

**Strangers and Priests:
Latino Activists and Contested Communities in a Movement for
Immigration Reform**

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THESIS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CIR	Comprehensive Immigration Reform
CS	Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Charles (the Scalabrinians)
IAF	Industrial Areas Foundation
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement
ICIRR	Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
IMP	Immigrant Mobilization (Research) Project (later called IMRP)
IMRP	Immigrant Mobilization Research Project
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service (later formed into ICE)
IRCA	Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986
OFM	Ordo Fratrum Minorum (the Franciscans)
OLOL	Our Lady of Lourdes parish
OMI	Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
OP	Ordo Fratrum Praedicatorum (Order of Preachers, aka the Dominicans)
PADRES	Priests Associated for Religious, Educational, and Social Rights
PJI	Priests for Justice for Immigrants
SWOP	South West Organizing Project
TRP	The Resurrection Project
UFA	Unión, Fuerza y Acción (Union, Strength, and Action)
UIC	University of Illinois at Chicago
USCCB	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

SUMMARY

Immigrants and their supporters filled Chicago's streets on March 10 and May 1, 2006, to protest legislation aimed at banning "aid and comfort" for undocumented immigrants. The largest street mobilizations in the city's history, these events were part of an unprecedented level of activism throughout the U.S. on the part of immigrants and their families, churches, labor unions, and schools. Chicago was a major locus of activism because of its Latino immigrant population and its Catholic infrastructure which, at the parish level, includes priests and nuns influenced by liberation theology.

This research examines aspects of the immigrant rights movement from 2005 to 2016, including a period of intensive participant observation (2006--2011) among the Priests for Justice for Immigrants (PJI) organization and among the laity of Latino immigrant parishes on the southwest and north sides of the city. The movement is analyzed as locally led and fortified by deeply held Christian beliefs, as well as an inclusive, ecumenical approach to social-justice activism. This progressive, parish-based focus is maintained despite the tendency in Catholic and mainstream media to privilege top-down views from the Vatican and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and despite a wider tendency among conservative Catholics to frame their worldviews as "authentic Christianity" while framing progressive Catholics as inauthentic and effectively "politicizing religion." In this ethnographic project, discourses and behaviors surrounding progressive Catholicism are examined as grounded in theology and the experiences of numerous individuals, groups, and communities, with attention to the following questions: What happens when novel types of activism emerge within an institution that in many ways is deeply conservative? What types of discourses arise that are both progressive and Catholic? How does clerical activism on behalf of immigrants transform practices in the Catholic Church? And how do progressive Catholics make claims to authenticity while supporting immigrant rights? This project also examines ways in which women have led and reinforced Latino activism, both in support of the Church and in opposition to it.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every religiously grounded unworldly love and indeed every ethical religion must, in similar measure and for similar reasons, experience tensions with the sphere of political behavior. (Weber 1963: 223)

There is nothing mysterious or natural about authority. It is formed, irradiated, disseminated; it is instrumental, it is persuasive; it has status, it establishes canons of taste and value; it is virtually indistinguishable from certain ideas it dignifies as true, and from traditions, perceptions, and judgments it forms, transmits, reproduces. (Said 1978: 19-20)

Community-based activists have taken the immigrant rights movement through diverse cultural, physical, and philosophical landscapes in recent years, ranging from localized protests at churches and city halls to mass mobilizations aimed at comprehensive political reforms. Until 2006, however, undocumented immigrants had not typically participated in these actions owing to fears of stepping from the shadows and attracting attention from government agents. That customary discretion was abandoned, for a time at least, after determinedly anti-immigrant bills appeared in the U.S. Congress. In the wake of that legislation, as well as accelerated deportations of undocumented immigrants and stricter border enforcement, the United States witnessed an unprecedented level of activism on the part of immigrants and their families, churches, labor unions, and schools. Chicago was a major locus of activism, not only because it has a sizable Latino/Hispanic immigrant population but also because of a strong Catholic infrastructure and influential activist priests, nuns, and laity. In the social movement for immigration reform and immigrant rights, their activism builds on religious and political traditions legible to immigrants from the predominantly Catholic countries of Latin America, although only a fraction of the new arrivals had participated directly in social activism in their sending countries. While engaging in hybrid frames of collective movement action, their Chicago-area organizing articulates with distinctive worldviews and political-religious segmentation within the Catholic Church.

In this situation, faith communities engage in social activism, which generates key questions for anthropological research, including the following: What happens when novel types of activism emerge

within an institution that in many ways is deeply conservative? How does clerical activism on behalf of immigrants transform practices in the Catholic Church? What types of discourses arise that are both progressive and Catholic? How do progressive Catholics make claims to authenticity in the face of conservative resistance? And what do women contribute to Latino activism through, or possibly in opposition to, the Church?

This dissertation addresses the preceding questions in chapters focusing, respectively, on the urban and Midwestern context for this study and the ethnographic methods supporting it, on the prevalence of local leaders and community-based activists within the U.S. Catholic Church, as well as the historical context for the immigrant rights movement, and on the Chicago-based group called the Priests for Justice for Immigrants, as major influences on the national movement. The parochial and diocesan leadership of women, as well as other laity in the Chicago area, are also allotted chapter-length treatment.

1.1 Vignette: March 10, 2006

On March 10, 2006, between 100,000 and 300,000 immigrants and pro-immigrant activists marched through Chicago, shutting down major avenues and intersections in the Loop and filling Federal Plaza. It was a human flood of unprecedented scale and an energetic but entirely peaceful protest. Because I had been told of the event the previous evening, by a priest addressing a group of at-risk teens in a parish basement, I was there as well. Within days of that historic mobilization I joined an interdepartmental team of researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago called the Immigrant Mobilization Research Project, under the direction of Nilda Flores-Gonzalez and Amalia Pallares and including professors and graduate students from the departments of Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, and English. Over the next few weeks our team developed and administered a survey for the May 1, 2006 mobilization, which became the largest march in Chicago history, and initiated a series of supporting observations and in-depth interviews. Much of our research was published in the peer-reviewed book Marcha! (Pallares and Flores-Gonzalez 2010); the chapter I co-authored with Juan Martinez and R. Stephen Warner focused on

the support the Priests for Justice for Immigrants (PJI) provided for the 2006 and 2007 mobilizations and the greater cause of immigration reform. This was the initiation of my dissertation research as well, with an ethnographic focus that evolved into a study of immigrant rights activists at PJI-led parishes, notably lay activists and staff members without whom the PJI and their archdiocese support staff could neither understand their communities nor lead effectively on an issue of such local and national import.

Our research on the 2006 and 2007 mobilizations indicated that two groups, “Catholic Latinos and secular white leftists” made up the core of the marchers in Chicago (Davis et al. 2010). We used the terms Latino and Hispanic somewhat interchangeably; although the majority of the marchers and activists studied were of Mexican heritage, others were from South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, and a few were from the Philippines. In the present study as well, both Latino and Hispanic were used by my informants, although some indicated a preference for one term or the other.¹

¹ Latino more strongly implied connections to Latin America and its diverse peoples (latinoamericanos), including Mexicans, Central and South Americans, people of the Caribbean, and Brazilians. Hispanic sometimes implied the speaking of Spanish, though my informants did not always define it as such. The category Hispanic has been used in U.S. government documents since the 1960s, and the term might be favored among English speakers partly because it sounds like the word Spanish. Thus, it also might encourage the equally problematic term Anglo, which my respondents tended to use in reference to white non-Hispanics. My priest-informants largely referred to themselves as “Anglo and white.”

Many activists, Anglo and Latino, objected to using the word American to refer to U.S. residents alone, since the entire hemisphere is literally “the Americas.” Some Mexican-origin immigrants called themselves Mexican American while others preferred Mexican or both Mexican and American. Some insisted they were “Americans first, then Mexicans.” Few of the activists I met in Chicago called themselves Chicanos with the exception of some older Mexican Americans for whom the word was a badge of honor from the struggles of the 1960s and 1970s.

Occasionally my informants used the word forms Latina (plural Latinas) and Latina/o (plural Latinas/os) to make explicit references to women, or to deemphasize the male bias in the Spanish language, where Latinos (in plural) refers technically to men and women, together, or to men, but not to women by themselves. I heard pairings (Latinas y Latinos, Mexicanas y Mexicanos) underscored in some of Chicago’s Catholic parishes, particularly when the speaker was a priest or lay leader concerned with struggles against domestic violence.

The survey respondents in 2006 and 2007 indicated that about 68% of marchers were Catholic, 10% Protestant, 7% other religions, and 15% non-religious; within this plurality the two largest core groups were thus Latino Catholics, who acknowledged (on our surveys) that they were primarily concerned with immigration questions, and non-religious non-Latino leftists, some of whom were marching primarily because of the immigration question, though others were more engaged in protesting the U.S. occupation of Iraq and President Bush's war policies. It was particularly intriguing to find that the great majority (71%) of the 400,000 marchers on May 1, 2006, were "significantly encouraged to participate by their church leaders," particularly in their Catholic parishes.

We concluded that the Catholic Church was one of the most important, if not the single most important, contributor to the success of the March 10 and May 1 marches (Davis et al. 2010). The Church encouraged parishioners to participate directly (from the pulpit) and indirectly, by making immigrant rights themed announcements in mass and garnering media attention for social justice causes. Parish priests had earned the long-term respect of parishioners (by showing cultural understanding, Spanish-language masses, etc.), and they had also promoted their substantive citizenship (i.e., civic integration, whether or not they can become formal citizens or register to vote). Lay leaders, priests, and bishops joined the marches themselves, gave masses at starting and ending locations, and lent an aura of peaceful, orderly authority to the already festive, family-infused event where hundreds or perhaps thousands of women pushing baby carriages also did much to guarantee the peace.

Churches were central to the effort to mobilize the marchers. While faith-based activists' rituals and beliefs have proven movement touchstones, however, this has been difficult for some secular leftists to tolerate. Even purportedly non-religious events have condensed from the religious milieu to guide the community emotionally: "A candlelight procession in the barrio to protest gang violence, flowers placed on the spot where a child has been killed...and calls for a 'crusade' against drug dealing are all social events that use the symbols and traditions of religion to motivate and mobilize Latinos" (Stevens-Arroyo

2004: 305). Many social scientists have argued that churches, and in particular the Catholic Church, have played either a limited or even countervailing role in this kind of social-justice activism,² but our findings indicated strong Catholic support in the planning and coordination of the mobilizations; observations and interviews confirmed the participation of numerous Chicago-area parishes in the March 10 and May 1, 2006 marches (Davis et al. 2010). Meanwhile, the mainstream media indicated that the movement had the support of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Yet it seemed as if important details were missing from the story.

1.2 Anthropologies of Religion and Social Movement Activism

The literature on social movements has been combined with the anthropology of religion in the work of theorists and ethnographers analyzing Latin American contexts. This multi-disciplinary shift has occurred especially since the 1980s, when dirty wars in Central America were associated with the Sanctuary Movement for refugees fleeing northward. The present work follows the conceptual orientations of Susan Erickson Nepstad, notably in the preference for cultural-agency approaches and theoretical work on movement frames; as well as Duncan Earle and Jeanne Simonelli's analyses of the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas; and Roger Lancaster's theorizations of gender, power, and religiously infused revolutionary regimes and social movements in Nicaragua. Marc Edelman's conceptualizations of transnational social movements, with a locus in Central America, have also been useful not as a nexus with religion but as a

² The phrase "faith-based activism" became associated with conservatives after the 2000 U.S. presidential election, especially in terms of Protestant and Catholic churches' charities divorced from social-justice activism (Elisha 2008). Conservative causes such as prayer in public schools and pro-life lobbying (Wuthnow 1989) have garnered a large share of media attention; this situation has prevailed despite efforts in academia to refocus attention on religion and social justice discourses (see, e.g., Smith 1996a; Espinosa et al. 2005; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007; Nepstad 2004; Schultze 2007; Wood 2002). Owing to support from right-wing churchgoers, creationist activism has grown in scope and strength (Freed 2005), and in Native American communities evangelical conservatism has been shown in opposition to progressive ideologies and pre-Christian customs (e.g., Dombrowski 2001). Budde (1992) argues that the U.S. Catholic Church is strongly pro-capitalist and nationalist and that its social-community outreach is tightly bounded. When causes are taken up by outspoken Catholics, they tend to be in opposition to larger Church structures and large numbers of its laity---e.g., Catholic anti-war protestors operated against a nationalist Church that largely supported the Vietnam War (Moon 2003). This conservative majority's perspective on social justice is defended by Schmiesing (2005), who argues that conservatism is "a corrective to deficiencies in the progressive approach" to social action.

model for an ethnography of human agency in articulation with personal and local influences, as well as historical and macroeconomic forces not allowed to overshadow the roles of individual actors. These theorists are discussed in the next few pages. Also important for ethnological and historical context though less central to the present focus on Catholic-infused social movements, Virgilio Elizondo's anthropology of mestizaje (the mixed ethno-racial heritage of Mexico and the Americas generally) afforded interdisciplinary insights on Mexican American history and theology. In reference to other U.S. Catholic contexts, Michael Angrosino's (1994) essay on the "culture concept" helped to conceptualize mainstream references to parish governance and social-justice rhetoric.

Anthropological studies of Protestant activism in the U.S. have focused mainly on reactionary attempts to preserve sectarian autonomy while projecting social control mechanisms; nonetheless, sociologists have produced a substantial literature on religious involvement in the Civil Rights Movement (e.g., Morris 1984; Wood 1981; Hadden 1969). Some anthropologists have also begun to examine evangelical participation in progressive questions, including immigrant rights movements. Human rights in the face of capitalist failures, the (political) performance of piety, and tensions between Islam and secular science were theorized as parts of the global, syncretic religious landscape in the anthropology of Kamari Maxine Clark (2010). Also related to Clark's work, theorizations of religion and social activism in European, Asian, and African contexts have mushroomed in recent decades, providing insights on the transnational agency of faith-based activists. Notable in this regard were Marshall's (2009) study of Pentecostals and violence in Nigeria; Asad's uncovering of claims to an "apolitical" frame in the construction of subjectivities among Islamic fundamentalists (2007; 2003); and John Bowen's (2004) analysis of civil tensions in articulation with French Islam. The spatial dimensions of immigrant religions and related "new" spiritual practices featured in the theoretical treatments of Robbins (2004), Leve (2007), and Comaroff and Comaroff (2009), among others. Additional works in the anthropology of religion have also been referenced in this project (e.g., Lawrence Taylor's [1995] ethnographic study of Irish Catholics), but these were utilized to a lesser extent where they lacked direct connection with social

movements. It should be noted, as well, that in the linked fields of gender violence and women's rights, with some exceptions (e.g., Lorentzen 1991, on women's leadership in the Sanctuary Movement), few ethnographies have delved into the possibilities of agency and empowerment within the Catholic Church.

1.3 Frameworks

The anthropological conceptualization of frames, or framing, in social movements, as originally proposed by researchers such as Benford and Jasper and (re)theorized by Sharon Nepstad (2004), accepted aspects of Resource Mobilization theory and Political Process theory, which provided useful perspectives on structural factors, but the chief focus was cultural agency. Beginning with a reminder that movements were not agents themselves but created and promoted by people, Nepstad (2004: x) built on Jasper (1997) and Benford's (1997; Snow and Benford 1988) work in placing activists in biographical contexts.

Activists, using their backgrounds and experiences, creatively formulated and interpreted cultural knowledge to promote social change, and their creativity also persuaded others to join movements. This attention to culture and agency might be called an "Expanded Cultural Approach" (Goodwin et al. 2000; Jasper 1997), though I would call it a standard ethnographic approach to data. Thus, activists have been examined in this work as agents with a range of social and cultural attributes; they occupied specific structural positions in organizations, affecting their cultural knowledge and their abilities to urge transformations. Finally, they operated within historical environments and developed skills through personal experiences (Nepstad 2004: 22).

In her study of the religious and political intersectionality of the Central American human rights movement of the 1980s and 1990s, which is referenced here as the Sanctuary Movement, Nepstad focused on solidarity and accompaniment, two concepts that have also resonated among immigrant rights

activists in Chicago parishes.³ The missionary experiences of Nepstad's subjects (priests, preachers, and religious) in Latin America gave them biographical and historical backgrounds against which they framed U.S. involvement in Nicaragua and neighboring countries; moreover, the early and persistent organizing of these priests, brothers, and nuns was a documented thorn in the CIA's side (Nepstad 2004: 53). Among the similarities between Nepstad's subjects and those of my study was the fact that some Priests for Justice for Immigrants (PJI) in Chicago were active in the 1980s and 1990s movement, even to the point of providing clandestine shelter (sanctuary) to Central American refugees. Nepstad described her leaders acting "as a moral witness" (2004: 13), whereas Chicago's activist parish leaders have described themselves as engaging in prophetic action, i.e., instigating risk-taking speech (speaking truth to power) and actions aimed at challenging unjust laws and affecting profound social change while drawing on biblical precedents (Old and New Testament prophets) and inspired by a deeply held Christian faith.

Building on the insights of Giddens (1984) and Sewell (1992), Nepstad's approach saw the Catholic Church through the eyes of activists as both a constraining and enabling institution, with great potential support to offer. These activists bridged cultural and socioeconomic gulfs (e.g., between themselves, as members of an educated white mainstream, and their immigrant parishioners) by framing events within contexts of religious conversion, popular solidarity, and personal empathy (Nepstad 2004: 109-110). Thus they superimposed their frame of a shared faith in a frame alignment process in order to produce a collective action frame (Nepstad 2004: 15) which was a uniting force, a driver of the social movement. Within the collective action frame, also called a movement frame, a tripartite interpretive analysis was offered by movement organizers, in which (1) a previously unfortunate but tolerable situation was redefined as unjust and unacceptable, (2) the sources of the problems were revealed with emphasis on

³ Solidarity and the nearly synonymous term accompaniment indicated not only empathy or a sense of understanding of suffering, but a determination to share in some aspect of it, thereby making the experience more social/communal and less isolating. Chicago's priests used these terms often, and the archdiocesan "Migrant-to-Migrant Ministry" was defined primarily as accompaniment.

one group or person linked to its resolution, and (3) there was a call to action or an obligation to act, linked to a group's identity as well as its collective responsibility (Nepstad 2004: 15).

Indirectly echoing Wallace's conceptualization of the mazeway (1956a) as a complex of cultural and psychological supports (with religion as a positive component) and revitalization movements (1956b) as cultural change phenomena involving mazeway resynthesis, Nepstad saw religion as a factor affecting profound social change. She cited examples of religion within social movements ranging from Gandhi's nonviolent resistance to late-20th-century Solidarity in Poland and the overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines. Like Smith (1996a, 1996b) and Lancaster (1988) as well as Wallace (1956a, 1956b) before them, Nepstad argued against the functionalist characterization of religion as a chiefly stultifying political force. In Nepstad's conceptualization, belief systems provided transcendent motivation for action (2004: 23), while religious institutions laid the groundwork for activism through years of leadership training, experience, and skills. They also endowed preachers with the charisma and moral authority needed to lead large groups into and out of challenging circumstances. Nepstad's culture-agency approach to faith-based activism highlighted the development of institutions and leaders within shifting political and economic circumstances, with special attention to the deeper meaning that the solidarity movement held for people of faith.

From their family histories and their early work as missionaries to their martyr stories, Nepstad's subjects were shown in an ethnographic confluence of personal, social, and spiritual meaning-making. The present work follows Nepstad in accepting aspects of structural models, such as the creation of vulnerabilities within authority structures, while making central arguments around agency and culture. This work thus focuses on the ways activists themselves engage in discourses of meaning on the "moral commitments, values, and emotions" of protestors (2004: 13) rather than merely examining actions in opposition to the mechanisms of power.

1.4 Conceptualizations of Roger Lancaster

Liberation theology was theorized by Roger Lancaster (1988, 1992) as inhabiting a revolutionary nexus in the anthropology of religion, between the socioeconomic realities of the developing world and the established belief systems of its working poor. Lancaster staked his theoretical claim to liberationism by calling it “most decidedly a revitalization movement” appropriate to anthropological studies (1988: 20). Writing in Nicaragua during the Sandinista revolution of the 1980s, he began Thanks to God and the Revolution: Popular Religion and Class Consciousness in the New Nicaragua (1988) by specifying that for Marx, religion was a symptom, not the root cause, of oppression: “the sigh of the oppressed creature” for whom the opium blossoms were as much a balm as a fantasy (1988: xviii). Although Marx counseled that the balm must be removed “so that man will wear the chain without fantasy of consolation but so that he will shake off the chain and cull the living flower” (Marx and Engels 1957: 41-42), Lancaster stated that, according to the ethnographic evidence from Nicaragua and elsewhere: “Not only is religion not inimical to revolution...but revolution in fact requires religion” (1988: 21). It also fueled resistance to counterrevolution; the repression of the 1970s and 1980s cost Church radicals dearly, but it seemed to strengthen them as well (Nepstad 1996: 117). This period also reinforced Church opposition to right-wing policies in the U.S., as religious leaders’ protests added moral authority to the movement (Smith 1996a, 1996b).

Lancaster’s discourse on the Popular Church synthesized Gramscian insights on religion (as supporting either revolt or status quo, rather than merely the latter) with James Scott’s conceptualization of religious little traditions as “acts of resistance” against formalized, great traditions (Scott 1977, citing Redfield’s [1961] nomenclature). According to Nepstad (1996: 110-112, 119-121), the little traditions were intimately linked with folk or popular culture, as well as class oppression, rather than being seen as a series of misunderstandings of elite doctrines. As a spirituality shaped by the social realities of the poor, “popular religion” was not reflected in the conservative Church hierarchy nor in the concerns of elite classes and was thus opposed by them (Nepstad 1996: 105).

As Lancaster described the folk connections of the Popular Church and its understanding of the realities of the working poor, he placed it in contrast with the elitism of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, including many conservative priests remaining in Nicaragua who opposed the revolutionary government. An expression of liberation theology, the Popular Church engaged in dialogue surrounding “the preferential option for the poor” (sometimes called the mythologizing of the poor [Lancaster 1988: 76]). It grounded its opposition to elite power structures in biblical foundations, including Jesus’s warnings about greed and riches barring entrance to heaven (“...a camel through the eye of a needle”). In this sense, as per Lancaster’s conceptualization, the Popular Church might have appeared politically radical, a charge he deflected by arguing that revolution was the “original message of Christ” (Lancaster 1988: xx). It made claims to being more authentic, more traditional, fundamental, and conservative “in the sense of pursuing a stable and normative community” (1988: 72), though it was not reactionary (1988: 54). Its adherents claimed a truer iteration of Catholicism as they saw the preferential option for the poor as more theologically grounded in the Bible and the lives of early Christians.

If we see recent events in this light, the conceptualization of activists as moral witnesses operating within a collective action frame (Nepstad 2004: 13, 15) has simultaneously urged the immigrant rights movement forward and sheltered it from setbacks in the short term; there might be little or no expectation, under this larger collective action frame, of reaching specific political goals in the short run---a useful long-term “survival mechanism” for the movement, as major political victories often proved elusive and frustrating setbacks frequent in the movement for immigration reform. This long-view on movement effectiveness was also evident among Lancaster’s (1988, 1992) informants in Nicaragua.

Lancaster conceptualized the intersections of gender, religion, politics in the context of liberation theology, particularly in his post-revolutionary ethnography Life Is Hard: Machismo, Danger, and the Intimacy of Power in Nicaragua (1992). The need for long-term historical and cultural context in

ethnography was underscored again in this work; for, while lamenting the “gradual waning of enthusiasm for the revolutionary project” (1992: 110), Lancaster demonstrated ways in which many radical reforms remained on people’s minds, especially in regards to gender violence, although the U.S. had effectively brought Nicaragua to its knees via its proxy war. In addition to discourses over domestic violence, including a blurring of the rhetorical lines between copulation and violence (1992: 34-47), Lancaster linked faith and gender relations to “microstruggles over power” in the control of the system(s) of domestic and public life (1992: xix, 20, 34-35, 235-238). His theoretical framework was that of a systems analysis, as “Machismo, no less than capitalism, is a system. Like racism, homophobia, and other forms of arbitrary power...machismo is resilient because it constitutes...a field of productive relations” (1992: 19). Lancaster also elucidated the differences between actual structures of feminism and empty rhetorical or symbolic claims to feminism, the latter being illustrated in the election of the conservative presidential candidate Violeta Chamorro.⁴

Such conceptual insights on the anthropology of religion have been reflected in various aspects of the present work, though there were major differences between Lancaster’s focus and my own. One difference is setting: the present work examines liberation theology in a domestic, U.S. context, rather than its original home in the developing nations of Latin America. Another obvious difference is that Lancaster’s study was set in the midst of an armed struggle between a leftist revolutionary government and forces of the counter-revolution, supported as a U.S. proxy war in Nicaragua; all of my informants were dedicated to nonviolent actions, proceeding no further than nonviolent resistance in street demonstrations. In addition, Lancaster saw progressivism as a false vision for his faith-based revolutionaries (1988: xxi), whereas progressivism was central (or at least allied) to many of the activists and reformers of Chicago---faithful who did not generally see themselves as revolutionary. Many of my

⁴ She was borne “in parades in the same fashion one might carry the Virgin Mary in religious procession” while seeming “a beleaguered, sympathetic mother and grandmother” (1992: 292). Although it seemed a social advance to see a woman elected president, Chamorro opposed most forms of gender equity. Thus, her victory “was both a triumph and a perversion of feminism in Nicaragua” (1992: 293).

informants would not have felt comfortable critiquing capitalism, though they were adamant supporters of social justice.

A major gap in Lancaster's work was the lack of detail about the Popular Church as an institution, organized by actual people in a series of actual locations. We were not given a sense of whether people in the Popular Church were led by priests or non-ordained preachers, lay leaders, etc. Lancaster discussed Christian base communities as a tenet of liberation theology as well as a major component of the Popular Church, but he did not specify whether the homes of laity (the chief meeting places of base communities) became the primary centers of worship, as they were for early Christians in the Levant---or whether dance halls or community centers were available for Popular masses as alternatives to mass at the old parish church. We were not told what the Popular Church actually was, beyond the fact that many Nicaraguans were talking about it, worshipping at it, seeing it as connected to the revolutionary government, and sometimes reverting instead to mass at the old "formal church," which was still led by conservative priests with the support of the formal Catholic hierarchy. Such a dearth of details were provided, that apart from the discussion of liberation theology (a decidedly Catholic initiative), the reader was left to wonder whether the Popular Church was so different from the evangelical Protestant churches which claimed some of Lancaster's chief informants.

1.5 Conceptualizations of Marc Edelman

Marc Edelman (1999, 2009) constructed his anthropological theory on an ethnography of activists involved in movement organizations, set against a field of stress-inducing socioeconomic contexts. Part of this linkage entailed both a "medium- and long-term" view (rather than an ethnographic moment) of the "structural changes that affect the possibilities for collective struggles" (2009: 63), and part of it signaled the importance of local actors, rather than top-down control in a movement. Edelman was concerned with the ways larger social theory could be posed and adjusted in the face of changing realities on the ground. He argued that some of the more vital details impinging on higher-level theory were also the chief

concerns of ethnography: details about who the activists were, whence they came, and to what extent they could work together to form, develop, and---more often than most anthropologists cared to admit---lose interest in and abandon social movements. Edelman showed the connections between macro forces and individual activists' lives. He delved deeply into national and socioeconomic historical contexts in an effort to reveal underlying frames, and in his ethnographic work he was ever cautious of "celebratory portrayals" (1999: 186) of leaders or their movements. He revealed bitterness over "authenticity and 'the right to lead'" (1999: 166), and he did not shy away from frustrated efforts (e.g., 1999: 150-155). He indicated how neoliberal market reforms contributed to the growth of agrarian movements (1999). Then he showed peasants in the 2000s abandoning their lands rather than continuing to fight neoliberal forces (2009: 62), although the region had seen successful movements for agrarian reform in previous decades. These diachronic shifts held implications for international migration and instability in local communities, coupled with globalized consumption and a rapidly shifting notion of campesino identity (2009: 83).

Edelman found that without viable local bases (i.e., without local leadership and community activism), the remaining national and transnational organizations achieved "periodic regional meetings...and...little else" (2009: 66-69). Although Latin America might have thus lost some of its cultural change agents---as "migration frequently undermines the capacity for political action" (2009: 80)---the present research suggests that a side benefit might be additional capacity for activism in the U.S., particularly in parishes providing a new home for former campesino activists.

Collective agency and structure were intertwined, as Giddens argued (1984). Edelman concurred with this view (and with Nepstad and Lancaster) on the need to focus on human agency as well as structure, or cultural and processual approaches combined, rather than (through attention to structure alone) providing nebulous analyses of movements' and institutions' seeming to act on their own, as if they had their own will(s) independent of the humans within them. Although he steered away from impersonal, abstract institutional descriptions, however, he stressed the need for contextual analysis, particularly in regards to

political economy and questions of neoliberal market forces. Yet he resisted the temptation to write “a heroic tale of ‘resistance to capitalism’” (1999: 4). Edelman argued instead for the conveyance of more ambiguous lessons “stemming not only from the complexity of the processes and people central to the research...but from my dissatisfaction with...analytical frameworks” that viewed power as “a product of abstract discursive processes” rather than relations among people. Building from a critique of New Social Movement Theory and development discourses, Edelman argued that notions of campesino identity must be seen as intersecting with material forces, including neoliberal pressures. The human scale of motivations must be recorded against the backdrop of structural adjustments and policies detrimental to the working poor. In a methodological note, Edelman also cautioned against being told “what they think they want [you] to hear” (1999: 38) as an anthropologist imposing on informants’ lives with visits and interview requests---and the trappings of hegemonic power structures---despite attempts to establish rapport through years of participant observation.

1.6 Conceptualizations of Simonelli and Earle

An ethnographic focus on more radical social movements was provided by Jeanne Simonelli and Duncan Earle, who engaged in decades of ethnography with the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas, and who confided that participant observation made them activists alongside the Zapatistas (see, e.g., Earle and Simonelli 2005). As they decried the effects of neoliberal regimes such as NAFTA on the working poor, their perspective was heavily affected by personal experience. Simonelli and Earle (2005) focused chiefly on individual activists, communities, and local leaders; thus they were not predominantly mired in the rhetoric of development promoted by state and NGO leaders. The local scale was of prime importance, as was the local contribution to the social movement(s). After acknowledging that Catholic parishes were “a quasi-neutral zone” and one of the few places large gatherings could safely occur (2000: 117), they confirmed an open secret: that radical elements of the Catholic Church were linked with the rebels (2005). These connections occurred in a manner reminiscent of the Popular Church as previously characterized by Lancaster in Nicaragua. Moreover, this revelation underscored the need for a longitudinal view in social

movement research (rather than a short-term study), as movements have not emerged fully formed, and church leaders were often in place long before mobilizations occurred. In Chiapas, they noted that a prior UN presence in Guatemala had brought NGOs to Chiapas, and that these “as well as Catholic followers of liberation theology were already involved in locations that eventually became Zapatista strongholds” (2004: 120). Simonelli and Earle did not always credit Church influence where it was due, however, as in their discussion of Zapatista efforts “to ‘disencumber’ [the] generosity” of donors, effectively “asking them to give up control” and instead “to ‘accompany’ them, which means they must respect the lengthy process of decision making among the Zapatista communities” (2004: 124). As is shown in the present work, the term accompaniment has long been used in Catholic contexts (both in liberation theology and in mainstream immigrant parishes); yet Simonelli and Earle did not link this concept to Catholic influence.

As a major component of their theoretical development, Simonelli and Earle (2005) overtly wrestled with notions of anthropological authenticity and objectivity, as they admitted their status as activists in Chiapas. I shared a similar methodological and theoretical concern; such tension was also considerable in my research---and though scientific distancing might have led to “greater objectivity,” that distance itself might not have been personally or emotionally desirable, and there would have been no manner of gaining the access and insights over these years of participant observation had I not freely and openly identified myself as a St. Pius-based activist for immigrant rights. As the authors have noted previously (Simonelli and Earle 2000: 115), this “participatory action model...allows...the research initiative to be shaped by local knowledge and participation.”

Though they staked positions as insiders (of a sort), Simonelli and Earle also acknowledged the imperfect histories and ranges of experiences exhibited by local organizers. This was consistent with what Edelman (1999: 185) offered as a caveat against any “relatively unproblematic view of how organizing takes place” when, especially, “the movement” was painted as a monolithic entity while “concealing in the process the disputes, the divisions, and the dropouts” as the shape and power of movements changed with

the compositions and motivations of their constituent (human) parts. Thus the focus on human agency is not merely a methodological concern but a deeply theoretical question, if our purpose as a discipline really is to seek an understanding of these complexities as human processes, not abstract forces or academically malleable discourses upon discourses.

These conceptual antecedents have influenced many aspects of the present work, from the focus on liberation theology to the rhetorical emphasis on movement frames, or frameworks. As viewed through a progressive Catholic frame, for example, PJI calls for “prophetic voices and actions” as well as “welcoming the stranger” were not mere rhetorical selections designed to elicit symbolic associations; although they were indeed biblical references to injustice, they were also sincere calls for social justice on behalf of the oppressed (e.g., see Heredia 2009; Schultze 2007; Nawyn 2007; U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops 2000; U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano 2003). Rather than examining radical aspects of liberation theology in Latin America, moreover, the present work has centered on progressive aspects of this theology within an industrialized country. In the words of one PJI leader:

I have personally found that liberation theology has transformed my faith and my role as a minister. I have found this in model parishes and in recognizing church ministers discover their transformative role in building church and making a difference in our society. [Elemental] understandings of liberation theology are based on “see, judge, act” theological and pastoral work done in the church. I have also found my reading of the Bible through that lens to be fundamental to my growth. (Father O’Brien, personal communication, June 15, 2015)⁵

1.7 Overview of the Immigrant Rights Movement

The actions at the heart of the immigrant rights movement from 2005 to 2011 were predominantly local and parish-based, as the U.S. Catholic Church included a contingent of priests and laity with historical roots in social-justice activism. No single national leader emerged at the head of the movement, although

⁵ Father O’Brien is a pseudonym.

a few politicians became more recognizable for their parts in it. Bilingual priests and bishops, most of whom were not of Latin American ancestry, often spoke creatively and forcefully at its rallies and vigils, but they seldom gained notoriety beyond their local (parochial) and regional (diocesan) territories.

Despite the lack of recognizable leaders within the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, however, both mainstream secular and Catholic presses tended to report on the movement as if it were being directed by a selection of archbishops or by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Meanwhile, the media tended to portray both the USCCB and the U.S. Catholic Church as monolithic (with only a few dissenting voices) on this issue and on others, ranging from reproductive choices to health care reform.

This research has confirmed findings previously established in the anthropology of religion by Lancaster (1988), Nepstad (2004), and others, regarding the existence of competing elements in the Catholic Church. Whether labeled as a divide between “the Popular Church and the formal Church” (as in Lancaster’s conceptualization of revolutionary Nicaragua) or between solidarity and privilege (as in Nepstad’s theory of the Central American Solidarity Movement), or as radical and progressive versus conservative and reactionary, these elements vied with one another on numerous issues; moreover, both have seen themselves as true adherents of Catholicism and Christianity. Members of these competing Catholic segments worked to frame immigration reform in alignment with preexisting worldviews, which typically placed conservative and culturally exclusive Catholics on one side of the issue, and more inclusive and social-justice oriented Catholics on the other.

The terms inclusive and exclusive (inclusivist and exclusivist) have been used by informants to refer to Catholics’ willingness to accept immigrants and embrace a multicultural milieu. These terms were first suggested to me in the foundational Notre Dame study of parishes (Leege and Gremillion 1981-1989), but they also appeared as recently as April 2015, in the parish bulletin of a member of the Priests for Justice for Immigrants (PJI) who are the subject of chapter three. One PJI friend regarded “Jesus as [an] exemplary inclusive” and noted movement activists’ desire for an inclusive Church and society “worth

fighting for” and a “reason for passion” (Father O’Brien, personal communication, June 15, 2015).

Although many of my PJI friends were comfortable with the term inclusive, however, one considered it “insufficient to describe the mission of these people...just too weak” a term to describe the sacrifices and activism of Catholics engaged in the movement (Father Mulligan, personal communication, June 6, 2015).⁶

The terms progressive and conservative were seldom employed by priests in public discourse, including the PJI, though some of these leaders were willing to discuss such labels in personal communications. Although I had initially expected there to be a variety of opinions about the application of these labels, the word conservative was only marginally accepted by my PJI friends. One specified that Archbishop Romero was “once was a conservative and was transformed by his people”; this priest identified Catholics in the movement, including himself, as chiefly progressives who “are frustrated by” and “struggle with conservatives” (Father O’Brien, personal communication, June 15, 2015). Although these respondents respected the charitable work of some conservative Catholics, they felt frustrated by conservative calls to reduce or end government programs that provided further assistance to the working poor, as well as conservative calls to place further restrictions on immigrants. One PJI informant implied that prayer and devotion---the chief interests of many conservative Catholics, in his view---were not suitable substitutes for action in the social realm. He saw such “increased focus on personal morality and devotion” under the papacy of John Paul II (Father Mulligan, personal communication, June 6, 2015), and although he did not use the term conservative in reference to John Paul II, he was juxtaposing a Catholicism centered on devotion with his own Catholic attention to social justice. This priest also opined that Catholic immigrant rights activists would balk at being called conservative, as the label “would leave them feeling disappointed and misunderstood. Conservative implies an unwillingness to challenge socio-political realities.” One PJI leader specified that he was conservative “in wanting to reverence the good

⁶ Father Mulligan is a pseudonym.

traditions of the past,” yet he preferred to be called progressive on most issues involving social spending and social action.

The term progressive also carried multiple valences among Catholic activists; some PJI referred to this as a desire to move forward, for instance, or to inspire change. One called it “looking at ways to advance the life circumstances of all people” (Father David, personal communication, June 9, 2015).⁷ A second priest clarified that “a significant progressive group...is a majority” segment within the PJI (Father O’Brien, personal communication, June 15, 2015). Another of the PJI leaders held up progressive as “the best term for most who are involved in immigration reform,” including “empowered Catholics,” as it “captures the urgency of the movement and challenges the status quo” (Father Mulligan, personal communication, June 6, 2015). And yet I knew from our previous conversations that this priest did not support the typical U.S. progressive’s stance on reproductive rights. Some of the Catholics most adamant about defining themselves as progressive could thus still be characterized as conservative on other social issues; they defied simple categorization.

The PJI felt that their views on activism were receiving support from the Vatican under Pope Francis but only after a decades-long period in which they perceived activist Catholics to be on the decline. As one PJI member explained, parish leadership became “more reflective of JP II and Benedict type clergy and ministers,” by which he meant more conservative, more focused on internalized reflections of faith and prayer. He added, “These ministers and priests have resisted involving parish ministry with community based organizations directly. A number of pastors still continue to collaborate with community based organizations but there is a rift, a conflict” (Father O’Brien, personal communication, June 15, 2015).

With the recent shift toward greater hierarchical support, as the PJI perceived it, many of the activists within the immigrant rights movement felt that actions once seen as radical were becoming accepted as

⁷ Father David is a pseudonym.

progressive. They clarified that for many Christians, Jesus, the biblical prophets, and Christian martyrs might be held up as radical role models, yet they would be wary of having the term applied to their own actions because of negative connotations, particularly in a news climate in which the term radical was often conflated with extremist. As one PJI informant noted, the term was often “understood to imply extreme strategies” which were not generally embraced by the immigrant rights movement (Father Mulligan, personal communication, June 6, 2015). Another PJI friend said that Catholic social-justice activists, laity and clergy, were “frustrated that others in Church see them as radical” and that he was personally “not comfortable with the term...except in use of [terms like] radical love, radical commitment” (Father O’Brien, personal communication, June 15, 2015). Thus I have used the term radical sparingly in the present study, although some priests in contact with the PJI did not shy away from it (e.g., Father Michael Pflieger, whose biography was titled Radical Disciple [McClory 2010]); moreover, some PJI told me they “would be honored” to be called radical if it placed them on a spectrum along with Archbishop Romero. These PJI also tended to point to the word’s derivation, i.e., “rooted in faith and out of that faith being willing to speak and act out...radical/rooted in the social Gospel” (Father David, personal communication, June 9, 2015).

One of the guiding concerns of this research has been the question of claims to authenticity (religious legitimacy) for radical and progressive Catholic beliefs, in the face of exclusivist claims of authenticity by conservative Catholics. Both segments of the Church supported the (small-c) catholic unity of the Church, and both claimed that their views were more authentically based on biblical foundations. And yet, this project’s analysis of Church discourses and reports in the media have indicated that when reports framed an issue or a statement as emanating from “the Church” or “the Vatican” or even “the U.S. Catholic Church,” the implied frame of reference was a conservative one---thus placing radical and progressive Catholics at a rhetorical disadvantage when attempting to establish the legitimacy of their worldviews. At the same time, however, their marginalization within the Church and the U.S. neoliberal socioeconomic landscape bolstered their resolve and their core beliefs, as they linked themselves strongly with the

prophetic visions of the Bible as well as the prophets of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr.) and liberation theology (e.g., Archbishop Oscar Romero).

1.8 Research Setting

Chicago was an ideal site for the present research because of its history of activism, its large numbers of Latino immigrants, and the city's role in the checkered history of the Catholic Church. The city's history of immigrant rights activism dated from the late 1800s when new arrivals were involved in events such as the Haymarket massacre (1886), and the early 1900s when working-class immigrants in southside neighborhoods figured prominently in Upton Sinclair's novel The Jungle (1906)---a book that has remained relevant to the experiences of immigrants in the city today, despite some changes in technology, nomenclature, and national origins.⁸ Chicago saw historic civil-rights and anti-war protests in the 1960s and 1970s, and it served as the hearth of Saul Alinsky's Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), which helped train community leaders throughout the country.⁹ In the 1980s Chicago served as a central nexus of the Sanctuary Movement. Many of the Priests for Justice for Immigrants (PJI) whose parishes were central to this study were also active in previous social-justice movements.

Chicago's Catholic leaders and immigrant rights activists interacted with nationally prominent political and religious figures based in the city, such as the Reverend Jesse Jackson, Archbishop Francis George, who served as president (2007-2010) of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and U.S.

Representative Luis Gutierrez, who had sponsored reform legislation in Congress and who might have been---if the attention he commanded of the crowd at a 2010 Washington, DC, rally, was any indication---the most broadly recognized spokesperson within the movement.

⁸ Though the public fixated on the novel's depictions of meat processing, Upton Sinclair was shining a reformist and socialist light on immigrants. Amid low wages, unsafe conditions, and a lack of employer-provided health or disability insurance, Sinclair also depicts a wedding feast beyond the means of its celebrants. Meanwhile, the naive vows of his burly protagonist, Jurgis ("I will work harder!") could be said to presage the doomed plow-horse, Boxer ("I must work harder!") in George Orwell's Animal Farm.
⁹ Alinsky influenced César Chávez, Ernesto Cortes, and numerous others (Burke 2004: 175), and his books "for radicals" are replete with examples from Chicago's neighborhoods and institutions.

At the time of this research, the Archdiocese of Chicago had 357 parishes and a Catholic population of 2.3 million, representing 39 percent of the total population of Cook and Lake Counties (Pozywio 2009). In 2011 it was estimated that between 42 and 44 percent of the Chicago archdiocese was Hispanic (Catholic New World 2011). Chicago's parishes served large numbers of immigrants, including undocumented parishioners, as was reported widely in the mainstream media (electronic, TV, and print), as well as in Catholic news media. All of the parishes involved in the present research had congregations with significant numbers of immigrants, including Spanish-speaking, bilingual, and English-speaking (monolingual) Latinos, among whom Mexicans and Mexican Americans were the largest subgroups. Some parishes counted thousands of congregants, some only a few hundred, and attendance at Saturday and Sunday masses varied as well.

1.9 Methodological Note

The ethnographic research for this dissertation was built on participant observation among Chicago-area parishes beginning in 2005, with more intensive and extensive observations completed between 2006 and 2011, as well as 106 in-depth interviews ranging from 25 minutes to 2.5 hours and approximately 40 shorter interviews, numerous conversations at public rallies, on buses, before and after meetings, and during marches. These interviews were conducted with priests, lay activists, deacons, religious, and diocesan functionaries. I focused primarily on lay volunteers at two parishes (St. Pius V and Our Lady of Lourdes) on the north and southwest sides of Chicago, but numerous interviews and observations centered on seven other parishes (on the north, northwest, west, southwest, and south sides---i.e., St. Adalbert, St. Procopius, Our Lady of Tepeyac, St. Agnes of Bohemia, St. Francis, Holy Trinity [in Waukegan], and Our Lady of Mount Carmel [in Melrose Park]); the total scope of interviews and observations extended to more than 30 Chicago-area parishes, four religious orders, two diocesan offices, and five community organizations in which parishes were active participants, as well as eight Protestant, Muslim, and Jewish religious congregations also involved in the immigrant rights movement.

I have shielded informants through the use of pseudonyms and coded references in field notes; all have been kept anonymous in this study except for those who are effectively public figures; thus pseudonyms are generally used except for well known priests such as Father Charles Dahm, Father Brendan Curran, Father Michael Boehm, Father Michael Shanahan, Archbishop Francis George, and the directors of high-profile offices such as Elena Segura, the director of the archdiocesan office on immigration; Josh Hoyt, who was the leader of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR); and Marco Lopez, the director of the Saint Toribio Romo Migrant Center. I did not ask nor annotate information about friends and informants' immigration statuses; moreover, verbal consent was sought for most interviews rather than the standard written consent, in order to shield the identities of individuals and families. On several occasions I have used pseudonyms for parish and diocesan informants as well, out of a concern for their communities and to protect those who have made remarks in candor about the Catholic Church, the Archdiocese of Chicago, law enforcement, or the U.S. immigration system.

I also gathered data from dozens of English- and Spanish-language Catholic periodicals, hundreds of press releases and electronic publications of the Chicago Archdiocese and the U.S. Catholic Church, and additional hundreds of parish bulletins (available, e.g., during Sunday mass), parish workshop flyers, committee reports, and other parish and community publications. On several occasions I was granted access to these documents owing to my dual status as a volunteer and researcher at the parishes in question, on the invitation of parish priests and other leaders who had full knowledge of my research interests.

My entree to the parishes of Chicago's southwest side began in 2005, when R. Stephen Warner, in whose ethnographic methods course I was enrolled at the time, placed me in contact with St. Pius V's Father Charles Dahm ("Padre Carlos"), who had served there as pastor for two decades. Father Dahm introduced

me to Father Brendan Curran, then the parish's new associate pastor.¹⁰ I began to volunteer with the "at-risk" teen program that Father Curran had initiated at St. Pius, based on a successful program he had observed in the Back-of-the-Yards neighborhood. The Mexican American youth and mentors in this program introduced me to more members of the St. Pius community. It was also as a member of this group that I learned from Father Curran of "the sea of people" that would flow through Chicago's streets for an upcoming immigration-rights mobilization on March 10, 2006 (see Davis, Martinez, and Warner 2010).

Thanks to the serendipity available through participant observation, I was present in streets where spirits soared and in rooms where terrible news was shared, tragedies were avoided, and dreams fulfilled. Much communication was unspoken but indicated through gestures and spontaneous outbursts of motion. Thus many of the vignettes herein attempt descriptions "in the moment" of moods, reactions, and nonverbal expressions of tears, laughter, fear, and joy. Just as we might seek religion in the actions of people and groups rather than in the numinous ideals, beliefs, and spirits (which may find ineffable expression in the hearts and minds of our informants and friends), we seek anthropologies that combine verbal and unspoken communications which our audio recorders miss (see e.g., Meyer 2009).

As ethnography affords opportunities to observe and interact within the daily milieu and to partake as a participant-observer of the psychology of groups, crowds, and congregations, it also affords us the inestimable opportunity to experience the movements, sights, sounds, and feelings of being there. My intention was thus to experience what Graeber (2009: 510) called the desire "to give the reader the means to imaginatively pass inside a moral and social universe" and, in the case of activists, to share a sense of their "immediacy, fellowship, and spontaneity" (2009: 190). That spontaneity was integrated into what

¹⁰ A few years later, when Father Curran was made pastor of St. Pius V, Father Dahm chose to remain at the parish as an associate pastor, under the mantle of his former protégé. This was a position he lobbied for because of his feelings of attachment to the community, rather than accepting a career-minded, lateral appointment to pastor a suburban parish. Such a move, he explained to me on various occasions, would not have required the skill, experience, and friendships that he had built up at St. Pius V.

Durkheim labeled the spiritual power of collective representations, collective existence, and “effervescence” (1965 [1915]: 22, 28-29, 250-253, 432). Although some of my colleagues have tended to quote Durkheim in order to frame religion as a traditional, conservative social force, I have invoked his work in reference to the shared energies of activist, entrepreneurial, and creative actions in religious communities.

1.10 Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Key Terms

2006 mobilizations: pro-immigrant marches and rallies throughout the United States, including the largest peaceful street demonstrations in Chicago’s history on March 10, 2006, and May 1, 2006.

American: adjective referring to “the Americas,” i.e., North, Central, and South America or “Anglo America” and Latin America. The term is considered mildly offensive by some Latin Americans, as well as some Latinos/Hispanics, when it is used to refer only to U.S. citizens or U.S. residents; thus, in this work “U.S.” is used as an adjective.

Anglo: This term is used with caution because Italian Americans and others identifying themselves as white or Caucasian may object to being lumped as Anglo and Anglo American, just as they might dislike being grouped with WASPs. The term Anglo was nonetheless preferred by many of my English-speaking respondents, including whites and nonwhites. Spanish-speakers and bilingual speakers often referred to blancos (whites) and negros (Blacks/African Americans), and sometimes also used Anglos in reference to whites in general society and in the U.S. Catholic Church. None of my respondents used the terms Anglo, blanco, or negro with derisive or disrespectful intent.

archbishop: a highly ranked bishop usually leading an archdiocese (a large diocese); the Archdiocese of Chicago is led by the Archbishop of Chicago. Some archbishops have been promoted to the status of cardinal by the pope, and thus serve in the “college of cardinals.”

bishop: a leader of priests; either a bishop leading his own diocese, or an auxiliary bishop (who assists with a group or cluster of parishes), or an archbishop; an archbishop is often referred to as “the bishop” despite the presence of one or more auxiliary bishops.

bracero: a temporary agricultural migrant worker. The Bracero Program began in 1942 to replace U.S.

farm labor that had joined the war effort. The program continued in various forms after the war, until the 1960s.

Broadview: a near west-side suburb of Chicago, the location of ICE's Broadview detention facility.

Cardinal George (Francis Cardinal George, formerly Francis Eugene George): Archbishop of Chicago from 1997 to 2014 and former president (2007-2010) of the USCCB.

catechism: Catholic Sunday school/ Bible lessons.

Catholic (upper case 'c'): pertaining to the Catholic Church, or an adherent of the Catholic Church (Spanish: católico or católica).

catholic (lower case 'c'): global, for all people, or universal; thus the name of the Catholic Church.

Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform/Justice for Immigrants (also called "Justice for Immigrants: A Journey of Hope"): pro-immigration-reform effort launched by the USCCB; with offices in Washington, D.C., the Catholic Campaign used funds allocated by the USCCB to provide some material and logistical support to parishes and diocese active within the immigrant rights movement; it supported and linked activists within the U.S. Church rather than explicitly leading them.

CCB: (See USCCB).

Charismatics: members of the Charismatic Renewal movement within the Catholic Church (Spanish: carismáticos), formed in response to Protestant charismatic movements.

CIR: comprehensive immigration reform, i.e., a bill or law that would address numerous issues involving immigrants, beyond merely customs and enforcement provisions.

CS (Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Charles): The Scalabrinian order of priests and religious, originally founded a century ago to aid Italian migrants and now serving people from many areas.

deacon: an ordained leader within a Catholic parish; neither a priest nor a religious (nun or monk), a deacon began as a layperson and then underwent special training and preparation to assist with ministerial (and sometimes priestly) duties.

diocesan priest: an ordained priest committed to a region (diocese); as this kind of priest is not a member of a religious order, he is directly overseen by a bishop or archbishop.

diocese (also called bishopric): an administrative region of the Catholic Church led by a bishop and comprising a group of parishes---e.g., the Diocese of Peoria. A large diocese led by an archbishop is called an archdiocese.

Guadalupanos: members of parish-based groups dedicated to the Virgin Mary, particularly as manifested in the apparition at Guadalupe---thus she is often called the Virgin of Guadalupe.

Guadalupe, Virgin of: the apparition of the Virgin Mary witnessed at Guadalupe, Tepeyac (a hillside shrine originally on the outskirts of Mexico City, now within the expansive metro area); in honor of the Virgin and the site of her apparition, the names of many other cities, towns, and historical documents have been expanded to include the name Guadalupe---e.g., Guadalupe Hidalgo.

IAF (Industrial Areas Foundation): institute for leadership-training and community activism founded by Saul Alinsky in the 1960s and later active in Chicago and other urban areas.

ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement; formerly the Immigration and Naturalization Service, INS): the branch of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that organizes the Border Patrol, workplace raids, the “Secure Communities” program, and deportations.

ICIRR (Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights): a lobbying coalition based in Chicago that included faith-based and secular organizations.

IMRP, or IMP (Immigrant Mobilization Research Project): an interdepartmental, interdisciplinary research project launched at UIC after the March 10, 2006, demonstration and street mobilization in Chicago.

IRCA (Immigration Reform and Control Act): often called “the 1986 amnesty,” this act provided a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who arrived before 1982, but it also increased border security and penalties for those employing the undocumented.

Justice for Immigrants: (See Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform).

laity, or layperson: an adherent of the Catholic Church who is not a priest, deacon, or religious (nun/sister or monk/brother).

minister: one who serves. In common usage, a minister is synonymous with a preacher, pastor, or priest; however, in a Catholic parish the term applies to anyone who is asked (usually by a priest) to assist with spiritual matters such as Holy Communion during mass, applying ashes to foreheads on Ash Wednesday, or catechism (“children’s ministry”). The ministry called Pastoral Migratoria (“Migrant-to-Migrant Ministry”) involved social, legal, and practical aid to a greater degree than individual spiritual ministry.

Office for Immigrant Affairs and Immigration Education: office of the Archdiocese of Chicago led by Elena Segura; it supported the PJI and the Church’s actions within the movement for immigration reform.

OFM: Ordo Fratrum Minorum, i.e., the Franciscan order of priests and religious.

OLOL: Our Lady of Lourdes, a multicultural parish on Chicago’s north side.

OMI: Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a religious congregation (similar to an order) dedicated to missionary evangelism---e.g., Francis Cardinal George, OMI.

OP: Ordo Fratrum Praedicatorum, i.e., the “Order of Preachers” commonly called the Dominicans---e.g., Father Charles Dahm, OP.

order: religious order of priests, brethren (monks), and/or sisters (nuns) that sometimes operate with greater autonomy in regards to the wishes of their diocesan bishop or archbishop; e.g., Jesuits, Dominicans, Scalabrinians, Franciscans. See also: religious.

parish: a Catholic community centered on a church and traditionally led by a priest called a pastor (when one is available); some are geographical parishes in that they have boundaries drawn around them signifying the populations or neighborhoods they are to serve; in the late 1800s and early 1900s, many ethnic parishes were also created, with boundaries overlapping those of geographical parishes, to serve specific immigrant and ethnic groups; although the ethnic parishes were ostensibly phased out just as Latino immigration was becoming more prevalent, in recent decades many

Latino/Hispanic parishioners and their (often Anglo but bilingual) priests have created de facto ethnic parishes as previous immigrant groups have aged and/or moved to the Chicago suburbs.

PJI: Priests for Justice for Immigrants (Spanish: Padres pro Justicia para Inmigrantes, also known as Padres para Justicia para Inmigrantes), a group formed in Chicago in 2005.

“Priest, Prophet, and King”: during a baptismal ceremony, the newly baptized is declared (by a deacon or priest) to be a “priest, prophet, and king” as a developing adherent and leader within the Catholic Church; this declaration is made for all laypeople and is thus independent of any actual plans to become an ordained priest.

religious: member of a religious order of brethren (monks), sisters (nuns)---e.g., “Within the crowd were priests and religious, as well as laity.”

St Pius V (San Pio V): a primarily Latino parish on Chicago’s southwest side, pastored by Dominicans since the 1900s, including Father Charles Dahm for two decades, followed by Father Brendan Curran.

St Toribio Romo Immigrant Center (Spanish: Centro del Inmigrante ‘San Toribio Romo’): pro-immigrant office founded in Chicago (largely through the efforts of key PJI members, with archdiocesan permission) to support activist parishes and to help establish support networks for immigrants.

Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants: organization of religious sisters (nuns) and brethren (monks) formed to advocate for immigrant rights; it often coordinated with the PJI.

SWOP (South West Organizing Project): a community development and activism organization centered on Chicago’s southwest side and in nearby suburbs; it included among its members Catholic parishes, Protestant churches, a mosque foundation, and Jewish synagogues.

Tepeyac: hill shrine where the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe was witnessed; once outside of Mexico City, the hill and temples there are now within the metro area and near a subway stop; some Catholic parishes are thus named Tepeyac.

TRP (The Resurrection Project): community development organization founded by the priests of 12 southwest-side parishes in 1990, with the significant influence of future PJI members.

UFA (Unión, Fuerza y Acción): “Unity/Union, Strength/Force, and Action”: social-justice and immigrant rights activist group comprised of parishioners at St. Pius V (San Pio V) parish on Chicago’s southwest side.

UIC (University of Illinois at Chicago): campus of the University of Illinois system located just north of Pilsen; when UIC was built in the 1950s and 1960s it forced the relocation of many Latino immigrants from the old Hull House neighborhood to the Pilsen and Little Village neighborhoods.

USCCB (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops): a collegial and advisory group of bishops that deliberates on issues (e.g., immigration) and often appears to speak for the Catholic Church in the United States, just as bishops do in other countries. This is one reason we speak of “the U.S. Church” although the hierarchy is officially pope-bishop-priest.

Virgin, the: Virgin Mary (Spanish: la Virgin Maria), Saint Mary (Santa Maria); or Mother Mary / Mother of God (Madre de Dios). See also Guadalupe, Virgin of.

2. LOCAL ACTIVISM

Religion may be a stone thrown into the world; but it must be a palpable stone and someone must throw it. (Geertz 1968: 3)

A religion which would be catholic these days has an extraordinary variety of mentalities to be catholic about; and the question, can it do this and still remain a specific and persuasive force with a shape and identity of its own, has a steadily more problematic ring. (Geertz 1968: 15)

It may seem remarkable to some that, in a church two millennia old, faith and liturgy are less prominent in defining a true Catholic than is personal behavior...that connects moral teaching about human life with a current American political issue. But as Weber and Tocqueville observed long ago, in America religion is defined less by sacramental beliefs than by righteous behavior. (Leege 1985: 7)

This chapter examines the work of local, parish-based organizers and activists in the immigrant rights movement, following approaches to ethnographic research previously established by Nepstad (2004, 1996), Earle and Simonelli (2005, 2004), and Lancaster (1992, 1988), each of whom has theorized religiously motivated agency in politicized contexts. The chapter argues that Catholic activists, including priests and lay leaders in select immigrant parishes, have taken multiple approaches to activism on behalf of undocumented immigrants---approaches which effectively blend deeply held religious beliefs with ideological tenets. These multiple forms of activism have placed parish leaders in conflict with conservatives within the Catholic hierarchy, including the former Archbishop of Chicago, Cardinal George, though he and some other Catholic conservatives were nevertheless perceived as empathizing, to an extent, with the suffering of immigrants. The priests, lay activists, and other active members of these parishes were not homogeneous in their ideologies, nonetheless, nor were they always in agreement on plans for the use of parish finances, parish spaces (in and outside of mass), prayers, music, movement strategies, and movement tactics. This chapter thus also examines the kinds of tensions, discourses, and divisions that can (or must) occur within parishes involved in such a social movement.

The analysis in this chapter addresses the following questions: What happens in the Church when some parish-based priests and laity begin to develop views on social issues that are at odds with that of Church leaders? What sources does this group draw upon to develop a discourse to express its views? Finally, within the context of the Church, how are broader groups mobilized by these leaders? In other words, what kinds of events are staged, what forms of protest are developed, and what kinds of symbols are deployed in a movement that is both political and religious?

These questions are also treated as components of a broader research question: What novel forms of protest emerge within an institution that in many ways is deeply conservative? Here I utilize the term novel for six related reasons:

(1) It should be pointed out that few, if any of the lay activists had experience in political movements. The predominantly Latino laity in a PJI parish had not, for the most part, previously helped organize or even participate in many of these modes of protest.¹¹ On some occasions, actions and styles of movement discourse emerged that were novel for particular PJI priests as well, even if these were authored by their colleagues in the movement. For example, in their clerical collars and black shirts, and in their nuns' habits (the latter no longer worn on a daily basis but reserved for special occasions), the PJI and the Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants "framed" the immigration debate by holding up actual frames, in an attempt to highlight what they regarded to be the unfair treatment immigrants had received in the press

¹¹ I have noted elsewhere in this work that some of the Latin American immigrants were activists in their sending countries, but many (likely most) others were not, and some did not see examples of social-justice activism, democratically inclusive civic participation, or other democratic practices before arriving in the United States. In the next chapter I also discuss the influences on PJI leaders of activism during the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Sanctuary Movement. Some PJI also marched in anti-war demonstrations in 1990-1991 or 2003; however, many of these previous experiences have been transformed into novel or creative iterations in the context of the immigrant rights movement. A similar song, action, or emblem may appear, but it may be discussed, in Spanish, by a "white and Anglo" priest in front of a Latino congregation, in the company of atheists and Muslim activists, and performed by mariachis instead of Anglo folk singers; it may also have been aided by global telecommunications (texts, blogs, live news reporting) after an overnight bus drive over newly rebuilt highways and bridges. Meanwhile, arrayed against it may be angry "commenters" on a blog and a Minuteman interviewed on live TV by a news crew using GPS and state-of-the-art digital recording equipment.

and in nativist protests; they listened to individual testimonials and then, in chorus (and in a responsorial style reminiscent of mass), raised their individual frames up to their faces, saying in union: “This could be you,” or “This could be me.” This event combined traditional motifs (the old church, the habits of nuns, the responsorial style) with media-savvy frames, in multiple colors, well-suited to newspaper photos and television sound-bites. According to Father Dowling’s comments to me afterward, the frames were originally proposed in a brainstorming session by Father Curran. Another example was the “border immersion trip” that Father Shanahan led, and which he then referenced to powerful effect in mass and at rallies afterward, by recalling his meeting of a mother and son who were limping across a section of desert---the boy with only one shoe.

(2) Music, symbols, and actions might have taken on innovative forms by combining the material of previous movements, and of traditional Catholicism, with the needs of the present. For instance, in a Lenten campaign, the PJI at the pulpit held up a cellular phone and preached that calling the president “fulfills part of the traditional practice of almsgiving on behalf of the poor during this holy season. The alms...is action for justice and compassion for immigrants” (see the subsection “Calling the White House” in this chapter). In addition, one PJI member added alternative lyrics to an “Immigrant Song,” which was already a creative take on the traditional “De Colores” tune; in a related manner, each Friday at dawn on the sidewalk at Broadway, the lyrics “We Shall Overcome/ Some day” were changed to “We Shall Overcome/ This year!”¹² Such songs and actions were novel to many, but not all, of the leaders of this movement, although similar contributions had already graced other movements in the past.

(3) Some actions were regarded as novel in their sheer size or reach. As was noted in the introductory chapter, for instance, this movement produced the largest (and largest peaceful) marches in Chicago history in 2006, and similar events in other urban areas, not all of them large cities. Some of the

¹² It is likely that vigil attendees did something like this during the Civil Rights Movement, but the change was nevertheless novel to most of the people at Broadview on those cold Fridays at dawn.

mobilizations of 2006 were among the largest in U.S. history. I would argue that even in subsequent years the novelty of those marches echoed throughout the movement, both as a point of pride and accomplishment and of trepidation (or perhaps regret), as activists struggled with the notion that any further mobilizations might be smaller, and therefore cast in the proverbial shadow of, the 2006 events.

(4) Actions featured new forms of electronic communication (cell, text, IM, websites, etc.) while imperfect yet extensive transport systems mobilized participants in unprecedented, or at least significantly increased, speeds. The first, hurried trip the PJI and thousands of other clergy made to Washington in 2005 was a prime example. And in 2010, this point was underscored by the fact that only one rider on my bus (a middle-aged Latino man) had a GPS-enabled smartphone; this enabled our “lost bus” to escape the Pentagon’s parking lot and cross the river before the expected arrival of a patrol or a security officer. Also notable were the blogs and online “comments” that attracted large amounts of attention following news articles (especially in the instances of provocative nativist comments following articles sympathetic to the undocumented). These could have been written from great distances, in other states or countries, with no easily visible markers of the names of their authors or their locations; thus, the anonymity and social distancing of the Internet favored vituperate remarks that would seldom be condoned in person nor in traditional media. Sometimes, in addition to the above examples, global communications were immediately juxtaposed with the traditional settings of the Church, as occurred during the campaign to call the White House, wherein phone calls were conducted during mass---an action that was not physically or fiscally possible in previous years.

(5) The ethno-racial makeup was novel, in that most of the PJI were “white and Anglo”---but with generally strong skills in reading, speaking, and understanding Spanish---yet they were leading predominantly Latino lay activists and Latino immigrant parishes. This was a novel situation against a history of movement activism, and activism research, often dominated by the boundary-making of ethnic

groups and identity politics.¹³ This is not to argue that such patterns prevailed throughout the movement for immigrant rights; on the contrary, most Latino-aligned groups were led by Latinos (e.g., PASO, Mujeres Latinas en Acción, PADRES, UFA). Yet within the Catholic Church it was common to see white, bilingual priests leading Latinos and simultaneously being praised by parishioners as acting “like one of us” or “part of the community” despite their ethnic differences. In contrast, if a Latino of one nationality were to lead a congregation of a different nationality, the ethnic mixing would often be regarded with distrust, at least initially. (It is important to keep in mind, as well, that only about 5 percent of Chicago’s priests are Latino/Hispanic, so a majority of immigrant parishes must be led by whites; see the following chapter on the Priests for Justice for Immigrants for further discussion of the priest shortage and related matters.) At one predominantly Mexican parish in August 2015, after a “white and Anglo” PJI priest departed the community a Puerto Rican priest was named as the new pastor; his first mass (and the greeting session in the basement afterward) produced mixed reactions, with some parishioners indicating appreciatively that they welcomed him outright, whereas others whispered among themselves that “Maria didn’t like him” or “I’m not sure...” because of class and ethnic differences: “How could a Puerto Rican possibly understand what Mexicans experience?” And “After all, Puerto Ricans are isolated from us like...like Cubans, they are totally different from Mexicans...in class...and the way they arrived here, with more money...with education.” Although they spoke of class, ethnicity, and cultural differences, many were more concerned with wondering whether the new pastor would become a PJI leader or merely a nominal PJI member. They wanted to know---and one dared to ask him directly, during mass, with a microphone (and against the advice of her friends)---whether he planned to support undocumented immigrants “who...we are the majority here, in the parish, in our home of St. Pius...some 80 percent of us”---i.e., to support the primarily Mexican immigrants in a vocal manner and advocate for social justice

¹³ In contrast, during the Civil Rights Movement the Black churches were led by Black ministers (with some significant and well-publicized support from leaders of other ethno-racial categories); the activist PADRES of the 1960s and 1970s were mostly of Mexican origin (and any who were not tended to be ignored or downplayed in some reports). The Sanctuary Movement anticipated but did not supply the same kind of ethnic mix (in terms of whites at the head of large groups of Latinos) although many of the Sanctuary activists were whites who were seen as assisting Latinos.

as their previous pastor had. The pastor then stepped over to the podium, showing---according to my vantage point in the front row---some slightly concealed hints of displeasure in his blush and in the way he appeared to concentrate (the occasional squint, pursed lips, and reserved gestures) as he gave some additional autobiographical remarks to the congregation, underscoring his longstanding ties to the neighborhood (“despite being born in Puerto Rico”) and his account of having marched previously in support of immigrant rights.¹⁴

(6) The level of inclusivity advocated by the PJI in their parishes and in movement actions was seen as novel because it was unprecedented for many Catholic immigrants, and for many other Catholics as well; although ecumenical interest groups and movements were not new in themselves, they were new to many of these participants. On various occasions I overheard parishioners, including social-justice activists, questioning the validity of these ecumenical gestures when they felt divided by religion or language, or by what they perceived as different work ethics, appearances, clothing styles, or child-rearing norms. Atheists and agnostics were also welcomed by the PJI from the pulpit, in the parish bulletin, and in workshops---provided they “wished to do good in the world.” Some of the social-justice activists I observed commented that they were unsure of this particular level of inclusivity, whereas others endorsed these notions wholeheartedly.

The level of creativity exhibited by progressive Catholics’ “novel forms” did not always rise to the media-manipulating bar set by participants in political theatre and in digital/online activism.¹⁵ And sometimes they lacked youthful enthusiasm and creativity. Among the Catholic youth at PJI parishes, for instance, few appeared to spend large amounts of time with adults in social action groups. Some joined other youth

¹⁴ Field notes of August 2, 2015, with quotations translated from the original Spanish.

¹⁵ See Haugerud’s (2013) ethnographic analysis of the “No Billionaire Left Behind” activists, as well as studies of digital protestors and hackers (e.g., Wolfson 2014; Coleman 2014; and Coleman and Golub 2008). Also useful is van Nieuwkerk’s (2013) analysis of Egyptians’ “sources of inspiration on art and religion” (2013: 10) within the Islamic Revival, notably among performers not usually associated with activism; yet their actions are not novel in some ways, I would argue, because for many of the performers, celebrity and talent were key rather than creating new songs or other additions to the movement.

activists (DREAMers)¹⁶ to block government buildings while donning graduation robes. But the Illinois Youth Justice League (IYJL) was a largely secular organization, and many of its Catholic members appeared to feel like they were only marginally linked to parish activism. While these and other examples of novel forms of protest might outshine the PJI on numerous occasions, however, some PJI actions could stand up to them in terms of creativity and attention-generation, including PJI participation in the “handcuffed in the Capitol” action and their use of actual frames for “framing” the immigration debate at Old Saint Pat’s Church.

When the novel forms of protest (or novel types of activism) in this chapter occurred, they were set against the context of the larger movement as well as previous social movements, with which only some PJI members (and few of the activist laity) had direct experience decades ago. Thus many of their movement symbols and actions were regarded, by the majority of participants if not by historians, to be novel and remarkably creative in form. These movement activists were also engaged against oppositional forces represented by nativists at large, and, closer to home, by the largely conservative membership of the U.S. Catholic Church. The data suggest that Catholic activists took from these creative, novel forms of protest a desire to engage in further innovations in their discourses and acts; these self-reinforcing cycles of creative protest further informed and inspired the religious actions and reflections of activists.

The next section in this chapter provides an examination of civil disobedience and vigils at the Chicago-area’s Broadview immigrant detention facility, including analyses of the discourses dividing and uniting various parish and coalition leaders. Subsequent sections of the chapter analyze ethnographic data concerning reactions to anti-immigrant legislation, including priests handcuffing themselves together on Capitol Hill and lay activists joining a phone-call campaign aimed at the White House. As the nation’s

¹⁶ See Anguiano and (2011) for an introduction to the DREAMER youth activists’ formational discourses; and yet, Anguiano and Chávez’s article does not examine the kinds of creativity and vitality (in novel forms of protest) that I observed among these youth, including my first experience speaking with a beaming, graduation-robed Latina DREAMer during an immigrant-rights event on the Mall in Washington, DC, in 2009.

border-security regime was further reinforced and reforms of immigration laws were blocked in the U.S. Congress, local Catholic leaders adopted additionally creative forms of protest, as well as networks of ministers (lay volunteers and parish staff) dedicated to providing spiritual and material aid to undocumented immigrants and their families. In-depth interviews, field observations, and related ethnographic data surrounding these events are analyzed as Catholic activists engage in such novel and creative dimensions of protest, which often place them in conflict with more conservative elements within the Church. Added to these lines of inquiry are investigations of progressive Catholic discourses associated with recent immigration to Chicago, including the Sanctuary Movement, and broader discourses on social justice and liberation theology.

Theological and political perspectives, as well as concerns over popular piety, are raised by another guiding question in this chapter: What types of discourses arise that are both progressive and Catholic? As I will argue in the following pages, the discourses being authored by such nexuses of faith and action are strongly informed by liberation theology,¹⁷ aspects of which provide insight into the authenticity of these forms of progressive Catholicism. In its Latin American context liberation theology articulated a radical set of principles: (a) theology must be culturally contextualized rather than being regarded “eternally true doctrine,” (b) the root causes of suffering can be explained in part through Marxist critiques---not as dogma, but as a set of analytical tools, (c) sin can be structural as well as personal and must therefore be alleviated through “the preferential option for the poor,” which extends far beyond charity to social action, and (d) the true mission of Christians is not to prepare for “the kingdom of God” in the afterlife

¹⁷ The liberation theology of progressive Catholics is reformist rather than revolutionary in either intention or expression, as is further discussed in the introduction (wherein PJI members reflect on the meaning of terms like progressive, radical, and liberation theology) and in the following chapter, which focuses on the PJI organization. I would argue, moreover, that historical accounts in the U.S. context indicate few priest-liberationists have exhibited a profoundly revolutionary record, at least over the long term. The historian Roberto R. Treviño observes that in the former chicano activist centers of Texas, “The fire of liberation theology still fuels the efforts of many Latino Catholic activists working in behalf of the most vulnerable of barrio residents,” yet the examples of liberationist-fueled social justice he lists are public-service charities and community improvement efforts: “...to gain better city services, establish antidrug campaigns, and otherwise improve their low-income neighborhoods” including “helping poor immigrants” in longstanding traditions of “feisty activism” (Treviño 2006: 214-215).

but to help create that kingdom on Earth via a more socially just society (Nepstad 2004: 58-60). As the current project analyzes liberation theology within a specifically U.S. context, important distinctions emerge between the PJI version of liberation theology and those of Latin America (predominantly of late 20th-century Latin America), with the chief distinction being violence: Priests like the PJI favored non-violent means and the building of peaceful solutions, not revolutionary armed struggle. Moreover, unlike some of the proponents of liberation theology in its Latin American matrix who distrusted “personal and communal expressions of...popular religiosity,” these priests valued popular piety as intimately linked to liberation (Wilson 2008: 67, 186); they welcomed formal and popular devotions and, in essence, felt deeply suited to religiosity and political action simultaneously. The political scientist Catherine Wilson, who conducted a series of interviews at St. Pius V, concluded that the distinction between revolution and reform was that

new liberationists do not desire revolutionary or “sweeping changes” of the political and economic orders, as in the case of Latin America. Viewing democracy as a “sham” in Latin America, many Latin American liberation theologians advocated “revolutionary socialism” as a path to participatory democratic politics. [The pastors] Rivera, Cortés, and Dahm hold no such attitude toward U.S. political structures. Lastly, the new liberationists tend, on the whole, to be less critical of capitalism than their Latin American counterparts, many of whom likened it to a “monolithic totality.” (Wilson 2008: 67, also citing Petrella [2000: 56, 59])

Although progressive Catholics within the United States have been inspired by the premises of liberation theology, they have recently tended to avoid terms like radical, and they have long distanced themselves from the calls for violent social upheaval that have been observed in numerous Latin American contexts. With the aforementioned principles as theological and ideological support, the Catholic leaders authoring discourses on immigrant rights were able to construct a movement framework on its own foundations, rather than continually and defensively reacting to the frameworks of conservative Catholics.

While this chapter thus examines liberation theology, social justice, and concerns over popular piety, it begins an exploration of the notion of authenticity (a topic that is further examined in the next chapter as well). I argue that progressive Catholics’ claims to authenticity are strongly linked to their social-justice

and immigrant rights discourses, given that progressive Catholics must react to and maneuver within a prevailing U.S. media landscape (in Church and secular media) shaped in some measure by conservative Catholics. The latter have staked claims to the prevailing discourse of traditional or “true Catholicism” in U.S. media, and in large parts of the Catholic Church itself. As progressive Catholics have called for activism on behalf of immigrants specifically and, more generally, on behalf of the poor and socially marginalized, they have undergone processes of self-definition and boundary formation expressed also as social movement frameworks. They have also engaged in discourses heavily influenced by liberation theology (in its reformist, not revolutionary, aspects), embracing both spiritual contemplation and social action on behalf of the oppressed. While progressives and conservatives within the U.S. Church have made competing claims to an authentic Catholicism, concerns over social justice (liberation theology as envisioned through a progressive lens) and immigration reform have become articulated with religious practices and theologies on the left, allowing the discursive claims of progressive Catholics to compete effectively with those on the right.

2.1 Civil Disobedience: A Broadview Vignette

“I never wanted to arrest a priest,” the police chief mused to a reporter¹⁸ beside an armored paddy wagon. Its stainless steel innards were stuffed with handcuffed protestors on metal benches. The chief and his deputies had just removed the last priest, an elderly but energetic pastor, from the street in front of the Broadview detention center. I had followed him back to the armored van from the center of the street and watched from a few feet away as an officer cranked the handcuffs onto his wrists. The father was experienced at this sort of thing; he had been arrested before and under less controlled circumstances. But his face at the moment seemed pale, his figure frail and small in the gloom of the armored van, and as the inner cage-door shrieked and clanged shut I remembered that only weeks beforehand he had survived a heart attack.

¹⁸ The chief was being interviewed by Antonio Olivo of the Chicago Tribune. http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2010-04-27/news/ct-met-illinois-immigration-anger2-20100427_1_illegal-immigrants-immigration-reform-immigration-debate (accessed May 1, 2010).

The target of the April 27, 2010 civil disobedience was a nondescript cul-de-sac in Broadview (a near western suburb of Chicago), near the entrance ramp for I-290 and the interstate system leading either north to O'Hare Airport where detainees were flown to the border, or east to Chicago's Loop and the ICE regional headquarters. On one side of the dead end was a low building with a brick facade and peeling paint, stunted bushes, a narrow lawn and sidewalk, and a few trees. To its left (viewer's right) was a standard office-park building (tinted windows, blacktop parking lot, Chem-Lawn signs sticking from the grass). Across the street was a taste of Chicago cement manufacturing with an expansive gray parking lot and semi-trailer trucks, entering and exiting every hour while generating a din of diesel engines, metal scraping and heavy loads dumping into large, rusty containers.

Every Friday morning, faith-based activists gathered on the sidewalk to pray and sing in what was called a vigil (and which indeed revolved around religious themes, in part), but which in practice was also a protest before the departure of a large prison bus as well as one to three plain-wrapped white or black vans. After the vigil, most of the activists went off to work while a few volunteers would stay another hour or two, waiting for the guards to allow them a moment to pray with the deportees before their removal.

In the preliminary stages of this ethnographic analysis, field observations and other data seemed to suggest that these Broadview vigils were weekly political protests veiled as religious events. But on further examination of data collected via participant observation (including time with detainees and ministers on prison buses, interactions with guards, and conversations in cramped cars outside) other patterns began to emerge in the analysis. These vigils were a far cry from quiet candle-holding ceremonies, it was true, but their vibrant and sometimes confrontational formats were deeply infused with religious texts, hymns, songs from the Civil Rights Movement, and rosary cycles, as well as testimonies of family members of detainees (being similar in style to the "witnessing" of suffering and conversion

heard in many evangelical churches). The vigils were ecumenical events with Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim leaders also in attendance, though they were led by two determined Sisters of Mercy. Analyses of notes and recordings at these vigils demonstrated, in my judgment, that the religious sentiments at Broadview were genuine and deeply held---all the more because of the desperation and suffering witnessed there---and that the discourses and actions of protest were largely products of that religious sentiment, combined with a desire to resist perceived injustices. These vigils were an example of the nexus between faith and action led by progressive, inclusive Catholics inspired by liberation theology.¹⁹

The April 26-27 overnight action would be a departure from the weekly norm. I argue, however, that by examining both the weekly vigils and the larger events at Broadview, the complex of religiously linked actions at the facility can be analyzed and interpreted as creative and novel forms of protest generated by local Catholic leaders in the movement. The Catholics that instigated and led these forms of protest, furthermore, were engaging simultaneously in theological discourses; they were developing ways of acting and speaking of social justice and liberation theology (in its reformist aspects) within the movement as well as in the larger Catholic Church. In the complex of actions around Broadview, ranging from songs to arguments on parish buses, group prayers, and civil disobedience itself, they underwent social and personal transformations on behalf of the movement, all of which demonstrated connections between novel forms of protest and claims to an authentic Catholicism tied with progressive ideology.

Months before the April 26-27 vigil and protest at Broadview, organizers from the ICIRR, the PJI, Brothers and Sisters for Justice for Immigrants, and other groups²⁰ planned the event in church basements,

¹⁹ The introductory chapter includes PJI members' reflections on liberation theology as a reformist project and as a pathway, as they regard it, toward deeper understandings of the Bible. The following chapter (on the history and development of the PJI) provides further discussion of liberationism as theology and practice in Chicago.

²⁰ Supporting organizations were the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, West Suburban Action Project (PASO), Familia Latina Unida, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Latino Organization of the Southwest, Immigrant Youth Justice League (IYJL), Centro Sin Fronteras, Eighth Day Center for Justice, Santo Toribio Romo Immigrant Center, and Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP).

offices, hallways, and via cell phones and email. When only a few weeks remained, ICIRR and faith leaders requested volunteers willing to be arrested at Broadview provided they were not placing themselves at unnecessary risk: only citizens were allowed, to avoid additional deportations, and only if they agreed to undergo screening and training in non-violence beforehand. Most of this preparation was arranged through word-of-mouth, as in the following example wherein I was nearly recruited for nonviolent resistance.²¹

2.2 In the Grip of an Organizer

I had just parked on the edge of Chicago's "Teamster City" complex and was walking toward a meeting hall where an immigrant-rights event was scheduled, when I crossed paths with a PJI priest I did not know well, though I had seen him at various Broadview vigils. The beaming, energetic prelate was joking with some construction workers, but he boomed out a greeting when I appeared. Urging me to match his pace, he arrested my upper arm in a steely grip and asked:

Are you going to Broadview? Will you be there with us?...It's going to be civil disobedience, too. We're looking for people with U.S. citizenship who can stand in the street and get arrested...block the buses, so they'll miss the plane.

His grip did not slacken as we walked, and though he did not twist my arm he might have been physically capable of it. Some priests built their charisma on a warm, nurturing demeanor; others, while also capable of such a soft approach, were more at home with the muscle and voice of Chicago's service workers, union reps, cops and veterans; many of Chicago's priests and religious seemed to be just so rough around the edges. As the event drew nearer I saw these parish leaders training in non-violence alongside their recruits, in parish basements and in meeting rooms.

²¹ A Facebook notice by the Immigrant Youth Justice League (IYJL) called the vigil a chance to show "solidarity with immigrants in Arizona as a response to the passage of SB 1070, one of the harshest anti-immigrant bills in history." However, social media did not play a major role in this event, nor in others I witnessed in Chicago; it was a tool but never a replacement for calls and face-to-face communication. Nearly every attendee at Broadview learned of the event in church or otherwise by word of mouth.

On the afternoon of April 26 each parish and community group made their final preparations for the Broadview event. At St. Pius V, leaders of the “Social Action” group brought bread, hot chocolate, candles, and fruit---all of which were destined for sharing (the hot chocolate in a large Igloo container being especially appreciated). We carried the supplies to the corner by the rectory door, counted the people who had come, and then filled the 30-seat bus across the street. Father Curran stepped on to announce that he could not join us yet but would be driving out tomorrow morning. He added words of encouragement, but when he asked who would be staying at Broadview all night only one person raised a hand. Most of the activist parishioners had families and work responsibilities, and were not usually disposed toward urban camping. Father Dahm would also drive separately to Broadview.

When analyzing these ethnographic data, one possible interpretation of such parish preparations, considering as well the lackluster response to the overnight camping query, might be to determine that activist Catholic laity did not dedicate as much energy and attention to the Broadview protest as other leaders (Catholic and non-Catholic) in the movement---and that these efforts did not, thus, serve as an example of entrepreneurial (risk-taking, creative) protest on their parts. Yet an alternative interpretation is also suggested by the data: These parish and community members, already heavily burdened by work and family responsibilities, have made additional sacrifices of time, money, and talent in order to promote a unique form of protest at Broadview; they have done so, moreover, not owing merely to political inclination or even to personal interest (though some of their friends do face an undocumented future) but, in large part, owing to their collective sense of identity as Catholics deeply involved, by virtue of their faith, in such calls for justice in the political sphere. Furthermore, the participation of lay parish leaders in this instance can be understood to have been planned for a supporting capacity only, as the nonviolent action was designed to garner maximum media attention but under fairly controlled circumstances; thus, the arrests of religious leaders in the daylight would achieve those goals far more clearly than would the addition of a few lay resisters in the street, let alone a few more overnight campers.

2.3 A Bus Runs Through It: Currents of Activism

On the way to Broadview, our bus wended westward through rush-hour traffic on Roosevelt Road and side streets, in an attempt to avoid the hopelessly snarled interstate. When we were forced to make a short but time-consuming detour at one point, a few passengers joked about our previous adventure getting lost in the Pentagon's parking lot (literally so) during a "bus caravan" to join a protest on the Mall in Washington, D.C.

The bus riders were excited to be joining an action at a site as notorious as Broadview. They were talking about the recent Arizona law SB 1070,²² the possibility of such laws in other states, the faltering pace of reform, and frustrations with activists who didn't seem dedicated enough: "If we unite, we'll be far stronger," one friend said. This was a discussion and sometimes a contentious debate---not a pre-event pep talk.

As an example of Chicago's centrality in the movement, one rider argued, "Chicago was [made] a sanctuary city, and that's why there are not raids in the streets and in churches now," whereupon others spoke of traffic stops still being a threat to the community. There was grave concern for the residents of Arizona and fear "the Arizona law has spread...because this could also happen in Wisconsin, California, Texas, and Waukegan [a northern suburb] where there are many Latinos."

An elderly man who had gone with us to Washington, D.C., expressed a deep-seated frustration, noting that "we speak of these things" only "when we are in each other's company, but then later we forget them." His voice carried throughout the bus despite his small frame, whereupon one of the parish's social-

²² The state of Arizona's attempt to trump the federal government's policies on immigration took the form of Senate Bill 1070 (SB 1070), which criminalized job-seeking in Arizona while undocumented, allowed police officers to arrest anyone they believed with "probable cause" (not an arrest warrant) might be justifiably deported, and forced immigrants to carry valid identification papers (a provision activists called "show me your papers" in reference to Nazi Germany). Most of the law was later struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court; the provision regarding police arrests remained in effect, however, as the court believed the argument that neither race nor national origin would be considered grounds for arrest.

action leaders broke the tension saying, “We’ll have power if we all unite....If all of us who were in the marches would dedicate ourselves to sending emails, making calls...” But this suggestion did not go far enough for one of the men known for carrying a large “Christ of the Immigrants” crucifix.

Propping up the ornately crafted wooden cross against the seat, he spoke in an animated tone, implying he might have been chastising someone directly: “We who can vote, have to get rid of those who don’t help us. They say...it’s our fault...Look at [a politician who lost an election]” whom few of us “lifted a finger to help.” But some other riders shook their heads in disapproval, and one murmured that [the radical politician] had simply not been a realistic choice. Seeking to redirect the conversation, another added that in elections, “entire families have to be involved” because “we have to show our children how it’s done.... The place where [civic] education begins is at home.”

The fiery Christ-bearer then challenged, “Who is going to Arizona?!” and suggested “a whole bunch of us should get ready” to “actively protest this [SB 1070] law” on Arizona soil. The frail, elderly man agreed that there was too much reluctance to act boldly, saying, “People here are thinking like they do in Mexico” with no hope for change, and that Mexico’s PRI have “the same type of [undemocratic] control on things as Mayor Daley.” This met with mixed reactions, since Daley’s uncommonly long rule had made him both hero and villain throughout the city. Some of the riders reserved their opinions, however, in the hopes of supporting a plan that might yet occur to them.

A consensus did not emerge, but within seconds a chipper voice broke the ice: “You know what I like about St. Pius?” the elderly woman interjected: “That there is communication, unlike in other parishes where they remain silent.” Many smiled, some laughed, but all nodded at the assessment. Choosing this as an opportune moment for a change in tone, Mariela, one of the “Social Action” leaders, handed out hojas cancioneras (song sheets), and we began to sing together---at various and sometimes competing levels of musical competency.

In an ethnographic analysis one might be tempted to conclude from this interchange that groups of Catholic activists were segmented, or perhaps even hopelessly fractured, along further ideological lines even within progressive parishes, and that such segmentation would put them at a disadvantage in their theological discourses and in their hierarchical dealings with conservative Catholics. One might further suspect, by rational extension, that these segmentations threatened the strength of the larger coalition for immigrant rights. While such an interpretation would appear valid and defensible, I offer a different analysis based on the above observations. Given that one of the cornerstones of progressive ideology, as I have observed in these parishes since 2005, is the encouraging of more open and challenging discourse with the goals of developing the self-esteem and leadership abilities of individuals and the development and progress of the larger community, the open and contentious debate on the parish bus could be interpreted as a community-building exercise, not a sign of future distress or fracturing. Thus the elderly woman's remark about appreciating "communication, unlike in other parishes," can be seen as a key toward understanding and valuing the debate rather than a saccharine escape from and closure of it. The singing afterward further assisted in uniting the group, but in my estimation (especially among Catholics, where singing is not normally a forte), the temporarily discordant debate coupled with the larger goal of the bus ride---joining in a well-planned and unique opportunity to join a protest as members of their faith community---could serve the larger movement frame while simultaneously strengthening the bonds between these Catholic activists. I argue that even the discordant opinions expressed on that bus were a sign of parish unity and movement strength, whether or not they were acknowledged as such by the bus riders themselves. Furthermore, such parish-building actions and discourses provided further understanding of the meaning of progressive Catholicism for these religiously inspired parish leaders, in that such novel forms of protest have yielded for them a sense of reinforced claims to theological authenticity---both within and outside of the Catholic Church itself.

2.4 Speaking, Fear, and Faith

The evening rally was paced with a mix of speakers, group songs, chants, and entertainment from a group of folk singers---though they did not sing anything in Spanish. If parish musical groups or mariachis had been invited to the stage they might have been more successful at motivating the crowd. Various speakers took turns at center stage with the microphone and chanted “Illinois will not be Arizona!” Religious sisters led in singing “All Are Welcome,” which has often been heard on the sidewalk in front of Broadview on Friday mornings. A labor-rights leader then gave a short speech and led the crowd in chants of “Reform, not Racism!” and “Shame on Arizona!”

A representative of the Teamsters argued that “There should be one set of rules for all workers” and, after a chant (“Shame on you, Arizona!”) reminded us, “Arizona did not want to accept Martin Luther King’s birthday as a holiday [some years ago], and now this crap from them!” The next speaker led a chant demanding the ear of the president (“¡Obama, escucha, estamos en la lucha!”). Another said, “[B]ecause of a promise [for immigration reform]...we elected [Obama],” yet he has not served us well enough. But “we know SI SE PUEDE, we know we can fight.”

A youth elicited signs of concern when he vowed, “We will stop deportations by any means necessary!” This was the kind of hint at danger---whether born of mere youthful exuberance or radical frustration---that many parish activists had seen in socialist groups, anti-war groups, and secular groups led by youth. This was a major reason for Catholic parishes’ and parish activists’ reticence to join in with marches and rallies that were perceived to be led by certain secular leaders---groups or individuals who, it was feared, might not mind endangering others “in order to accelerate” the movement. I had been told on various occasions that parish leaders might be willing to trust these allies individually, but they would not be willing to risk fellow parishioners. There were shows of respect, nonetheless, for the energy and creativity of many youth activists, as was notable later that night when an IYJL member spoke and led a chant of “Undocumented, Unafraid!”

The data considered here figure into the larger ethnographic analysis in terms of placing progressive Catholics in contact with a broad range of activists, ideas, and religious symbolism in the movement for immigrant rights. The night's activities were reminders that these progressive Catholics' discourses had formed in articulation with evangelical activists, as well as other faith traditions and non-religious youth--the latter being generally regarded as the more radical wing of the coalition. Yet in welcoming these interactions the Catholic leaders present at Broadview were also furthering their own theological understanding of "welcoming the stranger"---and learning a deeper appreciation for one's own faith, action, and thinking through that process of authentic and respectful welcoming.²³ In addition to a call to action and a prayer by Father Dahm that night, for example, additional speeches were given by a rabbi, by the Protestant minister Freddie Santiago, and others. The evangelical leader Emma Lozano (of United Families and Centro Sin Fronteras) led children in singing a creative form of the Woody Guthrie tune: "This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land...From Arizona, To Chicago!...."

Late at night when trying to make camping arrangements I was offered a seat in one organizer's car, but I was saved the discomfort by Father Dahm and Father Curran. They granted me a space at the parish---"It's Spartan...but with an actual bed, not just a couch"---provided I be ready to return with them at 4 am. The small dorm-style room had served many a weary traveler.

At 3 am Father Dahm knocked at my door, being accustomed to waking during the predawn. I joined the fathers downstairs where they were preparing coffee and burning rolls in a modest kitchen. Dozens of books of history, political science, and theology graced the wall shelves, and stacks of journals and newspapers framed the burnt sweet rolls. Father Curran's cell phone rang. A Protestant minister asked

²³ This mutually reinforcing attitude, if it is perceived as being beneficial to the one who does the welcoming, is akin to what Father Gustavo Gutiérrez, the father of liberation theology, theorized as a benefit accrued from the tenet of "the preferential option for the poor"---not only as an effort to help and empower the poor, but to ensure that those who are not poor learn from and value them as a source of spiritual and humane wisdom.

him to bring an extra “white cleric’s collar” out to Broadview because, as the minister later explained to me, laughing, “I’ve got to get all clergy’d up!”²⁴

On the dark road back to Broadview, Father Curran explained the event was a change in tactics, a nonviolent escalation beyond the street mobilizations, postcard-writing campaigns, and vigils that had characterized most of Chicago’s role in the movement to date. The consensus among organizers was “to change the campaign tactics by pursuing more acts of civil disobedience.” As we parked down the street we could see many of the overnight campers still asleep in tents and cars, but dozens of others were returning. By dawn the cul-de-sac was a hive of activity again.

2.5 Not Resisting Arrest

Organizers from the ICIRR began to arrange two dozen resisters on the grass embankment on the side of the street, hanging large photographs of immigrant families from their necks and reviewing the tenets of nonviolent resistance. As a white van pulled out of the detention center a tall, trenchcoat-draped ICIRR organizer led the group to the center of the street in a double line. They sat down, not linking arms in order to resist arrest; they were not expecting to put up a struggle at all---and they had informed the police chief of their plans in this regard. Despite their intentions, however, they were indeed at risk, and they trusted and prayed that both the police and the other demonstrators would not escalate the danger. The van sat still as the guards called for instructions. About 15 minutes later it was driven in reverse to the detention center again. The crowd applauded as those blocking traffic waived their photographs in the air, and chants of “No deportations today!” and “Illinois is not Arizona!” competed with the industrial din across the street. The press approached the seated protestors, crowding around the clergy in particular with microphones and digital cameras.²⁵

²⁴ A reminder that some new photographs of “Catholic priests” were actually Protestant ministers.

²⁵ Father Dahm’s image in media reports that day seemed to depict him as a kindly, calm, determined elderly priest (he may have been the oldest of those arrested that day). I video-recorded and audio-recorded lengthy statements by Dahm to reporters as he sat in the street awaiting his arrest.

Some minutes later the local police chief and several other officers arrived in their cruisers, but more than half an hour passed before they began to give “three warnings” to the protestors to move or be taken under arrest. When they did start the arrests, they helped one protestor at a time to their feet, reading their rights and escorting them back to the waiting police vehicles. Their methodical pace seemed intended to ensure that the event did not spiral out of control or become a public relations disaster.

As is discussed in greater detail in the chapter on the Priests for Justice for Immigrants (PJI), these parish leaders had a preexisting understanding of the symbolic and spiritual significance of such self-sacrificial actions on the part of Catholic priests. They knew that individual parishioners as well as television viewers (and particularly Catholic viewers, perhaps including many conservative Catholics) would experience an emotional reaction on witnessing their arrests, provided the arrests were viewed as peaceful, non-violent resistance. They had also calculated that the arrests would be made more emotional by the photographs of immigrant families that they hung around their necks, thereby almost ensuring that photographs and news clips of the event would link faces of self-sacrificing priests with the sacrifices of immigrants.

My analysis of the ethnographic data gathered that day, moreover, leads me to argue first, that the media attention generated around the priests (and their instantly recognizable white collars) served to strengthen their discursive case for an authentic Catholicism defined through progressive ideals rather than in spite of them (i.e., a progressive Catholicism viewed through their own frameworks rather than in opposition to the frameworks provided by conservative Catholics). Second, I contend that the non-violent street action at Broadview, though initially appearing to copy (or merely echo) the actions of previous movements, and thus not seeming exceptionally novel if we give it only a surface analysis, did in fact reveal deeper layers of nuance and complexity in its varied engagements and discourses, and that this perhaps signaled a new direction for immigrant rights activists. The overnight action was novel for this particular movement, at this moment in Chicago, and it was new and energizing for most of the activists present (even if similar

events had been witnessed by some of their organizers²⁶ in previous decades). Moreover, the combination of its historical associations with previous movements (speeches, civil disobedience, etc.) and its novelty for the Chicago parishioners helped create a rejuvenating shift in direction for the PJI and the larger coalition. I hold that the non-violent, mass arrests centering on priests, and their associated discourses among activists and images in the news media, were simultaneously perceived as novel by most Latino Catholics while also recalling the protests associated with the Civil Rights Movement as well as the Vietnam War---and that the Civil Rights connections would later become more of a priority to the immigrant rights movement as local leaders attempted to build support across ethno-racial and class lines. (The epilogue attached to the final chapter provides elaboration on links between the Civil Rights Movement and immigrant rights.)

The variety of activities included within this overnight action were also regarded by Latino parishioners as unique and new Chicago. The night had included an ecumenical range of speakers, creative twists on hymns and familiar songs, a folk music group (itself unusual to Mexican immigrants, who nevertheless would have preferred mariachis), chants and processions in a circle around the darkened street, arguments on parish buses, myriad conversations on the margins, camping in cars and tents, the sight of TV news vans beginning to stake out parking spots on the street, and clergy whispering of their impending arrests; most importantly, the night featured a long but sustainable build-up of expectation for the next morning. The morning would feature the sharing of food and warming drinks, the arrival of additional TV news crews, and an electric anticipation followed by the drama, worry, and qualified feelings of “victory” when the civil disobedience delayed the prison bus and vans. Taken altogether, this novel mixing of activities and actions, discourses and conversations, became unforgettable; it provided an enduring set of new symbolic associations for organizers and activists, Catholics and their allies.

²⁶ The organizers from ICIRR, SWOP, Familias Unidas, and the Sisters of Mercy were particularly experienced at such actions and played a major role planning and ensuring its success. Some of the PJI volunteering to be arrested were also experienced and some were not; the PJI also helped plan the event with the ICIRR-led coalition, but they were by no means the only force behind it.

The problem with such actions is that even while they reinforce momentum for the movement, and even while they may inspire the spiritual dimensions of progressive Catholics in many parishes, they may also strengthen the backlash. The risk of additional political counter-actions and oppositional discourses are already considered standard for a social movement, but the risk of institutional religious backlash is another factor altogether. When viewed from the perspective of a segment of Catholics seeking respect within the larger institution---seeking to show, in effect, that the authenticity of their progressive Catholic worldview should be acknowledged rather than continually challenged by conservative Catholics as inauthentic in its “politicization of religion”---such broadly televised political events could risk shoring up counterclaims to authenticity within the Catholic Church. Despite the intention of the PJI to win more hearts and minds, then, they might see more sympathy for conservative Church discourses calling for a distancing from “illegal activities,” the concerns of state, the prospects of future elections, and (according to some conservative viewpoints) unpatriotic expressions and sentiments. I cannot offer a prediction or even a suggested course of action that would diminish such a backlash or reduce claims against the Christian authenticity of progressive Catholics, but I contend that this contested ideological terrain within the Church is complex and self-reinforcing, partly as a result of such liberationist actions.

2.6 Rules of the Road

The Tribune later reported that the two dozen protestors had been escorted away “without handcuffs,” yet I accompanied them all the way to the waiting police vehicles where they were, indeed, handcuffed. One priest, on entering the dark van, began to shake uncontrollably with what was perhaps claustrophobia. As he explained to me a few days afterward, he had volunteered for this action without coercion but, having little experience being under arrest he had not anticipated the closely confining, armored prison van. When the police chief saw his involuntary reaction he removed him to a nearby police car instead. The prisoners were charged with misdemeanors for disorderly conduct and assigned a May 24 court date.

Meanwhile, the ICE guards and drivers had barely concealed their impatience. A small convoy of prison vans quickly lined up, waiting for the police cars and TV trucks to leave. Civilians were still standing on the edges of the street, and some were loading chairs or bags into cars, not intent on blocking anyone or protesting further.

Its engine gunning, the first van's tires abruptly slipped, spitting out loose dirt and pebbles, and then all the vans lurched. Accelerating rapidly down the street toward the intersection, they flew past the people on the shoulders, exceeding the Broadview speed limit by an alarming margin. A man closing his car door jumped back in alarm, shouting as his hair blew back and cursing the roaring vans for breaking laws and disregarding safety: "Homeland security?! Carajo!"

2.7 Faithful Action: Verbalizing the Kingdom

In the foregoing vignette, discourses on progressive Catholicism emerged from novel actions which, in turn, were generated through a nexus between religious belief and ideology. When analyzing these discourses it is vital to contextualize their symbolic and verbal expressions within a larger sphere of meaning, rather than limiting analysis to words alone. (This is especially important when contrasting the words of Catholics with evangelical Protestants, as the latter tend to be far more verbose when discussing faith and spiritual motivation.) Thus a note about the spiritual dimensions of political speech in the streets, in Sunday mass, and in other contexts is warranted here, utilizing the work of two prominent sociologists of religion as a starting point. In preparation for their acclaimed 2010 work, American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us, Robert Putnam and David Campbell conducted observations and interviews at St. Pius V and churches in other cities. They clearly approved of the community-building work of St. Pius's Father Charles Dahm and the social justice orientation of the parish. Yet they fell short of seeing Dahm's progressive works as a blend of Christian faith rather than as a step apart from Christianity. Although they acknowledged that for Latino parishioners, faith was "familial and cultural---

something inextricable from their identity” (2010: 216), they implied that Dahm²⁷ might stand aloof from that intersection of life, faith, and action: “When it comes to addressing the pathologies that plague his parishioners, Father Dahm’s faith lies mostly in the power of psychotherapy” (2010: 215), they wrote; and although the authors applauded Dahm’s attempts to “empower them politically,” they used a selective series of quotes to imply inaccurately that he would “use God with people” while not seemingly feeling the connection so strongly himself:

Fr. Dahm rarely refers to his role as a spiritual leader, or to the role prayer and worship play in his parishioners’ development. He calls himself a “social activist,” and sees Mass as an opportunity to educate his parishioners and empower them politically---often inviting guest speakers to address topics such as AIDS, military recruitment of minorities, and immigration laws in place of traditional scriptural homilies. Dahm also says he makes “a special effort to incorporate songs about struggle”.... Doing this creates a sense of peoplehood and collective action, Dahm says: “This is all social stuff---so they’re singing as a people and not singing as individuals.” (Putnam and Campbell 2010: 214-215)

Although the authors also quoted Dahm as saying “I use God with people all the time. I appeal to their faith because faith is a resource for people’s growth---it’s not something to be ignored” (Putnam and Campbell 2010: 214-215), and although they are correct in noting that the priest calls himself a social activist, Putnam and Campbell might have mischaracterized Dahm’s other dimensions. Those who have spent significant time with Dahm in Sunday (or Saturday) mass, at parish retreats, and in parish leadership workshops have noted his spirituality; and yet, unlike many Protestant pastors (with whom Putnam and Campbell had presumably more experience), Dahm did not constantly evoke the names of God and Jesus

²⁷ In a minor distortion, they also called Dahm the pastor of St. Pius V. He was pastor for more than 20 years (and remains, in many ways, at the center of the parish), but a few years prior to Putnam and Campbell’s publication date Dahm stepped down from pastor to associate pastor (a post he lobbied for, in order to remain at St. Pius rather than accept, in his words, “some suburban parish”). His successor, Father Brendan Curran (who was associate pastor under Dahm), was accepted warmly by parishioners as well, having seen proof of his commitment in marches, rallies, homilies, and parish functions. The acceptance of Father Curran did not keep the parish from nearly coming to a standstill when Dahm suffered a heart attack, but he soon recovered.

nor over-emphasize spiritual terminology.²⁸ One of the flyers from Dahm's workshops illustrated the point with a pie chart labeled "Balance of a Person," divided into equally-spaced segments: emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual, physical; moreover, other flyers and workshop discussions rearranged all of these facets of personality beneath the boldfaced, large-font heading: "Spiritual Life." (Experiences in these workshops are discussed more completely in the chapter on Women and Other Leaders.)

In this analysis, I argue that like his PJI colleagues, Dahm saw social activism not as a secular activity but as the bonding of secular and spiritual dimensions---faith and action. The data considered here, which extends far beyond the kinds of quotations and observations that Putnam and Campbell gathered in their comparatively short visit to St. Pius, suggest that the religious beliefs of Dahm and other activist priests are at their core both progressive and Catholic, both social-action oriented and theologically based.

Dahm's activism can be clearly conceptualized in the anthropology of religion, including Nepstad's framing of belief (spiritual transcendence) as motivation to action (2004: 23). Meanwhile, liberation theology was seen as a nexus between belief and action in Lancaster's Nicaragua; in contrast, sin was envisioned as the turning away from the oppressed---the ultimate distancing from God (1988: 76).

Lancaster, without citing Durkheim, also provided a Durkheimian condensation: "Sin divides the community from God precisely by the measure that exploitation stratifies the community internally" (1988: 78). (In Durkheim's view, community creates God in itself, essentially bonding and worshipping itself.) Despair was "internalized sin" expressed as loss of faith in society or one's role in it. Thus, "the project of the poor to liberate themselves is a sacred undertaking" (1988: 79). Prior to returning to questions of belief and action, we turn now to an overview of Mexican immigration, the Chicago archdiocese, and U.S. immigration policies in recent decades.

²⁸ In this manner he is similar to other nuns, monks, and priests I have known, regardless of their political or theological views. Catholics do not always speak of religion and spirituality in such insistent, public ways, and many are uncomfortable with Charismatic Catholics and Protestants who do just that. This is not a lack of Catholic faith or spirituality but a different expression of faith and spirituality.

2.8 Recent Trends: Mexicans and Catholics in Chicago

Although the names and faces are not the same as those of decades past, many aspects of this story are not unique to the context of Chicago or the U.S. Catholic Church. Immigration and activism have intertwined to define the region's history since the late 1800s, when Eastern European laborers found themselves at the center of strikes, rallies, and the Haymarket Massacre. In the early 20th century immigrants inspired Upton Sinclair's The Jungle, set in the Back of the Yards neighborhood on Chicago's south side.

Subsequent decades saw the urban jungle shaped by tensions between older waves of immigrants (notably Irish, Italian, Polish, and other Catholic groups) and new arrivals from the U.S. South, Puerto Rico, and Mexico, as well as the rest of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe. Immigrant entrepôt neighborhoods saw resistance and transition. The land on which the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) sits, for instance, was once dominated by tenement housing and open-air markets. Hints of the old neighborhood survive only in the Hull House museum and in a Catholic church (St. Francis of Assisi) at the corner of Roosevelt and Halsted; many of the old families survive in neighborhoods like Pilsen, Little Village, Albany Park, and in suburbs where immigrant succession continues. In these sites community organizing is aided by traditions of unionized labor and parish activism.

In the 1960s and 1970s the Catholic Church in Chicago remained slow to support the Mexican population beyond a couple of parishes (Our Lady of Guadalupe, founded by Mexicans in 1923, and St. Francis of Assisi, founded by Germans in 1853), largely owing to resistance from white parishioners as old waves of immigrants moved out while new, post-1965 waves moved in. This was a tense era at St. Pius V parish. Father David Staszak recalled (in a 1998 interview) Pilsen changing in the 1960s from largely Polish to Mexican, and that "prejudice and stereotypes were part of the problem"; after holding masses in the basement for eight years, the growing Mexican population moved upstairs as the Poles shifted to nearby parishes (Cruz 2007: 42).

Chicago's Archbishop John Cody (1965-1982) did little to further social justice for Latino immigrants, preferring instead to reinforce "authoritarian structures within the church" (Dahm 2004: xii).²⁹ Cody nevertheless allowed funds to be allocated to Catholic workers in the inner city and also sent support to the grape strikers in California. Yet he was so wary of radicalism that he unilaterally replaced "activist priests involved in racial and urban affairs" and "sparked ongoing internal disputes" with his overly controlling style of leadership.³⁰ A group of clerics challenged his policies by forming the Association of Chicago Priests (Badillo 2006: 90-91). As a component of this chapter's broader ethnographic analysis, the evidence that such discord has characterized so much of Chicago's Church history lends a more nuanced understanding to recent tensions between progressive priests such as the PJI and the former archbishop, Cardinal George. This historical and institutional context helps demonstrate that the frustration and impatience directed by Catholic activists at the archbishop were, in part at least, an expression of local-versus-regional or parochial-versus-hierarchical conflicts, arising from the exercise of power within a larger conservative institution, rather than arising chiefly from personal grievances or animosities. (In regards to the latter point it is also valuable to recall that some of the PJI leaders considered Cardinal George a dear friend, despite their differences.)

²⁹ In my analysis of Dahm's written account, informed as well by years of participant observation (2005 initially, and then 2006-2011) at his parish, I found that Dahm's interpretations were valid in regards to Latino parishioners' marginalization (i.e., the Church hierarchy supported many exclusive approaches to Church governance, as well as ethnically segregated worship). Dahm's choice of the word authoritarian might sound harsh by some standards, but it is valid within his movement framework. Although some observers might categorize Archbishop Cody's style as emphasizing traditional top-down, hierarchical, or less democratic forms of leadership, however, Dahm used the potentially provocative term authoritarian.

³⁰ Dahm's liberationist principles are exhibited here. Although he perceived that Cody was exclusivist and effectively anti-democratic, and that Cody was unjustified in removing radical priests who were attempting to promote social justice in their parishes, Dahm did not seem to be advocating the revolutionary replacement of Church leadership in Chicago. Like most other priests, Dahm favored non-violent activism, anti-militarism, and peaceful resistance elsewhere. Dahm may have embraced the term radical at times, but he was a reformer with a long-term view of political processes intertwined with personal development. Dahm advocated empowering parishioners to participate in the larger democratic system by becoming leaders themselves (not usually politicians, but leaders of all sorts), bending government to their needs and the needs of the less fortunate. Dahm supported impetuses in the U.S. government to provide stronger social safety nets, to end proxy wars in Central America and Southeast Asia, and to reduce nuclear proliferation; meanwhile, he sympathized with oppressed populations globally but discouraged armed struggle.

Subsequent archbishops were inclined to make more progress, partly because during the period 1990-2000 the number of Latinos in the Archdiocese of Chicago “jumped 60 percent, from 732,764 to 1.2 million, making Hispanics more than half the Catholics in the archdiocese” (Dahm 2004: 13), and suburban Catholic parishes in Elgin and Aurora (which pertain to the Rockford Archdiocese) added more to the metropolitan area’s total. In New York City, meanwhile, the Catholic Church was also criticized as slow to react to Mexican immigrants’ needs; this continued even in the 1990s and 2000s, as Mexican sensibilities were inadequately addressed by Puerto Rican and other Spanish-speaking priests (Smith 2006: 37-38).

Some inclusive efforts in the Church bore fruit in “a cohort of Latino priests, seminarians, and religious sisters...to minister to the needs of Latino believers” although overall numbers remained limited (Stevens-Arroyo 2004: 313). Yet this co-ethnicity of priests might not have been as much a mark of progress as Stevens-Arroyo implied. Only a small proportion of priests and religious in the Chicago area were Latino by 2015, despite years of attempts to address the shortfall. Moreover, a shared ethnic identity³¹ or ethno-racial resemblance to one’s parishioners was not enough to guarantee shared senses of social justice. My analysis of observations at dozens of Chicago parishes leads me to argue that, in general, priests from Spanish-speaking countries have made fewer efforts to engage and welcome their undocumented congregants than in the parishes of these activist non-Latino priests. Rather than a mere tally of Latino co-ethnics, then, a more nuanced examination of Catholic institutional responses is in order. In the Chicago area, this would mean focusing on the efforts of non-Latino priests to make their parishes responsive to Latino congregations. Further support for this approach comes from a statistical analysis of a national 2006 Pew Hispanic Center survey: Beyerlein et al (2007) strongly correlated lay activism to having (1) a Latino constituency and (2) a priest willing to speak to the issues during mass.

³¹ It would be misleading to group Latin American priests together; they exhibited distinctive ethnic and national backgrounds, with class differences entailing additional segmentation. Many Latin American priests in Chicago hailed from privileged or middle classes, culturally and politically distant from the working poor.

2.9 The Sanctuary Movement

The Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s was partly an expression of liberation theology. In the context of the Cold War the U.S. government supported regimes notorious for anti-democratic abuses (Klaiber 1998), and the proxy wars in Central America resulted in floods of war refugees. These were mostly in the form of undocumented migrants (Garcia 2005: 159-160), especially among the Maya of Guatemala and other indigenous peoples (Wellmeier 1998: 103).

The framings of these conflicts determined the list of Cold War enemies of the U.S. (such as Nicaragua, which received Cuban support) and the list of allies, and thus deemed the latter officially invisible to charges of state terror and human-rights abuses. Since most Central American governments were led by reactionaries and listed as allies, the U.S. denied the vast majority of refugee applications on grounds they were merely economic immigrants (the unwanted poor) and not political refugees (Nawyn 2007: 142; Garcia 2005: 160-164). Nicaraguans had much better chances of being granted asylum (Garcia 2005: 162) because President Reagan saw them as victims of a Soviet-aligned enemy government (Klaiber 1998: 18-19, 193, 264-265). Many felt they had to escape to the north with or without such assistance. The result was a surge of undocumented Central Americans.

The number of Salvadoran-born people counted by the U.S. Census soared from 94,000 in 1980 to 701,000 in 1990---an eightfold increase; at the same time, the numbers of Guatemalans jumped from 71,642 to 226,000 and Nicaraguans from 25,000 to 125,000 (Gonzalez 2000: 129)---and given the difficulties of Census counts of the undocumented (who distrust government agents) these are likely undercounts. In response to the ongoing refugee crisis and aghast at their government's actions, U.S. Quakers, Baptists, members of the United Methodist Church of Christ, and other Protestants made common cause with many Catholic clergy and laity, particularly those who had been moved to action at the assassination of El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero in 1980.

They organized support for civic groups such as the Border Association for Refugees from Central America (BARCA) and eventually created a new kind of underground railroad called the Sanctuary Movement (Nawyn 2007: 142-143; Garcia 2005: 159-173), which arranged for safe havens for thousands of undocumented refugees. In the case of Maya refugees, human rights lawyers and volunteers “worked feverishly during 1982 through 1989 to prepare and file political asylum applications” on grounds they “were subject to repression and persecution in their own land because of their race, religion, or perceived political involvement” (Wellmeier 1998: 103).

The Chicago Religious Task Force (CRTF) took on a leading role in 1982 and eventually formed the National Sanctuary Alliance (Garcia 2005: 165). The Chicago arm of the movement became more defiant in their stance against the Reagan administration, a stance that was sometimes at odds with another node of the movement in Tucson. Whereas a group of Sanctuary activists who had been arrested and placed on trial in Arizona held that the Reagan administration was guilty of flouting laws---and that the Sanctuary defendants were defending “good laws” through de facto civil disobedience---Chicago activists argued that Sanctuary was “civil disobedience directed against unjust laws” (Crittenden 1988: 234). These differences did not paralyze the movement, however, and when these accounts are placed within the analytical context of the ethnographic evidence from the present project, I would hold that such discourses between Tucson and Chicago might have helped lead to a stronger network capable of withstanding further discord. Meanwhile, the CIA leadership labeled Sanctuary priests a collective thorn in the agency’s side (Nepstad 2004: 53).

Those who became the most dedicated to the notion of Sanctuary witnessed stronger bonds in their own communities. Decades later, many of the churches that participated in the Sanctuary Movement have remained engaged in aiding undocumented immigrants, helping to lobby the government, parlay with the Border Patrol, and deliver water drums to the Arizona desert (Menjivar 2007: 110-115).

2.10 Amnesty: IRCA in 1986

Anti-immigrant feelings had begun to resurge partly owing to the economic recession of the 1970s and early 1980s. This era also saw the anti-immigration activism of John Tanton, who created the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR, in 1979), U.S. Inc. (in 1982), and the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS, founded in 1985 as a think tank to the anti-immigrant movement).³² Nevertheless, in 1986, backed by a Democrat-controlled Congress, Ronald Reagan signed the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). Although critics charged it was an amnesty program because it provided a pathway for the legalized status of nearly three million people, the act also included sanctions against employers who knowingly employed undocumented workers; however, employers were not forced to great lengths to determine workers' statuses, and thus "the market in false identification documents" boomed (Staudt and Coronado 2002: 145). In addition to general amnesty provisions and family reunification, IRCA allowed for an echo of a previous guest-farmworker program (the "bracero program" of the 1940s through the 1960s) in the newly dubbed Special Agricultural Workers (SAWs), who "could apply for legalization on the basis of 90 days of illegal seasonal agricultural work between 1983 and 1986 or between 1985 and 1986" (Heyman 1997: 893). One of the unintended consequences of IRCA was a heightening of the U.S. "mania for border defense" and additionally confusing laws (Massey et al. 2003).

Films portraying porous borders and news reports on smuggling and human trafficking also fed the tendency toward scapegoating. Politicians bolstered their own tough-on-national-security and tough-on-crime images by conjuring waves of Latino invasion, even (in 1986) linking terrorism with border control (Massey et al. 2003: 84-89).³³ By the 1990s "whites near the Mexican border began to dramatize their

³² The Tanton network advocated global population control and saw immigrants as population bombs (www.newcomm.org, accessed Jan. 15, 2011). Tanton never completely abandoned those origins, a factor that by 2013 caused some conservatives to marginalize FAIR's rhetoric. Meanwhile, groups such as the Minutemen made frequent use of CIS reports while purporting to cite "objective" data and findings.

³³ Economic planners were following a wave of government deregulation to free-market neoliberalism, which would benefit from open borders. The result was a series of compromises in IRCA (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2003: 89-91), which included amnesty provisions as well as tightened controls on the southern border and increased penalties for the undocumented.

frustration” by forming vigilante movements like “Light Up the Border” in which groups gathered “to shine their car headlights across the border and stop Mexicans from crossing illegally. In some cases, groups of white supremacists took to attacking immigrants”; meanwhile, Pat Buchanan ran “on an anti-immigrant platform in the 1992 Republican primary” (Gonzalez 2000: 195). As a component of the present research, it is important to contextualize the activist backgrounds and immigrant stories of my informants against these sorts of recent historical and political events. Analysis of the ethnographic data suggests that these and other events of the 1960s through the 1990s continue to influence the socioeconomic contexts, worldviews, and indeed the religious affiliations of the informants involved in this study, as well as myriad other activists who have been observed during the period of fieldwork in Chicago. Moreover, similar patterns have continued into the 21st century.

2.11 Politics of Hope and Comprehensive Immigration Reform

As new arrivals from Mexico and the rest of Latin America made up a large and growing portion of its adherents, the U.S. Catholic Church indicated that it was learning to respond to the needs of its immigrant parishioners, albeit slowly. More than 80 percent of dioceses were said to “have diocesan staff coordinating Hispanic/Latino ministry” (McCarrick 2009). Within its Hispanic ministry, moreover, the Church seemed to favor Mexicans, the most numerous subset, as a “homogenizing influence” (Badillo 2006: 180-181). For all Catholic immigrants the parish church had potential for community building, a unifying presence within a mobile society marked by social isolation (Badillo 2006: 149).

Mexicans and Mexican Americans represented 16% of the U.S. foreign born in 1980 (compared to 4% from Cuba), 21% in 1990 (with still 4% from Cuba), 30% in 2000 (versus only 3% from El Salvador and 3% from Cuba), and 31% in 2006 (Migration Policy Institute 2008). By 2000 Latinos accounted for 40 percent of the Catholics in Chicago; with a median age between 21 and 24 they were younger on average than white Anglo and African American Catholics, and their numbers were expected to continue growing, according to the archdiocese Office of Planning (Martin 2008a). On the western edge of the Chicago

suburbs, for example, the Mexican and Mexican American population of Aurora, Illinois, approached one-third of the city's population, while nearby suburbs and "satellite cities" like Waukegan, Elgin, West Chicago, and Joliet saw similar demographic shifts (Linton 1996).

After the attacks of September 11, 2001, border security was heightened amid fears of terrorism. Immigrants were increasingly marginalized and assaulted. Muslim immigrants and Sikhs³⁴ saw the worst of this combined national-security fear and xenophobia, but the rhetoric of "border security" and "homeland security" were also usually framed as concerns over Mexican and other Latino (and therefore Catholic) immigration. Terrorism was increasingly conflated with unauthorized immigration. Rather than "a single marginalizing voice in the call-in show," as one PJI member recalled, "now you have hosts of call-in shows giving xenophobic rants." The anti-immigrant "F.A.I.R." network and the Minutemen, in particular, were linked with a sense of dread among undocumented people and their families.

ICE increasingly drew on local police to assist with migrant arrests, detentions, and deportations. Through one program, the Delegation of Immigration Authority Section 287(g) Immigration and Nationality Act--- typically called "287 (g)"---sheriffs in Illinois and Arizona encouraged deputies to seek out and arrest undocumented immigrants. Immigration was also taken up by local and state politicians in the U.S. and Mexico to seek the support of either migrant or anti-migrant constituencies.

In December 2004 in Chicago, immigration officers arrested several undocumented immigrants in sweeps at O'Hare Airport under the aegis of increased homeland security. As a result several Chicago parishioners lost cleaning and janitorial jobs. Local priests, recognizing that parishioners were among those arrested, responded to the O'Hare raid by making announcements during mass, publishing remarks in the weekly bulletins, calling federal and elected officials directly, and demanding media balance on the

³⁴ The first post-9/11 victim of this xenophobia was a Sikh entrepreneur, shot to death outside his gas station by a white man who had thought him a Muslim, in Mesa (beside Phoenix), Arizona.

issue. Many of the priests and lay leaders who spoke the loudest had been advocating for immigrant rights and reforms for many years.

As Father Curran of St. Pius recalled, “for many years we were being reminded through confession, through counseling appointments, through emergency situations that [immigrant justice] was a need.”³⁵ Immigrant parishes responded by becoming “more proactive,” and priests and parish activists saw the community “asserting its rights and its voice.” Meanwhile, few Catholic bishops were quick to react to reports reaching them from parishioners, religious orders, and priests. But after “a gradual process” they “had a change of heart,” as one PJI member recalled, and became “very vocal, and very forceful, about this immigration issue.”³⁶

A Chicago rally on July 1, 2005, drew an unexpected crowd in a city that had not seen many large street demonstrations (apart from antiwar marches in 2003) for several decades. Churches had cooperated with various organizations to make the event happen, “for a real feeling that we are going to assert a voice here and...do this, unified, as a real sign of strength.” July 1, 2005 was “the real sparkplug for the movement in Chicago....There was no longer four to five thousand people marching, there were forty thousand people...really, [it] was a sign a new moment had begun.”³⁷ They got the sense “that now is the time, that there is a moment in history.”³⁸ Yet it was proposed anti-immigrant legislation from Congressional Republicans that would jumpstart the largest mobilizations in Chicago history.

In December 2005 the Sensenbrenner Bill caused shockwaves to reverberate through the Catholic Church. The bill would criminalize the giving of almost any “aid or comfort” to the undocumented, even in religious and educational settings. Many were insulted by the implication that immigrants were framed as

³⁵ Interview with Father Brendan Curran, Sept. 23, 2007.

³⁶ Interview of Jan. 26, 2007.

³⁷ Interview with Father Brendan Curran, Sept. 21, 2009.

³⁸ Interview of Jan. 26, 2007.

an enemy, whereas the bill's supporters believed that porous borders would bring death and destruction as well as economic distress to citizens. For progressive parish leaders the Sensenbrenner Bill was "a divisive and xenophobic document" that got "reaction from the community to keep us mobilized" and also "sent ripple effects through the country---that if we don't act Congress will act against us" to uproot populations and destroy families: "...it became survival, this community may be literally removed from the country forcibly."³⁹ A parish staff member reflected, "It's a [source of] tremendous fear because...if for instance you are a citizen here in the United States but your mom is undocumented, you're going to have to refuse her help or you'll be [labeled] a criminal."⁴⁰ That same year in Washington, D.C., the USCCB responded to pressure from its many immigrant parishes by launching the Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform.⁴¹ With its help, the PJI and the archdiocesan Office of Peace and Justice helped initiate a postcard-writing campaign in December 2005, handing them out in Sunday masses.

Several parishes saw new activist groups forming and old groups reactivating. Community organizations and churches felt impelled to find "any way to become vocal and [do] whatever they could to promote a response."⁴² In immigrant parishes, lay volunteers such as catechists, parish council members, ushers, and the leaders of social-justice workshops were often at the fore along with priests---or in front of them, urging them to action. Volunteers in these types of ministries remained among the more frequent participants in rallies and trips to Washington, D.C., over subsequent years:

³⁹ Interview of Sept. 23, 2007.

⁴⁰ Interview of December 4, 2006; my translation of the Spanish: "Es un miedo tremendo todavía porque...si por alguna razón tú eres un ciudadano acá en Estados Unidos pero tu mamá es indocumentada, vas a tener que negarle la ayuda para no convertirte en criminal, y no vas a poder ni verla yo creo."

⁴¹ In a March 21, 2009, speech at Our Lady of Mercy parish, Francis Cardinal George noted: "My brother bishops and I affirmed [the right to emigrate and immigrate]...in establishing the Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform. That Campaign remains...dear to all our hearts..." He added a gloss of Catholic immigration history which mischaracterized tensions within the U.S. Church between immigrant groups: "Our Church has supported and accompanied every immigrant community that has come to this country... seeking to participate in both the privilege and the responsibility of American society."

⁴² Interview of Jan. 26, 2007.

Leaders, ...[lay] leaders in the parish...realized that we have to speak out, for human dignity's sake...that this is simply an inhuman, irresponsible, unethical, immoral response to this national problem.⁴³

A handful of immigrant parishes immediately became centers for the movement, owing to their long traditions of social-justice leadership and cultural connections. “Prominent parishes in key pockets in the city [and suburbs] said ‘Enough is enough.’”⁴⁴ Within weeks the impetus for action spread to a few dozen other parishes around Chicago, though key movement centers continued to be hubs of activity and places where buses departed for rallies and caravans to the capital. As part of St. Pius V’s early leadership in the movement, a group of parishioners began calling themselves “Acción Social” (Social Action), a name that evoked the Chicano activism of a generation earlier.⁴⁵ One lay activist in Pilsen, Arnolfo, recalled that several weeks of anticipation led to the March 10 mobilization, and “people were saying, ‘Oh we should do something in a very mutual way’ That was before the first great march I experienced.”⁴⁶

No single leader emerged at the head of the national movement, nor did anyone become the sole figurehead in Chicago. While some feared that this lack of a central charismatic figure was a weakness, it may have become an additional source of solidarity. As Father Boehm of the PJI recalled, it was “a phenomenon across the country, and the most powerful thing is there’s no one leader that can galvanize it...there’s no one...[about which] you could say, ‘This is [the] person from immigration,’” but instead the movement developed among equals, “a natural phenomenon which says to me it’s a true, true issue from the people, and the government has to listen.”⁴⁷

⁴³ Interview of Sept. 23, 2007.

⁴⁴ Interview of Sept. 23, 2007.

⁴⁵ The name recalls the once influential center set up in Los Angeles in 1968 and led by Soledad (“Chole”) Alatorre and Bert Corona: the Centro de Acción Social Autónoma-Hermanidad General de Trabajadores (CASA-HGT) was called in English the Center of Autonomous Social Action-General Brotherhood of Workers; though it folded by 1978, it “had a substantial impact on many other organizations, even after the heyday of the movimiento” and sparked future Latino leaders and politicians (Gonzales 2009: 216).

⁴⁶ Interview of Jan. 25, 2007 with Arnolfo (pseudonym). My translation of “la gente sí comentando muchas cosas acerca de la situación difícil que están pasando los inmigrantes. Gente sí decía ‘O debemos hacer algo de una manera muy mutual’.... Eso fue antes de la primera gran marcha que yo experiencí.”

⁴⁷ Interview with Father Michael Boehm, Jan. 26, 2007.

An examination of the preceding remarks by PJI informants yields insights into the political and theological motivations behind some of the movement's earliest innovations and mobilizations. The examples of political motivations are clearly discernible, ranging from concerns over the burgeoning influence of the nativist F.A.I.R. network to the ramifications of the Sensenbrenner Bill. The latter, in particular, galvanized the immigrant rights movement, providing in Mr. Sensenbrenner a named villain against whom Catholic lay activists, the PJI, and others could unite. With that personal focus established, the PJI were also better able to help construct an effective rhetorical framework for the movement. That framework (which is examined in more detail in the Priests for Justice for Immigrants chapter) rested in part on theological content---and a careful analysis of the interview data in the preceding section begins to yield an understanding of these theological motivations.

This mode of inquiry leads me to argue, first, that the sense of injustice that motivated PJI members did not originate only in actions in the here-and-now, such as one PJI member's recollections of callers on talk-radio shows conflating undocumented immigrants with terrorists. The evidence suggests instead that the events of 2005 joined a long line of evidence of injustice which pushed activist priests and laity toward the Old Testament ideal of "prophetic voice and action." The signs of injustice against immigrants were strong and growing, as priests heard evidence of it regularly in the confessional, in counseling offices, and elsewhere in the parish community. All Catholic parishes feature regular sermons on prophets of the Old Testament, dealing with demands for deific reverence or for popular justice in the face of powerful rulers; in progressive Catholic circles, however, leaders felt an additional motivation in the sense that such biblical lessons should not remain in the realm of theory alone. As a life of action rather than contemplation was more highly valued in progressive contexts, these Catholic leaders felt themselves roused to action, to speak out even when unpopular (the prophetic voice) and to challenge the present order of things despite personal risk (prophetic action). Even the fact that no leader (local or national) had emerged worked to motivate Catholics within progressive movement frameworks, because of their desire

to promote democratic norms and their growing sense that this movement was directly supported by God, or that it at least had God's blessing through the people and was not mediated through any sort of national or international leadership, including Vatican leadership. This is not to say that progressive Catholics turned their backs on the Church hierarchy, only that they saw its limitations in the sense that prophets, as well as Jesus Christ, saw the limitations of the Pharisees and bishops in their times as well.

2.12 The Mobilizations of March 10 and May 1, 2006

The activism of priests before the March 10 and May 1, 2006 mobilization is examined in more detail in Davis, Martinez, and Warner (2010), a chapter I co-authored in Nilda Flores-Gonzalez and Amalia Pallares (editors), Marcha!: Latino Chicago and the Immigrant Rights Movement, which highlights the initial findings of the Immigrant Rights Mobilization Research Project. Priests were key motivators of these events via direct encouragement from the pulpit, and via a long tradition of indirect encouragement in their years of service to spiritual and immediate material needs (e.g., food pantries), cultural connections such as Spanish-language masses, Latino participation in Church governance, Mexican styles of music at mass, and festivals recalling Hispanic traditions. Parish leaders had also worked for years to promote substantive citizenship (civic integration, even among the undocumented) via workshops encouraging leadership in schools and the community, as well as citizen participation in voter registration drives, conferences with politicians, and census participation.

The flood of people through the streets on March 10, 2006, caught many social scientists and Anglophone journalists by surprise---and on the day of the event, marchers admitted disbelief at not seeing any English-language TV crews in the Loop. Yet parish priests had anticipated "a sea of people" on the eve of mobilization. For weeks they had attended organizational meetings and had been speaking with parishioners. They could gauge the increased level of support over the previous year's successful July 1 march, and even simple calculations indicated a vast increase in numbers. March 10 became, in the words of one PJI member, "the one that set the bar on how marches could be because with the largest in the

nation it was peaceful, no arrests, and it got international press.”

2.13 Handcuffed in the Capitol

In late March 2006, the PJI and parish activists joined a quickly arranged trip to Washington, D.C. that included five buses from Chicago. Their intention was a series of provocative public actions and lobbying of senators and representatives. An estimated 4,000 clergy from all over the country attended, and Chicago priests were especially proud of their joining an act of symbolic (if not actual) civil disobedience that garnered significant media attention, by handcuffing together 100 ministers of various faiths, and filing en masse through Congressional office buildings. The PJI’s Father Curran believed that the media storm they generated added pressure to legislators, noting: “That lobby day we got international press, we had Spanish media, French media, from all over the place,” all of which helped gain access to Congressional officials, although “usually when you go to Washington you’re lucky the staffers listened to us” (as lower-tier substitutes for their bosses). The ministers decided to build on the excitement of the mass mobilizations of March 10 by engaging in a confrontational political performance:

So part of what happened there was that we wanted it to be very public and very in the face of Congress members.... What we decided to do on a national front was...a public act of ritual, challenging Congress to produce something much more reasonable and much more ethical.... So after we did our ritual out there in front of the U.S Capitol steps there were a delegation of 100 of us who all were handcuffed who went into the Senate offices...every minister handcuffed one to the next...symbolically representative of the two per state that make up the Senate.

...there were...every kind of Muslim, Christian, Jewish leader to be found went with that delegation into the Senate office building. So...we went and...asked the senator...that day we thought it was bleak...it’s not going anywhere, [but] there it is in the midnight hour, the end of the day, the committee passed it in an overwhelming fashion.⁴⁸

Thus the hastily arranged March 2006 Washington trip seemed, for a while, to be a harbinger of rapid and comprehensive legal reforms. Father Curran recalled, “That was a major event because that galvanized the Chicago group. We had the largest delegation from any state in the U.S., the largest clergy caucus that went, and it was clear that that galvanized the Illinois group at a time we needed.”

⁴⁸ Interview of Sept. 29, 2006, with PJI pastor in Pilsen.

On Ash Wednesday of 2006, the PJI initiated the next campaign at St. Francis of Assisi parish on Roosevelt and Halsted; about 60 priests signed a document pledging concerted efforts. Thus on April 10, 2006, as marches occurred in other cities, the PJI took on a series of small rallies and vigils. Father Gary Graf of Most Blessed Trinity parish in Waukegan led a fast for 15 days. A prayer vigil was held at Our Lady of Tepeyac parish in Little Village, and labor unions and immigrant activists joined in a news conference at Harrison Park, near St. Adalbert and St. Pius V parishes, to promote the upcoming May 1 march. Ethnographic analysis of these data suggest that as novel forms of protest were authored by local religious leaders these, in turn, encouraged and promoted further protests of a creative and novel character. I am not arguing that the tactics were all previously unheard of; yet they were new to many of the activists present, and it was novel to see such a combination of faith-based actions influencing one another on behalf of immigrant rights.

While some of the PJI opted for more disruptive actions, such as handcuffing themselves to interrupt the flow of business in the Capitol building, others turned toward styles of self-abnegation which they saw as consistent with their status as spiritual leaders. All of their actions were creatively designed to attract media attention, and all included spiritual components, both as motivating factors and as symbolic elements. Moreover, these forms of activism on behalf of undocumented immigrants came to be associated increasingly with local leaders' definitions of "true Catholicism" as expressed by progressive members of the Church.

2.14 Radio and Word of Mouth

From the perspective of Catholic laity, anticipation of the spring 2006 events grew via several vectors of communication, including radio announcements (on "El Pistolero's" [The Gunfighter's] show), talk around the dinner table in many households, and word of mouth at Sunday mass and around the parish. They later recalled feeling that nothing would stand in the way, that a large number of people would

attend, and that it would be an enjoyable and historic occurrence. Just as importantly, they felt that safety concerns would be allayed. As Arnolfo recalled:

Yes, I found out through the Pistolero radio [show] and that was my first contact with the situation.... Here in the parish we had all kinds of support for us to go and be part of that march. To be honest I didn't see why we were doing it at first but [later] for some reason I thought that... it would be a great step for us to be present and that we should be there and that well, it's something good, if we are going to be arousing interest... celebrating together of course. And we begin to hear more talk about it.

And that's how that day I participated with the parish and that's how there was a group of people [from here] who were at least giving us...well, songs to sing, and we went along happily talking as [the crowd] moved itself along [up Ashland Avenue]. ...and suddenly we saw the whole street [was filled] and we saw that maybe it was the first experience I had hearing so many voices with us saying '...[give us] a little more respect, for being human beings.'⁴⁹

It was Arnolfo's exposure to the issues at church, then, that convinced him to become active in preparing for the next march. Although he had "first contact with the situation" via the radio, he needed time and further discussions in his parish community before he would be convinced of the strategy and moved to participate.

Surveys and ethnographic research indicated that the Church had indeed played a pivotal role in the mobilizations; without the participation of parishes throughout Chicago the marches would have been far smaller (Davis et al. 2010). The great majority (71%) of the estimated 400,000 marchers on May 1 reported being "significantly encouraged to participate by their church leaders." Surveys also indicated that 68% of marchers were Catholic, 10% Protestant, 7% other religions, and 15% non-religious. Within this mix, the two largest core groups were Latino Catholics (who were primarily concerned with

⁴⁹ Interview of Jan. 25, 2007 with Arnolfo. My translation of the Spanish: "Sí, me enteré a través del radio por Pistolero y ese fue mi primer contacto con la situación.... Aquí en la parroquia había todo el apoyo para que fuéramos a apoyar esa marcha. Para ser sincero yo no veía el objetivo primero pero [luego] de alguna manera yo pensaba que... sería un gran paso de que estamos presentes y que podemos estar presentes y que, pues es algo bueno, si nos vamos a motivar y pues celebramos juntos por cierto. Y la voz se empieza a escuchar más.

"Y fue de la manera que ese día participé con la parroquia y la manera que hubo un grupo de personas que nos estuvieron dando al menos... este, cantos, y fuimos a platicar a alegría y se promovió. ... y ya estaba lleno y de repente vimos la calle entera y vimos como tal vez fue la primera experiencia que tuve escuchando tantas voces con nosotros diciendo '...un poquito más de respeto, de ser seres humanos.'"

immigration questions) and non-religious non-Latino leftists, many of whom supported the immigration question, though others were protesting President Bush's policies (Davis et al. 2010).

Unlike Chicago's previous major street demonstrations---the protest of the 2003 invasion of Iraq (a march that resulted in numerous arrests) and events in the 1890s, 1960s, and 1970s---the 2006 mobilizations were remarkable for their peaceful standards, reinforced by unprecedented participation by entire families. (Mothers and fathers pushed groups of baby carriages through the Loop.) Lay leaders, priests, and bishops joined the marches, gave masses at starting and ending locations, and lent an additional aura of peaceful order to the already festive, family-infused event. People shared food, drinks, music, and friendly conversation with strangers.

An analysis of the zip codes of May 1, 2006, survey respondents indicates that marchers hailed from all parts of Chicago, particularly from *entrepôt* neighborhoods (including Pilsen and Little Village on the southwest side and Humboldt Park on the northwest), followed by other neighborhoods with significant Latino populations. These included Albany Park, Logan Square, Bridgeport, Brighton Park, Gage Park, Andersonville, Belmont Heights, McKinley Park, and areas near Midway Airport such as West Lawn, Archer Heights, and Garfield Ridge. Also present were nearby suburbs like Cicero (which alone accounted for 5 percent of the total) just west of Chicago's Little Village. Parishes and parishioners in many of these neighborhoods are factored into the present work. The zip codes do not tell us parish affiliations, however, since many people live in one part of the metropolitan area but drive to a parish elsewhere, and postal boundaries do not match up with traditional parish boundaries.

Opinions regarding the efficacy of the marches were initially mixed and later somewhat soured. Although most Church activists agreed they had defeated the Sensenbrenner Bill, a comprehensive immigration reform did not appear, and instead there were additional calls for enforcement-only laws and border-fence construction. Many in the Catholic Church, especially at the local level, began to speak of the need for

other strategies to garner political attention and will. As one PJI priest noted, “March 10...was amazingly organized, it was a powerful statement...but politics only understand votes.”⁵⁰ Another priest concurred:

There was no doubt in my mind that we had to march---but the politicians unfortunately...only understand votes...if you have 50,000 undocumented people that’s fine, but unless you get some of the documented who have power of the ballot, the power of the vote, the politicians might be impressed but they won’t be convinced to change anything.⁵¹

Many ICE raids were carried out in 2006, in some cases leading to deportations of parents who left U.S.-born children behind.⁵² These raids were another impetus behind Latinos’ enthusiasm for making themselves “heard and seen” in the 2006-2007 marches, partly as a psychological need to combat the terror instilled by raids, police surveillance, and other threats they perceived to family structures. Some said that on March 10, 2006, the theme in Chicago was “El Gigante Despierta (‘The Giant Wakes’)” as the city’s record-breaking demonstration “put the rest of the country on notice” for the events that followed in Los Angeles on March 25, Dallas on April 9 (where 350,000 to 500,000 joined in the “ ‘Mega March’ ...the largest civil rights march in the city’s history”), New York on April 10, and elsewhere around the country (Wang and Winn 2006: 6).

The massive pro-immigrant marches of 2006 were among the largest peaceful demonstrations in the country’s history. As mass mobilizations of citizens and non-citizens, including undocumented immigrants, these resulted from the efforts of a broad-based coalition ranging from Spanish-language radio announcers to labor unions, community-development organizations, and churches. The mobilizations helped to defeat the Sensenbrenner Bill and galvanize years of additional activism. And yet, the images of streets filled with immigrants alarmed and energized anti-immigrant nativists. ICIRR organizers wrote “Our movement called us to march, so we marched. We felt our power, but we did not

⁵⁰ January 15, 2007 interview with “Father Anonymous” on Chicago’s southwest side.

⁵¹ Jan. 27, 2007, interview with PJI member at a southwest-side parish.

⁵² Family separations remained a major consideration through the years. As one activist remarked during a 2009 trip to Washington, D.C., “No child left behind unless you are an immigrant.”

get reform.”⁵³ Despite activism over the next seven years, along with numerous legislative false starts and 1.5 million more deportations, immigration reform did not move through the U.S. Congress.

2.15 Summer and Fall of 2006

On July 19, a 90-degree day, the fourth Chicago mobilization saw about 10,000 people march from Union Park to Grant Park in an event organized by Centro Sin Fronteras (led by Emma Lozano and the congregation of her evangelical church) and the 105.1 FM---“La Qué Buena”---radioman Rafael Pulido ‘El Pistolero’” (Avila 2006). The numbers reflected a lower amount of Church⁵⁴ activism as well as other factors, such as wariness over the political process and concerns over safety. However, the marchers garnered attention for the large number of U.S. flags they carried, the participation of entire families (small children and strollers included, as in previous marches), and the continuing “zero arrest” tradition; moreover, prior to 2006 the appearance of 10,000 marchers on Chicago’s streets would have been a noteworthy event in itself. Only in comparison to the year’s earlier groundbreaking events did such a number seem small or a qualified failure. Divisions were growing within the movement, however: some wanted more marches and boycotts to “shut down the city” while others argued that a major change in tactics was needed.

On September 1, 2006, a compromise between the two camps was attempted. A more focused march was organized but with a much longer route; lower numbers were to be expected from the outset, given that two or three entire days would be required to see this march through to its conclusion, but the shift in strategy helped to reduce talk about sheer numbers of participants. Individuals from several parishes

⁵³ ICIRR “Our Story” sheet in the rider information packets for the March 20-22, 2010 caravan to Washington, DC.

⁵⁴ This was not a “quiet” month for Church activists, however, as efforts were ongoing to publicize, organize, and capitalize on citizenship workshops and other initiatives. For example, an unsigned Spanish-language column in El Sol Newspaper (p. 12) concluded with an invitation to direct concerns about workshops, citizenship, voting, and “any other questions” to Father Jesus Olivares, C.S. of Mount Carmel parish in Melrose Park (a near-west suburb).

participated while other activists vowed material support, and parishes along the route volunteered staff and space for posadas (overnight stays). This logistical plan was so successful it was copied again two years later.

St. Pius V parishioners and students from the parish school responded to announcements in Sunday mass and during their groups' regular meeting times to gather on a street corner in Pilsen. They handed out water and other supplies as the marchers passed through on the way to the suburbs, to the office of Dennis Hastert (then Speaker of the House of Representatives). Only a small group was initially gathered. Children from the parish school milled about in front of a banner stretched across the corner fence. The bilingual sign emphasized that the parish stood "in solidarity with the oppressed immigrant." Soon Father Brendan Curran arrived, along with two staff members from the parish counseling office and school, a young man preparing to enter the seminary, a few other laymen, and six laywomen.

The march had originated a short distance away, in Chinatown/Bridgeport, and included a mixture of ethno-racial immigrant groups totaling 200 to 300 people. Clapping hands and cheers greeted the line of marchers as they surged along the sidewalk. Latinos among them carried signs supplied by the ICIRR, reading "Hoy Marchamos / Mañana Votamos" (Today we march/ Tomorrow we vote) and "We Are America." One woman carried a hand-made placard: "Shout-out for Immigration Reform," and another homemade sign reading "Support Elvira Arellano / No More Deportations."⁵⁵ A motorcycle rider trailing behind them had decorated his vehicle with U.S. flag motifs. Afterward we gathered up the unused boxes of water bottles and loaded them onto a church van following the marchers---a simple but vital bit of logistical support.

⁵⁵ Arellano had attained the national spotlight after publicly seeking sanctuary for herself and her minor son, Saul (a U.S.-born citizen), at the Adalberto United Methodist Church on Chicago's Division Street (on the near northwest side of the city). After living at the church for a year, she attempted to travel to speaking engagements elsewhere; she was arrested by federal agents in Los Angeles and deported.

Few other events in 2006 counted on sustained and widespread parish support, although some of the coalition's Protestant churches attempted to maintain the pace of marches and rallies. In early November, for example, the sanctuary-seeker Elvira Arellano's seven-year-old son, Saul, and more than 30 other children rode buses to protest in Washington, D.C., in another event organized by Emma Lozano's Centro Sin Fronteras and Familia Unida.

Several lines of inquiry are suggested by the data in the preceding ethnographic observations. First, it can be argued that local, progressive Catholics long recognized their power to influence turnout at mass mobilizations such as those of 2005 and 2006, but they were circumspect in their use of this power, even when risking the ire of coalition leaders from left-leaning Protestant churches and secular organizations that have tended to push for more frequent, and occasionally more radical, mobilizations. The data indicate that while parish leaders have responded on occasion to urgent situations (e.g., ICE raids in 2006), they have generally adopted a long-term view calculated to promote community-building rather than focusing on what might be perceived as short-term political changes. As the years of protest witnessed numerous political setbacks, moreover, this long-term view helped pace the energies and levels of enthusiasm of their fellow parishioners; coupled with various forms of protest (phone-call campaigns, marches, posadas, bus trips, postcards, etc.) this helped guarantee that a large number of immigrant and progressive parishioners remained interested in assisting with possible future actions.

Local leaders have also reinforced themselves (and their fellow parishioners) spiritually and emotionally, by tying their activism together with religious ritual and symbolism, but only partly as a political expedient; they have called on the cultural resources of Catholicism as they have faced frustrations and setbacks so that, from a perspective of solidarity and accompaniment, their sense of a loving and just God has provided comfort and hope, in the long view if not in diurnal accomplishments. Their dedication to this movement, as the years of observation have borne out, has yielded for them a sense of spiritual reinforcement, as if they felt they were contributing directly to God's will. In sensing that their activism

placed them in a closer relationship with God, they felt a stronger Christian collective identity, expressed as a nexus between action and theology, and thus their progressive Catholicism felt deeply authentic in addition to being biblically sanctioned by their priests and catechists. These kinds of feelings or visions sometimes emerged during prayer, sometimes during sleep, and they were sometimes privileged within Christian discourses as a category of revealed evidence [revelation] of the Holy Spirit, though progressive Catholics would not wish to allow themselves to base important decisions solely on these feelings or hints of divine will, which could be misled or misinterpreted; they tended to seek evidence and experience that further confirmed their feelings of divine sanction. Meanwhile, as I argue below, this sense of an involved faith has not been the sole product of Catholic fellowship and Church-supported environs.

The evidence indicates that progressive Catholics have worked to develop their activism within a larger, ecumenical coalition, not merely in the interests of building a larger campaign for immigrant rights but also as a means of encouraging their own creative approaches to activism, as well as challenging their Catholic faith in, according to their perception, a healthy way; in other words, the contextualization of their actions within the broader coalition was not a political maneuver. Moreover, the discourses on immigrant rights and social justice that emerged from this ecumenical approach were, I argue, theologically compatible with both progressive Catholicism and left-wing evangelical churches. (This is a point I emphasize against the assumption---commonly heard in conservative and progressive Catholic circles---that evangelical churches represented mainly a threat of conversion away from Catholicism; none of the Catholic activists I interviewed from 2006 to 2015 indicated any interest in leaving their parish for an evangelical church.) Further analysis of the preceding observations indicates, moreover, that progressive Catholic leaders encouraged immigrant-rights activism (e.g., through bulletin announcements and calls for mobilization during mass) while simultaneously inspiring further participation in their progressive Catholic communities; i.e., these leaders and their parishioners tended to interpret social justice discourses as a reinforcing mechanism for the movement and for their Christian faith, as expressed through more active membership in (or support for) their local parish. These kinds of support also

translated into the long-term concern among the PJI (and other liberationists) for empowered and empathetic leaders, builders of a vibrant parish and its larger community, and participants in civic and democratic processes. As projects of liberation theology within a specifically U.S. context, then, these are indicative of the constructive and non-violent use of liberationism among the PJI---far removed from any hint of support for armed insurgency as have been seen in Latin American contexts.⁵⁶

2.16 Tactics in 2007-2009

By 2007 there were widespread feelings that the immigration reform movement had stagnated despite efforts to revive mobilizations. In the diminished but still significant wave of 20 marches across the country on May 1, 2007, Chicago's was the largest. This was yet another indicator of the city's status as "perhaps the epicenter of the immigrant rights movement."⁵⁷ The anti-immigrant lobby had also grown, perhaps because Republicans advocating enforcement-only policies had made a strong showing in the 2006 midterm elections, or perhaps because of the wariness of politicians looking to the 2008 elections.

Apprehension over anti-immigrant activism was bolstered by the established custom in the media (especially in Fox News) of framing immigration questions together with drug smuggling and terrorism. These patterns were reinforced by press releases from the Department of Homeland Security (within which was ICE, formerly the INS) reporting on drugs flowing northward from Mexico, and U.S.-made weapons moving illegally southward. The number of anti-immigration laws increased from 40 in the border region to 280 around the country, including states and localities attempting to deny housing,

⁵⁶ While cautioning against connections between this (U.S.) version of liberation theology and Latin America's histories of armed rebellion, it is also important to add this caveat: Although some liberationists in Latin America did take up arms, many remained opposed to violence in all forms. One case in point is Archbishop Romero, who angered left-wing rebels as well as government supporters by calling for an end to all armed struggle.

⁵⁷ Gonzales (2009), citing Juan Mora-Torres, "La Primavera del Inmigrante: Media and Voice in the Making of Chicago's Immigrant Rights Movement, 2005-2007. Oral presentation at the 35th annual convention of the National Association for Chicano and Chicana Studies. Austin, Texas. March 20, 2008.

employment, and social services to the undocumented.⁵⁸ Citing concerns over law and order, anti-immigrant Catholics pressured parishioners and Church officials “who were open to work on immigration reform” to silence themselves or “become... neutral.”⁵⁹ Anti-immigrant hate groups became more vocal in local debates and media forums; the total number of these hate groups tracked by the FBI increased from 8 in 2005 to more than 30 in 2007.⁶⁰ The start of the “great recession” in 2008 also saw the scapegoating of immigrants at levels unknown since the Great Depression.

In an August 2, 2008, radio interview with Dick Kay on AM 820, the U.S. Congressman Luis Gutierrez said the “12 to 14 million undocumented ...they’re not going to go back” since the government was more likely to “charge people with things they never did” and place them in a “very vulnerable position” through ICE raids and threats of deportation. For Gutierrez (who served a securely Latino district in Chicago), the U.S. immigration regime had become heavy-handed and contradictory, oriented around illusory security issues: The “border is pretty much secure” but “You can take that Mexican American who has moved to the northwest... suburbs...and that person is angry...[about discrimination]... [and the] community feels that it is being targeted....” Gutierrez’s belief that identity-linked fears and frustrations would translate into electoral power was reinforced by his constituents, including community organizers and leaders from activist Catholic parishes in his district.

Community organizing in Chicago focused on registering Latinos to vote in 2008 and turning people out to the polls. The ICIRR claimed that the efforts paid off: “We swung 8 states, electing Barack Obama president. We became the fastest-growing voting bloc in the country”; however, despite winning “a

⁵⁸ As a brief history of the movement toward Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR), the document was titled “The Journey Towards CIR, 2000 to 2007 (prepared by the Office for Immigrant Affairs, Archdiocese of Chicago)”; it was included in the participant folders at the Priests for Justice for Immigrants event (“Between a Rock and a Tea Party: Preaching for Justice”) in Chicago, Oct. 5, 2010.

⁵⁹ “The Journey Towards CIR, 2000 to 2007” (October 5, 2010).

⁶⁰ “The Journey Towards CIR, 2000 to 2007” (October 5, 2010).

promise for change,” the movement “did not get reform.”⁶¹ President Obama’s election in November 2008 was strongly supported by Latino voters, especially Mexican Americans, but the number of deportations spiked during his presidency.

In 2009 Chicago organizers argued that pressure should be brought to bear on the new government in 2009, so “we lobbied and strategized like never before. We built the campaign to Reform Immigration for America. ...But we still have no reform.”⁶² As part of a long string of years that saw defeats and delays, past and future, 2009 was as frustrating and demoralizing as any. Yet core activists in Chicago remained connected with the movement, in recognition of the high stakes for undocumented parishioners as well as the long-term sense of patient preparation that Church activists had instilled in them as parish leaders. In Nepstad’s conceptualization of collective action frames, such emotional and spiritual components of agency should be considered, as “some conditions may be so morally reprehensible and emotionally charged that individuals feel compelled to protest regardless of their chance for success” (Nepstad 2004: 12).

Indirect participation continued to be a factor when fewer parishes were actively cooperating. Although the main organizers of smaller marches were nonreligious groups (including leftist anti-war and anarchist groups) and labor unions, many of the Latino marchers continued to be Catholics acting independently (not with a parish group) who were motivated by and openly displayed their religious faith. I observed this phenomenon especially during the 2009 Mayday march, which disrupted Chicago’s Loop on a Friday with a few thousand⁶³ people chanting, beating drums, dancing, and cheering. Amid rhythmic chants of

⁶¹ ICIRR “Our Story” sheet, information packet for the March 20-22, 2010, caravan to Washington, DC.

⁶² ICIRR “Our Story” sheet, information packet for the March 20-22, 2010, caravan to Washington, DC.

⁶³ Perhaps as many as 5,000. The 2009 march was worthy of significant news coverage but was given little. (I have witnessed TV news crews attracted to as few as two dozen people protesting the shuttering of a Chicago clinic.) Reports on these marches focused on the raw numbers and gave “equal time” to a handful of anti-immigration activists whom reporters sought for “the other side” of the issue, even when they were not physically present as counter-protesters---e.g., one woman representing the Minutemen was interviewed at home while other mobile TV news crews covered thousands of marchers in the streets.

“Sí se puede!” (Yes, we can!) and “Obama, escucha, estamos en la lucha!” (Obama, listen, we are in this fight/struggle!), I interviewed a Spanish-speaking parishioner from a predominantly English-speaking parish in suburban Maywood. She wore an oversized Virgin of Guadalupe T-shirt and carried a homemade sign highlighting the U.S. citizenship of her children and the threats of deportation to families. Like many other Latino Catholics she admitted to having great admiration for Congressman Luis Gutierrez, who had garnered national fame, being featured often on Spanish-language TV news. She also spoke in favor of President Obama:

Gutierrez is an excellent person for us, I mean, he gives us hope...right now for us, well...He isn't, he isn't God, but we have a lot of faith in Obama. And, well, in Gutierrez and everyone helping them and...we want to work in peace...and for our children, to be able to finish school.

The breaking apart of families, the woman added, was “the most nonsensical” aspect as she contrasted peace, war, and freedom---the latter referring not to free speech, consumerism, or mobility (what many call “our way of life”) but to fears of actual loss of life and liberty through deportation and military draft:

...the most important thing is freedom. When our children grow up, they can be taken away...[drafted] and used to defend the country in war, but they take [parents] away now, when all we want is to work...[or] you don't eat...we want to be able to work in peace. That's why we're here today.⁶⁴

On examining her words within the larger context of the social movement, it can be argued that the “he isn't God” remark was a popular expression that nevertheless hinted at an imagined, idealized link between church and state. This Catholic activist, I argue, was gauging a tension between politics and religion through a familiar Catholic framework. In Catholic mass one often heard prayers and preaching toward bringing “the kingdom of God” to Earth, a goal (and a justification for Earthly action) more often verbalized in social-justice oriented parishes, while in both conservative and progressive parishes it was common to pray collectively for the president and for other government leaders. Thus, the activist's “faith in Obama” and in Gutierrez was an extension of an established spiritual discourse throughout the Catholic

⁶⁴ Interview of May 1, 2009, while marching in Chicago's Loop. Translated from the Spanish: “Para nosotros es una persona excelente Gutierrez, o sea es parte de nuestra esperanza...o sea, ahorita para nosotros...No es...No es Dios, pero nos, tenemos mucha fe en Obama. Y, pues en Gutierrez y todos que ayudan y...es lo que queremos, es...queremos trabajar en paz...para mis hijos, terminar escuela...Para mi solamente es libertad...es cierto, los hijos crecen...los quitan para irse a la guerra...”

Church. Yet her openly religious participation in that street mobilization---like the participation of local Catholic leaders in voter-registration campaigns, in bus caravans to Washington, and in phone-call campaigns---was also a form of protest resulting from, and further contributing to, the analytical themes central to this chapter, including the discourses authenticating and reinforcing progressive Catholicism.⁶⁵

2.17 Calling the White House

Catholic activists continued to seek ways of pressuring local and national legislators for reforms. At a pre-Lenten PJI meeting⁶⁶ Father Dahm proposed a “Prayer and Calling Campaign” wherein every pastor would make announcements during Lent to have parishioners call President Obama’s number and advocate for immigration reform. The idea was well received by the group, who called it “...Great...Simple, effective.” Dahm noted that Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, when asked about immigration reform, tended to say “Well, let’s wait and see what Obama wants to do”; thus, calls were aimed at goading Obama to action. After all, he had promised to promote humane immigration reform in the first year in office. Dahm said that at St. Pius, in the past, “we’ve modeled how to make these phone calls from the pulpit” by actually dialing the number and using a microphone so that everyone could hear the voice mail and hear the message that we have left. A letter handed out at the meeting, addressed “Dear Priests for Justice for Immigrants,” asked priests to participate:

This campaign would best be addressed in the pulpit at the beginning of Lent, noting that it fulfills part of the traditional practice of almsgiving on behalf of the poor during this holy season. The alms that we urge people to give is action for justice and compassion for immigrants. Parish bulletins should remind the faithful of the campaign each week of Lent.

Since most people have cellular phones, they can call at any time and in any language. In fact, we can model how to call in the pulpit by dialing the President during the homily and letting the people hear the answer at the White House and our response leaving a message.

⁶⁵ Her comments hinted that a sense of hypocrisy and an overly individualistic assumption were built into the American Dream---concerns that are unpacked later in this chapter.

⁶⁶ Field notes from the Feb. 16, 2009, PJI meeting.

Thank you for your participation on this campaign. Please pass on this letter and the attached card in Spanish and English to as many people as possible.

Father Dahm said parishioners should not fear retaliation, but that they should include addresses and other personal information or else risk being ignored as an anonymous letter writer. As they left messages they would read the “Prayer for President Obama” (provided in English and Spanish) noting the president’s challenges and praying “that God enlighten and strengthen him so that he can lead our country to peace and justice for all.”

Another sheet handed out at the meeting, dealing with a related (but not necessarily Lenten) calling campaign, exhorted people to call the White House each week of the first 100 days of Obama’s presidency to leave their own message or say “I am a US Citizen, and I ask the President to undertake Comprehensive Immigration Reform now...for the sake of immigrants...and for the sake of our country....” It also asks the person to commit to asking five friends to call, as well as asking the person to write or email President Obama at The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20500.

2.18 Enforcement or Advocacy

Despite early talk of loosening immigration controls, enforcement-only approaches were greatly expanded by the Obama administration, which increased the number of Border Patrol agents and reinforced them with National Guard troops. Immigrants continued to be framed negatively in news media reports as well.

A brief analysis of related news coverage helps shed light on the barrier this represented for immigrant rights activists: When a Phoenix newspaper printed an interview with the U.S. marshal for Arizona, he noted, “Illegal immigrants are 7 percent of Arizona’s population but 15 percent of the state prison population. Additionally, 14 percent of those in prison for murder or manslaughter and 24 percent of

those held on drug charges are illegal immigrants” (Gonzales 2012). The marshal issued these comments without a caveat explaining that drug smuggling and violent crime are strongly correlated in border regions, and that these are not aspects of most immigrants’ lives; nor did he distinguish between detainees initially held on immigration violations and those held initially on criminal matters. In separate news stories throughout the nation, the Phoenix-area sheriff Joe Arpaio’s immigrant prisons (for which he received significant daily payments from the federal government) were enthusiastically reported, but neither the U.S. marshal quoted nor the newspaper referenced this link, which bolsters significantly the share of the undocumented within Arizona’s prison population, thus skewing the marshal’s numbers.⁶⁷

This was not a quiet time in the Catholic Church, though it was filled with frustrations and setbacks in the larger movement. On the national scene the archdiocese of Los Angeles became an especially vocal advocate for legal reforms and Church activism. At the border Scalabrinian priests and religious (nuns and brethren) staffed urban shelters for new deportees, including Casa del Migrante (“Migrant House”).⁶⁸ In 2009 and 2010, Chicago parishes and Protestant churches participated in the planning and organizing of “caravans to Washington” to lobby Congress and the president. Organizers attempted to reframe immigration reform as supporting families and “American values” by showing “economic fairness for everyone and citizenship rights and obligations for all who work hard to sustain our country.”⁶⁹

Meanwhile, individual parishes increased their services to Spanish-speaking parishioners. Following years of PJI planning and negotiations regarding funding, as well as the “donation of office space” by a certain parish, the Archdiocese of Chicago added its stamp of approval to the new St. Toribio Romo

⁶⁷ I am not advocating a partisan view of the undocumented as entirely innocent or law-abiding individuals, but I am cognizant of studies emphasizing their higher levels of conformity with legal norms.

⁶⁸ From the early 1990s Casa del Migrante in Ciudad Juarez provided “shelter, food, clothing, medical services, and spiritual guidance to people” averaging as many as 250 to 300 per month, including many who “are victims of discrimination and abuse.” The priest in charge also raised “awareness to the plight of immigrants. Whether it is a public hearing or a meeting...to bring about social justice...with issues of immigration, access to water and other environmental issues, and in raising wages in the maquiladora industry” (Staudt and Coronado 2002: 157).

⁶⁹ ICIRR “Talking Points” sheet, in the rider’s packet for the March 20-22, 2010, Washington, DC, caravan.

Migrant Center. Partly with the help of the director of St. Toribio Romo, Marco Lopez, the archdiocese then sponsored a series of training workshops and networking initiatives called Pastoral Migratoria (“Migrant-to-Migrant Ministry”); these ministries were to be led by lay activists in individual parishes.

“In Chicago, we are extremely blessed to have this network of priests and bishops...compared with the national arena,” remarked Elena Segura of the archdiocesan office of peace and justice.⁷⁰ But even in this local arena, bishops and priests often vied with one another; the frames of progressive Catholics often clashed with those of their conservative bishops. As the following section explains, the archbishop and Chicago’s immigration activists did not always have a smoothly functioning relationship.

2.19 The Archbishop’s Speech that Almost Wasn’t: Cross Purposes

On March 21, 2009, the PJI, the parish staff at Our Lady of Mercy, and archdiocese staff helped organize an interfaith rally for immigrant rights at Our Lady of Mercy on Chicago’s northwest side. Organizers shared a sense that the movement had gone through too long a period of stagnation---of “wait and see...until after (another) election season”---and they wished to encourage President Obama, who had just taken office under the banner of Change, to make good on his campaign promises to immigrants. But a dispute between a bishop and a congressman would threaten to derail plans to reactivate the movement.

Details of the March 21 event were worked out at PJI meetings in the months prior. At a Feb. 16, 2009 session, priests expressed enthusiasm and one predicted: “I really believe this may be a defining moment...[when we may] see the church and government trying to work together to change unjust laws.” The federal involvement of which he spoke centered on President Obama and Congressman Luis Gutierrez of Chicago. Gutierrez had risen to some prominence within the immigrant rights movement.

⁷⁰ Field notes from Feb. 16, 2009, PJI meeting.

Most Latinos who watched the news knew his name, having seen him on Univision or another Spanish-language channel.

Gutierrez had launched a three-month, twenty-state tour of the country, and the March 21 event was originally outlined as a continuation of his efforts “to bring the plight of immigrant families directly to President Obama” via reams of petitions from citizens and permanent residents. A copy of the petition, to be signed by every citizen or permanent resident concerned about family members, was passed around the church.

An earlier version of the petition was used in an event hosted by St. Pius V parish on Nov. 15, 2008.⁷¹ Mixed families (of citizens and undocumented members) were urged to bring pictures of loved ones for whom they feared deportation, and to sign petitions requesting support from political and community leaders. The event took up an entire Saturday morning in a church overflowing with petitioners and volunteer translators, with whom I served. Everyone present that day heard personal accounts of families in crisis. Many wept, including members of Gutierrez’s family. This was the spark igniting Gutierrez’s tour as he realized that an effort hosted by churches across the country would generate publicity for the movement. The fact that St. Pius V had hosted the first event made for a stronger bond between Gutierrez and the PJI, in my estimation---but since the archbishop and the St. Pius priests had not always enjoyed an easy relationship, the PJI downplayed St. Pius’s earlier work with Gutierrez.

⁷¹ Flyers and parish bulletin-inserts for the 2008 event read: “THE UNITED FAMILIES CAMPAIGN/ DEFEND YOUR FAMILY!/ SIGN UP YOUR FAMILY ON THE "LIST OF PROTECTION"/ CONGRESSMAN LUIS GUTIERREZ HAS CALLED/ FOR U.S. CITIZENS WHO HAVE A MEMBER OF THEIR/ FAMILY UNDER THREAT OF DEPORTATION TO SIGN/ UP THEIR FAMILY ON THE LIST OF PROTECTION./ ...We are going to enlist the support of pastors, business leaders, community organizations, labor unions, and elected officials to make defending the families on that list their sacred commitment./ ...The right of a family to stay together is a sacred right. The defense of these families is a sacred cause that this nation must honor.” Beside a picture of an immigrant family the national plan was announced: “We will begin in Chicago and continue to build this list of families and match them to defenders across the nation. We are going to put a human face on the issue of immigration and draw a line in the sand in Congress in defense of these U.S. citizens and their right to the sacred unity of the family.”

In the Feb. 16, 2009 PJI meeting, Father Dahm reported that in other cities Gutierrez made arrangements with evangelicals, whereas Catholic churches “were in the minority.” Another priest said evangelicals organize “and they get themselves heard” while Catholics lack unity. Father Claudio Holzer noted that while he was in Guadalajara he saw Gutierrez’s photo in the paper with an evangelical church---with no mention of the Catholic Church at all “in Mexico, a Catholic country!” Someone half-joked that this should be brought to the cardinal/archbishop to goad him into action. After laughing a bit it seemed the two bishops and the priests were taking the notion seriously; they concurred that evangelicals were taking people away from Catholic pews, and that this might be used as a bargaining chip---not a distortion or a manufactured crisis, but a real tension that could be used to further the goals of the movement. Evangelical churches had indeed signed onto Gutierrez’s effort in several cities, a fact that, in addition to evidence of human suffering, might motivate the cardinal to attend the event. Yet they were uncertain how to proceed. Father Dahm asked, “So, are we all going to write him letters...?” But another (who had the cardinal’s ear) said he would “get this issue to the cardinal’s attention” for the group “and go from there.” At the same time, all priests were encouraged to help spread the word throughout the archdiocese.

Auxiliary Bishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller and Auxiliary Bishop John R. Manz were present (as they often attended PJI meetings), and they also pledged that they could exert pressure at their meeting of bishops to attempt “to get this event onto the schedule” to encourage the cardinal further. They stressed he “doesn’t like to be blindsided,” however, so they wanted a clear plan, and they agreed “bringing up the evangelicals, that’ll help.”⁷²

⁷² Protestant converts from Catholicism often cited rejections of the purportedly alienating or meaning-lacking rituals of Catholicism, a perspective that research in Africa (Engelke 2007) has supported. In an evangelical church in Los Angeles, factors related to “meeting the needs of the people” were highlighted: “Most of the ‘lapsed Catholics’ came [there] because they enjoyed the company of others, the feeling of belonging...emotional security, friendship.... Symbolically and physically secluded...vibrant fellowship where they remake self, community, and the nation” (León 1998: 188). The PJI believed that one of the best defenses against attrition was an activist parish where people felt a sense of belonging.

Every priest in the room was then asked how many buses or people they could bring to the March 21 event, to get a clear commitment from each. Some said “two buses” or “three buses,” but one noted the difficulties of generating interest among his mostly non-Latino parishioners and said, “realistically, I can [only] bring ten [individuals].” In all, however, they were committing hundreds of people and hundreds of working hours for themselves, their staff, and their volunteers. Father Dahm suggested using a phone tree to call the other PJI, those who were not there at the moment, to help guarantee a full crowd.

A green-colored index card was then distributed for comment and approval. Bearing the stamps of the Catholic Church’s “Justice for Immigrants: A Journey of Hope” campaign and the PJI, it was a bilingual announcement intended to be inserted into parish bulletins:

With LIBERTY & JUSTICE for ALL IMMIGRANT FAMILIES
 ...Join your brothers and sisters in Christ, religious leaders & Congressman Luis Gutierrez for inter-faith prayer, testimonials of U.S. immigrant citizens separated from loved ones, & petition President Obama to stop raids & deportations through compassionate immigration legislation. Invitees include Cardinal Francis George. Sponsored by Priests for Justice for Immigrants, Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants, & the Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform.

In their final drafts, parish bulletins and flyers specifically noted that Gutierrez was “our invited guest,” likely in anticipation of negative reaction from anti-abortion activists. The unwritten code of guest-host conduct would protect the guest from embarrassment. And yet, guarantees were lacking from high levels. What if the cardinal did not see Gutierrez as a guest?

A press conference was held a couple of days beforehand, ostensibly to generate interest in the Our Lady of Mercy event but also to apply pressure on Cardinal George to ensure his participation. According to my analysis of the data from that day and from observations through the years, I argue that the press conference was held at St. Pius V because the parish held symbolic importance as both the home of the St. Jude shrine (with which the cardinal had a personal, childhood connection) and also as the place

where, as a senator, Barack Obama had pledged support to immigration reform.⁷³ In front of the cameras and newspaper reporters, religious sisters and PJI made statements about suffering families and the need for reform. Father Larry Dowling announced, “We believe that prayer changes the hearts of politicians.” He stressed “Saturday we’ll pray...sing...” and hear from Cardinal George, who will make “a prophetic statement” concerning the US Conference of Catholic Bishops---and that we will also hear from Congressman Gutierrez, sign petitions, and help people who “have been kept in the shadows.”

After the press conference, however, the cardinal seemed likely to bow to pressure from friends in the anti-abortion lobby, as he was a prominent spokesperson on that issue. PJI members told me that he might refuse to appear on stage with Gutierrez or cancel at the last moment. On March 20, the evening before the event, news reached one parish’s social-action group of the cardinal’s waffling, whereupon a lay activist clenched his fist in frustration, saying, “The cardinal always does that---that stepping away. First he says he will, then he doesn’t!”

In an 11th-hour concession it was not the cardinal who backed down. Gutierrez, acting in what PJI members called “a gracious and admirable move,” agreed to stay off the podium---not to appear beside or near the archbishop. He would instead sit in the pews in a subservient position, despite the fact that it was Gutierrez who had launched this “national tour” of churches. (Indirectly, however, this concession might have bolstered Gutierrez’s charisma by hinting he had remained humble despite living in Washington.⁷⁴)

The cardinal agreed to these new terms. The Gutierrez camp was nevertheless on edge at the event, nervous about the possibility of negative publicity. When the congressman’s name was announced, two of

⁷³ As Father Curran reminded reporters during the conference, “Here, in this space at St. Pius, President Obama was transformed...by the story of a little girl” who was suffering under the system of immigration laws in the United States. Obama recorded that event in his book The Audacity of Hope.

⁷⁴ There were mixed opinions about Gutierrez---e.g., after an Oct. 27, 2008, rally at a Chicago union hall, as I sat on the St. Pius V bus a self-described “Latino atheist” from the neighborhood collapsed onto the seat beside me. When asked for his opinion on the event he guffawed: “Gutierrez is trying to be a new saint, a martyr!”

his staff members bounded down the left- and right-side aisles, whooping his name in a painfully obvious attempt to generate a more lively welcome. Gutierrez was greeted with applause, but sidelong glances and grimaces from the applauding activists near me indicated they did not appreciate the artificiality of the crowd-seeding.

In the midst of the archbishop's speech on immigrant rights, he inserted two passages⁷⁵ reflecting pro-life activism. The first passage broadened the definition of "undocumented":

I must add another note. A family is destroyed by deportation, a family is destroyed by violence in the streets and in our schools. A family is destroyed by violence in a mother's womb. Unborn children are undocumented. They are not yet citizens but they are part of a family. An unborn child is someone's son, someone's daughter, someone's brother, someone's sister. They, too, should be protected in law.

I am very proud to stand with my brother priests from the Priests for Justice for Immigrants, to stand with the Religious Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants, to stand with other faith leaders and all of you...to call on our government to end immigration raids and the separation of families.

A second unscripted remark was directed specifically to the invited politician:

Congressman Luis Gutierrez is here and, with others, I thank you...for your forceful leadership on this all important issue, even as I recognize there are issues where we do not stand together yet---however I'm praying!

In this line of analysis, I further argue that regardless of the bishop's presumably charitable intentions, and the smile and good-natured laughter the "I'm praying!" remark elicited from Gutierrez (as well as the nervous laughter in the pews), activists were gravely concerned during this part of the program. I observed that many of them sat on the edge of their seats, with wrinkled brows and squinted eyes. Perhaps they were praying the bishop would not add further comments to this veiled barb. "I'm praying" was a phrase one might expect in a church, but on this occasion it became the coded means of addressing

⁷⁵ A comparison with the manuscript written (with PJI effort) before the event shows that the cardinal added the remarks on abortion when he delivered his speech March 21, 2009.

differences with Gutierrez on reproductive rights.⁷⁶ It can be admitted, nonetheless, whatever one's position on this issue, that the bishop's likening of the unborn to the undocumented had a mark of rhetorical craft about it, in a creative "third way" argument.

In the weeks following the rally, there was discussion of the apparent disconnect between Cardinal George's energetic words on behalf of pro-life politics and his tempered, delayed enthusiasm for immigration reform. Various PJI members wanted to speak with him directly, to tell him they respected his position on abortion but that it might be something of a distraction from the immigrant rights movement. Some celebrated his appearance at the event but questioned how it could have taken him so long to become vocal---even though, as he had noted in his speech, he had known undocumented Catholics since at least his time as a bishop in Washington state. While PJI were circumspect and guarded in criticisms, faith-based community organizers in Pilsen and Little Village were considering penning a more direct challenge to the leader of the archdiocese. They wished to ask that he begin mentioning immigrant rights at his pro-life speaking engagements, quid pro quo. The data do not suggest that this was a spurious request or that it was intended to anger the cardinal, but instead, according to my analysis, it was a recognition of an opportunity, given the cardinal was "constantly speaking about pro-life issues...wherever he goes." As conceptualized by the anthropology of religion, however, the issue was not a failure of reciprocity but of movement frames (Nepstad 2004: 15), with an attempt to set conservative, pro-life frames over social-justice frames. In this anthropological conception of a frame alignment process (Nepstad 2004: 15), activists utilize their skills and creative assets to align immigrant rights both with the Civil Rights Movement and, more broadly, with dialectics on the cornerstones of democracy.

On May 9, 2009, the rally and celebration for the end of Gutierrez's national tour was not sited at a Catholic church but was instead booked in a meeting hall within Chicago's lakefront McCormick Place,

⁷⁶ Perhaps it was the apparent condescension that later, following the main program, caused Gutierrez to break from the plan by adding a brief speech in the church's basement, where he gave a statement to the overflow crowd. That sub-venue was not being covered by TV news cameras, however.

the convention center that houses auto and boat shows. The decision for this venue was a compromise between evangelical and Catholic activists as well as an attempt to avoid the pro-life/immigrant drama of Our Lady of Mercy. The challenge for the McCormick Place event was not whether one leader would attend---the docket of speakers was considerable---but “to fill up the hall” or risk embarrassment in the media. Flyers for this “Mothers Day National United Families Report Form”---even those printed under the logos of The Resurrection Project⁷⁷ and the Catholic “Justice for Immigrants” campaign---placed Gutierrez’s name front and center, as invitations to join the congressman “and community leaders from across the nation for the conclusion of the historic 20 state campaign to stop the separation of families by our current broken immigration laws.” As Gutierrez staffers noted, the three-month tour saw “over 10,000 U.S. citizens...come forward to save their families from separation.”

In 2010 a group of national organizers wrote, “We face nothing short of a moral crisis in our country. Today 1100 of our friends and family members will be deported. Tomorrow, another 1100. As long as we are faced with that reality, we all live in fear.”⁷⁸ The number of immigrants deported under the Obama administration (300,000 to 400,000 annually) had long since surpassed that of the Great Depression, while additional populations of Latino, Irish,⁷⁹ and Polish immigrants voluntarily returned home because of the economic recession that began during the presidency of George W. Bush.

⁷⁷ The Resurrection Project (TRP) is a community-development organization begun by several southwest-side parishes in 1990. Father Charles Dahm played a leading role in its creation and on its board of directors long afterward, and I often saw him in consultation with the director of TRP, Raúl Raymundo. A political scientist studying faith-based organizations in Chicago and other cities (and predominantly focused on Protestant examples) concluded that for Dahm and Raymundo, “For new liberationists” in the U.S. urban contexts of her study, “as for liberation theologians, theology and politics are continuous entities. Theology informs political decision” while “a new method of doing theology” is accomplished through “scholarship, traditional congregational life, and pastoral ministry” as well as through “the para-church and nonprofit structure---the Latino [faith-based organization]” (Wilson 2008: 66). Wilson further argues that unlike in some previous Latin American contexts, these U.S. pastors “do not view personal and communal expressions of religious devotion---i.e., popular religiosity---with disdain” but instead “believe deeply in the connection between popular religion and liberation” (Wilson 2008: 67).

⁷⁸ ICIRR “Our Story” sheet, information packet for the March 20-22, 2010, caravan to Washington, DC.

⁷⁹ Chicago’s Irish population had risen in the 1990s as unemployment soared in Ireland. By 2010 there were an estimated 5,000 undocumented Irish in the Chicago area of about 50,000 undocumented Irish in the United States (Smith 2010b).

Many activists began to question the level of support that Obama would receive from Latinos in the 2012 election,⁸⁰ although the president shored up some support by issuing an executive order that allowed, temporarily, for many of the privileges that had been proposed for a so-called DREAM Act. The DREAM Act would have provided a “pathway to citizenship” for young undocumented immigrants who were brought into the country at a very young age, and who are either displaying commitment as students or as members of the U.S. armed forces; President Obama’s executive order was a stop-gap measure without the full force of federal law, and its purported benefits to undocumented youth (e.g., allowing for driver’s licenses or in-state college tuition) were challenged by nativist governors in states such as Arizona.

2.20 Posadas, Census, and 2010 Activism

A posada is a Christmastime reenactment of Mary and Joseph’s attempt to find shelter in Bethlehem before the birth of Jesus. The PJI had been encouraging activist posadas for several years but large, archdiocese-wide events with pro-immigrant messages remained rare. An exception was reported in an uncommon nod to immigrants by the Catholic New World:

More than 1,000 people crowded onto the sidewalks around Holy Name Cathedral Dec. 14, walking in slow procession to reenact the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem before the birth of Jesus. The mostly Mexican congregation prayed for immigrants, especially the young, during the 22nd annual archdiocesan posada, whose theme was “Immigrant youth, hope for the people of God” (Martin 2008a).

At the posada people offered testimonies about their families. A journalist interviewed one teen from Providence of God (a Pilsen parish) who has lived with an older brother since her parents were deported;

⁸⁰ Electoral polls in November 2012 confirmed President Obama received enormous support from the Latino electorate as well as heavy Catholic support. Based on my analysis of the news coverage, I hold that these two categories of voters are strongly correlated though seldom acknowledged---e.g., an otherwise insightful historian, Gonzales (2009) erred in assuming that Latino affiliation as predominantly Catholic would “clearly suggest a natural affinity for the GOP, a party that emphasizes church-friendly policies” (2009: 289). Although he argued that working-class identification and anger at GOP anti-immigrant rhetoric were strong counterbalances, he undervalued the ways in which working-class worldviews could be linked with the social-justice aspects of Catholic faith. In my analysis, the data suggest that Latino Catholics, as well as other U.S. Catholics, might be as likely to identify with progressive politics because of their religion rather than despite it.

the separation from her parents “affected me most,” she said, but the posada allowed her to celebrate “and pray and hear the stories of the immigrants” (Martin 2008a). Bishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller also “spoke of...immigrants, and how tired they are---tired like Mary and Joseph were tired as they searched for shelter” (Martin 2008a). Garcia-Siller’s event was a product of his PJI membership and years of posadas at activist parishes.

Immigrant-themed posadas did not always meet with approval. At one PJI meeting a priest who was an immigrant from Latin America voiced concerns about a planned event not being a “real or traditional” posada---and that his parishioners, “especially the children,” might be confused about the lack of candies. He argued that “so many posadas” had taken on “these themes” that “the real posadas have become forgotten.” By real, he specified a festive and apolitical event where children could get handfuls of candy from piñatas. In my interpretation, his statements illustrated how a policy of hiring priests directly from Latin America did not guarantee voices for social justice. This analysis further pertains to the research questions posed in this chapter by illustrating how conservative Catholic discourses compete with progressive voices even within PJI meetings, and that multiple and pervasive challenges confront progressive Catholics engaged in discourses of authentic faith and acceptable Church practices.

The 2009 posada at St. Pius was typical of the activist parish. On a night in December a din of celebration emanated from the St. Pius basement, as it had for several nights. The wide downstairs space was crowded with tables and about 200 small children and parents. The kitchen was humming. Beef stew (menudo) and pozole were being served from enormous pots, the same as are used when St. Pius operates its soup kitchen for the poor and homeless. Two of the cooks were in charge of this evening’s event. One woman held the microphone and rapidly recited parts of the Rosary in Spanish, in an almost hypnotic rhythm. Not all of the adults in the basement mouthed the prayers and not everyone knew them by memory. Fewer, if any, of the children were involved. Father Dahm was not involved until later, when he

sauntered over and shook a few hands, thanked the women for leading prayers, and then asked for the people to form two separate groups for the singing of the posada.

A large accordion-like dividing wall in the basement was used as a division between “those on the outside” and “those on the inside” during the celebration, envisioning the partition as the U.S.-Mexico border fence/wall. Those on “the outside” were joined by a young man and woman dressed as José (Joseph) and María (Mary) attempting to find succor. Those on “the inside” sang in response: at first they denied entry outright, then added dismissive questions: “If she is a queen, why can’t she pay for a room somewhere?” On the last verse the walls were drawn open, and those on the outside walked inside and took seats at the tables.

The children were anxiously awaiting the distribution of candy, so Father Dahm used their captive attention to initiate review questions about the posada (“Who is Jose?” etc.). He also asked how many people were “experiencing a posada here at St. Pius for the first time?” And some hands went up, followed by applause. Dahm asked the kids if anyone knew what a census was. He underscored the importance of being counted, both in biblical times and in our times, “no matter what your status, documented or not.” He also noted that Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus were forced to leave the country and go to Egypt---because Herod was planning to have the baby killed---and thus they effectively “became undocumented immigrants.”

Father Dahm had long championed the census in his parish; as a PhD-carrying political scientist he understood that a more complete count in the inner city would bring more federal money and more political representation, according to the apportionment of Congressional seats by resident population. In December 2009, posadas and Christmastime homilies in other parishes also reinforced the notion of the

census as a necessary context for Christmas. A PJI letter of February 2010,⁸¹ signed by Rev. Donald Nevins, Rev. Marco Mercado, Rev. Thomas Cima, and Rev. Casimir Garbacz, the “Priests for Justice for Immigrants---Census Team” called on their colleagues: “This Spring we have a once in a decade opportunity to support the people of our immigrant parishes,” explaining that forms could be sent to each parish. The advantages of inviting U.S. Census officials to a parish were underscored particularly for communities with large families (as most census forms “have room for only 6 persons”) and a better accounting for poor, homeless, and undocumented portions of the community; moreover, “Securing a Census form from the parish will avoid a fearsome visit from a Census worker,” as many had learned to fear the visit of any government official.

In the months before the census, posters designed and distributed by the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO) began appearing in parish windows. They showed the silhouette of Joseph and Mary, on a mule, following a star toward Bethlehem, and included the words: “This is how Jesus was born / Joseph and Mary Participated in the Census / Don’t be afraid.” (This references Luke 2: 1-14.) The U.S. government did not pay for the posters or create them, but it did not oppose them either, given that the Census needed publicity in marginalized neighborhoods. Some Evangelical and Pentecostal leaders, calling them “blasphemous,” generated a media storm in opposition to the posters, but they did not change policy, and the posters did not disappear from the windows of many Catholic and other mainstream Christian churches.

On analyzing these observations, I argue that the evidence of parish leaders’ support for censuses is significant in two principle ways: (a) it underscores the challenges inherent in linking religion with political action, as called for under the tenets of liberation theology, but at the same time, (b) their claims to an authentic, progressive style of Catholicism inherently benefit from the opposition provided by

⁸¹ <http://www.archchicago.org/Immigration/pdf/Immigration/Census%20English.pdf> (Accessed July 6, 2010).

Pentecostal and other Protestant evangelical leaders. If we contextualize these data by recalling the oft-cited biblical admonition to “give unto Caesar what is Caesar’s” (and thus, to deal separately with the realms of politics and religion), we see more clearly the need for local Catholic leaders to elucidate a contrasting set of biblical foundations in favor of a political-religious nexus, such as providing institutional and symbolic support for the government census. The annual celebration of posadas, especially immigration-themed posadas, is a powerful support for this discourse, as progressive priests and laity underscore the foundational relationship between Christianity and the state---i.e., Jesus would not have been born in Bethlehem, according to this line of argument, if not for a census; moreover, Joseph and Mary would not have experienced such stress (in their inability to secure lodging at the inns) if the census had not filled the town with travelers. Church is set in dialogue with state, in a somewhat mutually dependent but not necessarily easy relationship; the state is depicted as a contributor to Christianity and also being an early antagonist, simultaneously welcoming and rejecting Jesus, in a dynamic that is transferred (in posadas) to the simultaneous acceptance and rejection of immigrants.

I also contend that these parish leaders benefitted from the census in another manner: By maintaining their support for this state project in the face of well-publicized evangelical opposition, they effectively reinforced the boundary lines between Protestant and Catholic and thus strengthened their discursive claims to an authentic progressive Catholic identity. But this was not mere boundary maintenance. Just as the evangelical preachers who contacted the news media were, presumably, using Catholic political engagement as a foil to make a firmer, louder claim to their specific identities as Protestants (despite their avoidance of that term), so did progressive Catholics indirectly benefit by drawing a firmer boundary around their territories of faith.

2.21 UFA: From Parish Group to Community Organization

Activist parishes might have only one “social action” or “peace and justice” group which occasionally set up tables outside the church doors, or sponsored a movie night---e.g., one group advertised a screening of

the 2004 documentary Mojados: Through the Night in the bulletin.⁸² In committed parishes several groups were dedicated to aspects of social action, from Christian Base Communities to anti-war groups, immigrant-rights protestors, immigrant ministry, and even some of the more socially progressive Bible study or Guadalupano groups. One staff member said they wanted “to facilitate the work between them and to be an enlace [“tie” or “link”] between the resources the parish has.... And to see how they can support the parish...it’s an enlace.”⁸³

St. Pius V has generated groups of lay volunteers involved in social justice causes for decades. Some have focused more on community safety, others on anti-war campaigns, schools, or domestic violence. As noted previously in this chapter, a small group of immigrant-rights activists at the parish began to call themselves “Acción Social” (Social Action) in 2005. They signed up to support their priests in forming the PJI, raising awareness of the movement in Chicago, and traveling to Washington, D.C., to lobby legislators against the Sensenbrenner Bill. (Examples of creative engagement and organizing by this group are discussed in the chapter on Women and Other Leaders.)

As the group collaborated on more projects in 2006 and 2007 they began referring to being “like family” or “our St. Pius family.” They continued to reinforce these bonds through social actions and informal functions that ranged from group participation in surprise birthday parties for the priests to picnics and cookouts (to which family and friends were also invited) and parties at members’ apartments. Many of these get-togethers involved a large amount of dancing and larger amounts of joking and story-telling. As Bosco (2006: 343) noted in a study of activists in Argentina, the “emotional labor” involved in cultivating and nurturing connections are examples of “the emotional dimensions of social networks...built around

⁸² Mojados: Through the Night (2004) is a documentary directed and written by Tommy Davis, who accompanied four migrants through the desert of Texas while evading the U.S. Border Patrol.

⁸³ The term enlace means “tie” or “link” but is also evocative of a neighbor, a member of a social safety net, or one who accompanies another. Interview of December 4, 2006, from the Spanish: “...facilitar el trabajo entre ellos y ser un enlace entre los recursos que tiene la parroquia que les puede apoyar a ellos, a las comunidades de base. Y como pueden apoyar ellos a la parroquia es parte de eso y es un enlace.”

reciprocal affection...crucial for the emergence, sustainability, and cohesion of activists in social movements”; collective rituals involving shared tragedy, entertainment, and humor “play an important role in mobilizing activists’ affective bonds and creating a sense of continuity and currency” for a movement (2006: 342).

The Social Action group led St. Pius parish’s efforts to send contingents to Washington, D.C. in 2009 and 2010. They took turns promoting the events during masses and seeking donors among fellow parishioners and business contacts in the community, to help cover the estimated \$110 cost per bus passenger. (Such caravans, as “national actions,” are the topic of a separate project I am preparing for future publication.)

In January 2010 the St. Pius V “Social Action” group changed its official name to U.F.A. (Unión, Fuerza, y Acción). Both names continued to be used, although UFA felt official after a youth in the parish school designed a green T-shirt that included the logo, and the group all wore matching shirts at subsequent masses where they made announcements, as well as at rallies and marches. The name “UFA” was easy to shout at public rallies, but it also served to establish the group as more of an autonomous entity: Rather than being known merely as the parish’s social action group, it could then call itself a parish-affiliated group. Nonetheless, the UFA members still felt themselves to be firmly rooted in the parish community and continued to seek the advice, blessings, and fellowship of their priests. They also continued to meet (except for social gatherings in individual homes) in the parish rectory and basement.

The slight rebranding helped convince outside donors that this was not just a Catholic group; with some assistance from their priests, UFA’s chief organizer applied for and received a pair of small grants from an organization UFA members affectionately referred to as “the Presbyterians.” Totalling a few thousand dollars, the grants purchased supplies for workshops and marches, such as poster board and markers, and it allowed the group to offer small honoraria to invited speakers (e.g., \$150 to a labor-rights community organizer to lead an event in the church basement, and a domestic violence presentation on another night).

Biweekly or monthly meetings were attempted with mixed results from 2008 to 2011. It was nearly impossible to find a night when all members could attend because of conflicting work and school schedules. Meanwhile, interest levels waxed and waned as calls for action in the Chicago area and national events slowed expectations, notably during election cycles. During lulls on the national and Chicago stages, parish activities kept the group together, even if incompletely, by providing communal life-blood to the leaders-in-training. When other energizing influences were in doubt, a priest or a member of the parish council would ask UFA to join in a Kermes (street fair and fund-raiser) or to help provide ice and drinks, accompanied with dancing and inevitable good cheer at a priest's surprise birthday party in the church basement. These were major events on the parish calendar, requiring the participation of all parish groups and both of the principal priests.

Group members said that it was important to experience a bit of the parish limelight as well, to feel one's energy reinforced by small bits of recognition that came with making a Sunday announcement or a social contribution. Peer esteem mattered, even if only for face recognition, and even if most of one's peers in the pews were barely listening to announcements---i.e., if they were secretly wishing the mass would end a bit quicker (a sentiment they expressed in occasional comments to me). When the pastor agreed to help promote the U.S. Census of 2010, several UFA members helped make "be counted" announcements during mass on February 28; UFA members signed up para cubrir ("to cover") the various Sunday masses, ensuring an announcement would be made at each service that day.

2.22 Community as American Dream

A guiding principle for the PJI and parish lay leaders was the strengthening of community, which was one of the pillars of the immigrant rights movement along with family and faith. These were terms indicative of love, i.e., ties that bind rather than actions that break and upheave---not revolution unless that term can indicate a series of peaceful reforms, as when invoked by community organizers in the mold of Saul Alinsky. A parish group leader explained:

One thing we envision is the creation of community. There already is community but to create a little more in the sense of having more solidarity in this and other types of events. To create that social consciousness that brings us to improve our lives and also to continue with the mentality that we carried with us from our countries of origin.... And to continue fighting for social change in terms of our immigration laws, something fair for [all] the people.⁸⁴

An analysis of these comments brings several related factors to the surface. If nation or country fit in this parish leader's equation, whether for Mexico or the U.S., for nostalgia for homeland or for the American Dream, it seemed to be perceived as a subordinate and troubled intermediary zone---a struggle to reform an unjust political framework. This leader spoke not of choosing one form of nationalism over another nor of deciding whether to assimilate, but of integrating a stronger U.S. community where one's parish ties helped unite the old and the new. He also cast aside the myths of Social Darwinism that still held sway in many circles. The impoverished communities to which he referred had taught their migrants the necessity of mutual support, not individualistic competition.

And yet, the American Dream could not be ignored by these activists whether or not they subscribed to the version taught to their children. (Fourth and fifth graders in Tucson and Chicago, for instance, competed to draw "American Dream" posters and patriotic art projects.) Another parish activist problematized such notions of the Dream late one night during a caravan bus trip to Washington, D.C., at a truck stop in rural Pennsylvania:

Look, there are lots of people who believe the American Dream means being selfish, like they give you a pastry and you eat it alone. Then the same thing will happen to you that happened to the mouse who got sick from trying to eat the whole pastry by himself, and it gave him diarrhea and all that. So I believe that if we achieve what we call the American Dream it has to be a dream of solidarity.

⁸⁴ Interview of December 4, 2006, in Spanish: "Una de las expectativas es crear comunidad. Que ya hay comunidad pero crear un poco mas en cuestión de estar más solidarios en este y otro tipo de eventos. Crear esa conciencia social que venimos a mejorar nuestras vidas y también a seguir con la mentalidad que traíamos de nuestros países de origen que era apoyarnos unos a otros, no perder eso. Y seguir luchando por un cambio social justo en referente a las leyes de inmigración, algo justo para la gente."

I don't know what may be in the minds of the people who achieve the American Dream but for me, it's not that you're going to be rich. It's that you're going to be part of a great family with everyone.

I don't care [because] at one time there was money, and now there isn't any money. However, we continue being part of a family, everyone. So then, I believe that the American Dream [of that kind] is a lie, because it gets put into the heads of people from all over the world who come to this country, that you can be the richest in the world and not worry about anybody else. That's no good. No good.

His anger was directed at the Dream as a neoliberal myth but not against the entire country. U.S.

inclusiveness was particularly endearing, he explained:

I believe that this is a nation of immigrants, and it's a privilege to live here, because it's a unique experience you can share with people from many cultures...and to get to know so many people from Latin America and diverse other parts of the world...so it's a blessing. I am Mexican and yet it's here where I've gotten to know more Mexicans than I have in my own country.⁸⁵

These interviews demonstrated that the kinds of patriotic and socioeconomic discourses on the minds of progressive Catholic activists were deeply inflected with Catholic Social Doctrine---i.e., the complex of socially responsible, community-oriented ideals forming a major part of the catechesis and which were reinforced on a weekly basis in activist parishes. To citizens raised on civic religion and the notion that self-reliance was a high form of patriotism, the notion of "a dream of solidarity" might seem almost sacrilegious. And yet the solidarity expressed by these parish activists was in line with Catholic teachings in both conservative and progressive parishes, with particular emphasis in the latter.

2.23 Procession for Arizona: Signs of Death and Hope

In Chicago and other cities in 2010, responses to Arizona's anti-immigrant SB 1070 legislation included press conferences, vigils, marches, and other actions. In a departure from this pattern, one event (re)framed the faith base of the movement by occurring far from television cameras: a "change in pace" as an interactive mass and vigil at the south side's Most Blessed Sacrament parish. Scheduled for the afternoon and evening of July 28, 2010, it was called the "Mass in Solidarity with the People of Arizona and Immigration Reform." PJI parishes promoted the event with bulletin inserts and announcements; it

⁸⁵ Interview at bus stop, Number 2, Oct. 12, 2009. My translation from the Spanish.

was not advertised to the press. No journalists attended apart from a lone photographer working for (both) the Catholic New World and Católico; the latter published pictures of volunteers at the event.

The outdoor portion of the vigil was set up in stations, in the mold of Christmastime posadas or Lenten stations of the cross, but it was described by PJI leaders as “a procession” on the sidewalk. Near the parish doors was an altar on which they placed sandals, cast-off desert clothing, empty two-liter soda bottles, and lost money---“All of which are signs of death,” as one priest explained to the crowd. Stretching half a block down from the parish doors, the procession incorporated layers of textual, physical, and spatial symbolism. This imagery was explained in a transparent manner within the brochures that accompanied the event, in order to encourage what I regarded to be an attempt to foster a feeling of empowerment among the participants, in addition to the more obvious spiritual and biblical sources of inspiration that were programmed into the evening.

Laity, joined by PJI and religious in white robes, moved from station to station reading biblical passages and commentary on social and political issues. Each of the nine stations was, as the brochure explained, a makeshift altar on a table set to represent “a group of migrants: (9) = Mexicans, Colombians, Arabs, Polish, Lithuanians, Koreans, etc.”

The “First Station” emphasized Old Testament descriptions of the Egyptian pharaoh’s (c. 1250 BC) order to kill “the first-born of the People of God, foreigners in those lands” and to condemn them to “forced labor and building their cities.” A group prayer then focused on current events: “Many children die for lack of economic resources, many people are employed in slave-like conditions, many migrants construct buildings, but don’t have their own houses.” It noted similar ironies for migrant hospital workers, farm laborers, and janitors who “clean universities, but do not have access to education.” The responsorial chorus (read in unison) following each litany was: “For how long, God, will the oppressors triumph?”⁸⁶

⁸⁶ My translation of the Spanish.

The Second Station of the procession focused on the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation “of more than 18,000 people to Babylon” that separated families, appropriated lands, and burned temples (c. 597-587 BC). Heads were bowed for prayer:

Today also, God of unity, many families are separated by unjust anti-immigrant laws...about 1,100 people are deported every day; many of your children are obliged to abandon their properties; millions of youth are abandoned to poverty and the violence of the streets.⁸⁷

The Third Station dealt with a Greek king in 170 BC: “Antíoco Epifanes” who imposed Greek “customs and religion” and prohibited people “from speaking their language, obliged them to abandon their traditions, values and customs, [and] persecuted those who did not ‘adapt’ to [Greek] culture.” Another prayer was read:

Today also, God of diversity, our migrant community is being persecuted for being different, for their customs, values and religious expression, is discriminated [against] for language, for the color of their skin. It is obliged to sell itself to unjust laws and to put down its own race.⁸⁸

I would argue, on subsequent analysis of the event, that while the content and commentary of these table-altars showed the concern among the PJI for the plight of their immigrant parishioners, an underlying and far more effective theme of the night emerged from the numerous tie-ins with Old Testament stories of plague, slavery, and oppression---all of which underscored the theme of prophetic voices and prophetic action, i.e., the mold in which progressive Catholic leaders envisioned their actions on behalf of immigrant rights, particularly when state and federal governments appeared to be pushing back against immigrants, thus giving the impression that the movement was either failing or under extreme stress. These themes were further highlighted in the Fourth Station, which referred to the migration inflicted on the newborn Jesus:

⁸⁷ My translation of: “Oración: También hoy, Dios de unidad...muchos de tus hijos e hijas son obligados....”

⁸⁸ My translation of the Spanish: “...nuestro pueblo migrante está siendo perseguido por ser diferente, por sus costumbres, valores...es discriminado por su lenguaje, por su color de piel. Es obligado a venderse a leyes injustas y a menospreciar a su propia raza.”

his family and...mothers had to migrate because King Herod attempted to kill innocent people...to maintain his dominion. Herod the unconditional collaborator of the empire, imposed 'pax Romana' in order to silence all the people who raised their voices and called for a more just world.⁸⁹

The accompanying prayer called out to the "God of the poor, of the orphan and of the widow" to note "your people are being persecuted only for being who they are, for growing and for raising their voice against unjust immigration laws." The Fifth Station referred to genocide in 1492 at the hands of the conquistadors who, "in the name of God" divided the peoples and took their lands, "demonizing their religions, and condemning them to believe that they were inferior beings."⁹⁰ A priest read this prayer:

Today also, God, Word of the Indian made into flesh, your people are conquered by transnational corporations, your indigenous are torn away from their land, forced to migrate, dehumanized in the great cities. Your migrant community is a victim of racism and discrimination by avaricious men.⁹¹

The Sixth Station underscored links between the historical slave trade ("obliged to contribute to the economy of the rich" by oppressors who manipulated "the Scriptures to teach them to be submissive, resign themselves to abuse") and racist legacies of slavery today, as "your Afro-descendant community is treated with disdain, manipulated by the oppressor" to show distrust to "other peoples who, the same as they [were], are enslaved."⁹² The faith-frame of this message was also an attempt to link the Civil Rights Movement with immigrant rights.

The Seventh Station advanced to the 19th century, when Irish, Italian, and German migrants, "compelled by hunger, disease and wars find refuge in our lands, and are given food, education and the opportunity to enrich this nation." The prayer then drew a stark contrast between the Ellis Island generation and the immigrants of today:

⁸⁹ Translated from my field notes and the program for July 28, 2010. The title was "Misa en Solidaridad con el Pueblo de Arizona y la Reforma Migratoria"; it was written by PJI and staff at the Office of Immigrant Affairs.

⁹⁰ My translation from: "En 1492...sufre el peor genocidio.... Ellos, en el 'nombre de dios' se apropian de las tierras, dividen a los pueblos, satanizan sus religiones, los condenan a creerse seres inferiores."

⁹¹ My translation from the Spanish: "...Dios, Palabra india hecha carne, tu pueblo es conquistado por empresas transnacionales...."

⁹² My translation from the Spanish: "...tu comunidad Afro-descendiente es tratada con desprecio...."

Today also, God of the pilgrim, your people continue arriving from all parts of the world, with dreams of obtaining a better life, walking beside other cultures, and continuing to enrich this nation of immigrants.⁹³

The Eighth Station critiqued neoliberal job losses and migration caused by NAFTA. The prayer called our “God of the laboring class” to aid laborers who “live in fear because of other contracts and treaties that only benefit the powerful.” The Ninth Station brought events up to 2010 with Arizona’s law “that promotes discrimination, racism, and distrust among minority communities.” It was called an unconstitutional law “that has provoked a climate of fear, wherein a brother is judged by the color of his skin, a sister is singled out for her accent,” and citizens whose parents are Latinos “are free to be harassed by the police.” The prayer afterward called “out to You God of the migrant...may you show solidarity with your people who flee to you God of Justice.⁹⁴

The Final Station saw ritual burning of paper signs (“oppression,” “racism,” etc.), testimonies, and prayers. A prayer emphasized God’s love for those “despised by the powerful...excluded from a fair distribution worldwide... Move us to bring forth Your justice and mercy into a community where everyone can live in harmony and solidarity. ...in the name of Jesus the Poor⁹⁵....”

As the sun dropped toward the horizon, the crowd joined for a blessing in front of the doors, then were beckoned enter “after removing our shoes and walking over the sand” on the temple’s wide steps. The cool brown sand represented the biblical “wilderness” as well as the desert along the U.S.-Mexico border--a visual and tactile representation which, for some, elicited deep and traumatic memories.⁹⁶

In subsequent analysis I concluded that these tactile and visual symbols were designed not only to cause memories to resurface for some participants but also to elicit empathetic responses among those who had

⁹³ My translation from the Spanish.

⁹⁴ My translations of the Spanish.

⁹⁵ The Spanish version has “Jesus, the Poor” (capitalized) as an honorarium: “...por Jesús, el Pobre, que vive....”

⁹⁶ A woman shared one such memory as our group departed the event; see further below.

never migrated themselves. Participants that evening were linked as well with the migration stories of the Old Testament. The sand on the steps was a novel exercise in political-religious theatre---and thus a contribution to the complex of creative protests in favor of immigrant rights---in that everyone walking through the threshold to the parish church was obliged to strip off a layer of psychological and ergonomic defense (shoes and socks) to undergo the transition. This was a rite of passage that incorporated all those present into the historic and spiritual world of the Church and the modern world of immigrants, at once. On a parallel level, it was a rite of incorporation into the concurrent state of belief and action making up progressive Catholicism.

For the members of this parish, the event was an outgrowth of outdoor vigils showing links with the chosen peoples of the Bible. In 2007 it was the site of a bilingual “Way of the Cross for Justice for Immigrants / Vía Crucis por la Justicia para los Inmigrantes” coordinated by Father Michael J. Boehm, one of the core PJI members, with the support of archdiocese staff. The bilingual event incorporated quotes from papal encyclicals, prayers, and reflections on immigrants’ rights. One asked, “If we as Christians can’t find the courage of [the biblical] Veronica to accompany...and speak out for these people, **who will?**”⁹⁷ Also included was a quote from the martyred Archbishop Oscar Romero: “I wish to make a special address to the men of the army...the law of God says: DO NOT KILL...No one need obey an immoral law.” At another station an immigrant lamented being unjustly linked with terrorism:

Since the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001 in this country, many undocumented immigrants have been very much affected in their jobs, for not having a valid social security number allowing them to work.... They have confused them for terrorists or they have chased them away from their jobs or deported them to their countries of origin. ...All of them, just like Simon of Cirene, carry the cross of Jesus, an unjust and heavy cross.⁹⁸

Among the lines of inquiry stemming from these observations are specifically progressive Catholic understandings of having an “unjust and heavy” cross to bear that should be rejected, or at least reformed

⁹⁷ In English with emphasis in the original.

⁹⁸ My translation of the Spanish (quoting “palabras de un obrero inmigrante indocumentado”) sixth station.

rather than borne out of a sense of martyrdom. And yet they drew inspiration from martyrs to social justice as well. The anthropological literature treats martyrdom as a component of framing processes: Catholic immigrant-rights leaders since the 1980s have been theorized as using their martyr stories, including that of the Archbishop Romero and the nuns murdered in El Salvador, as creative means for transforming Christian faith into socioeconomic and political action (Nepstad 2004: 98, 108). The martyrdom of Romero followed his “conversion to the poor” after an early career as an apolitical member of the hierarchy. The archbishop’s conversion entailed evangelization and a political-religious nexus; in Romero’s words: “The Christian who does not want to live this commitment of solidarity with the poor is not worthy to be called Christian” (Nepstad 2004: 108, citing Romero’s *Violence of Love*, p. 191). The framing of contemporary events within contexts of religious conversion, popular solidarity, and personal empathy served to unite North American and Latin American activists, bridging the gulf between their cultural differences, their privileged and unprivileged perspectives (2004: 109-110). The frame of a shared faith was superimposed over other frames in what Nepstad calls a frame alignment process in production of a collective action frame (2004: 15). Since frame alignment depends on the receptivity of audiences, however, U.S. and Latino Catholics predisposed toward a conservative view of the proxy campaigns of the Cold War would be less receptive to the framing of Romero’s martyrdom in the promotion of social justice, although conservative Catholics might still respect the archbishop’s martyrdom as a distinct historical event, not ostensibly tied to U.S. domestic concerns today.

As the July 28, 2010 mass neared its conclusion, one of the responsorial prayers recalled the efforts local activists have undertaken to pressure the Church hierarchy to stand with undocumented immigrants. The prayer asked God to aid the pope, bishops, and others to “be moved by the truth and justice found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” To return to an analytical theme that I invoked earlier in this chapter, I argue that responsorial prayers uttering the names of popes and bishops are usually part of a mass, though in the form of general blessings; they do not often imply that Church authorities have been falling short of truth in the Gospels. Perhaps in this case, then, the evidence suggests a use of prayer in the movement frame, to

goad bishops into action, though it was more likely a reframing and reifying of faith as first in the movement---speaking directly to God while speaking indirectly to the bishops.⁹⁹

After the mass we were invited to a convivencia (get-together) in the adjacent meeting-hall basement, where young mariachis from a parish in southern Chicago performed traditional, largely secular Mexican songs. Young women stepped forward to solo throughout the performance. The tables buzzed with laughter and conversation. Then a dozen of us squeezed into a parish van where a lay leader, Mariela, worried about future activism in the neighborhood and told us to “always remember where we come from.” The woman sitting beside me took her words literally. As her small daughter gazed out of the window she spoke of wanting her children to learn to make traditional foods “so they know they are Mexican, from Puebla, and they don’t forget the way things are done.” I nodded and asked if Mariela had meant also that some Latinos turn their backs on others in a political sense, failing to recall hardships families suffered. She nodded but also, maintaining a patient composure, encouraged the woman beside me to relate more of her migration story.

“The sand on the steps of the church brought me back,” she said, “in time to...my own crossing of the border.” It was “perhaps six years ago or less” when she brought her first child to the United States. Although she had crossed “through the mountains” and not the desert, the passage was traumatic. She wiped away tears in the moonlight and related how she and her group “were robbed twice that night”---once “at 10 p.m. at gunpoint,” and then “again at knifepoint at 5 a.m.” the next morning.

2.24 The Archbishop’s Visit to Broadview

In a bitter snowstorm one December morning in 2006, two Sisters of Mercy, JoAnn Persch and Pat

⁹⁹ This also recalls Lancaster’s 1988 conceptualization of “the Popular Church” as being simultaneously radical and ironically more conservative than the conservatives, yet not reactionary, not politically right-wing.

Murphy, led a small group of families, along with the Catholic lawyer Royal Berg¹⁰⁰ and a handful of other colleagues on an effort that would become a weekly vigil for the next several years---amounting to hundreds of determined, weekly appearances in all weather for the sisters, Mr. Berg, and a group that would vary from the small, hardy core to hundreds of activists on special occasions.

Catholic origins notwithstanding---or, rather, because these Catholics shared an inclusive view of the Church and U.S. society---the effort became ecumenical and was sometimes led by Protestant pastors from suburban congregations. Many PJI members went to Broadview on those Friday mornings, and they worked long to bring the archbishop out to the site to highlight the cause. In August 2012 Cardinal George joined the vigil; the experience moved him, and he broke his usual silence on immigration to write about the experience in his Catholic New World column (George 2012). After noting that religious brothers and sisters, “especially Scalabrinians” near the border offer deportees food, phone calls, and shelter at Casa del Migrante, he thanked ICE:

The Chicago office of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement kindly permits the sisters and others who come each Friday to speak to the deportees, pray with them and minister to their family members who are present. The archdiocesan ministry for immigrant affairs and education is directed by Elena Segura, who is always present with support and hope, especially for the families who are about to be separated from their father or, less often, their mother.

The members of the Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants who discussed this article with me noted that the “kindly” granted permission of which the archbishop spoke had actually cost them years of work. Rather than being granted permission, they had worked through courts and legislatures to pressure ICE to allow them access. That struggle with federal officials and local wardens continued, they said, in the face of changing deportation schedules, bureaucratic alterations, and the arbitrary decisions and moods of guards.

¹⁰⁰ I first met Royal Berg at a PJI meeting in 2009. He reported on the vigils every Friday, and on planes from O'Hare for the border with chained immigrants aboard. ICE had hearings by televideo, obliging people to appear apart from lawyers and dressed as common criminals---all prejudicial to them, he noted. A group of sisters went to the courtrooms to lend support. Berg also negatively critiqued "F.A.I.R.," an anti-immigrant group claiming diseases were brought by immigrants.

Although the archbishop missed this point, in their estimation, he did highlight the human dimensions of their ministry at Broadview by noting the tears of a mother of five children. The statistics the archbishop provided in his article (which were compiled by archdiocesan staff Elena Segura and Marilu Gonzalez) provided an overview of the importance of Broadview:

Approximately 50,000 deportees have left from Broadview in the past five years.... About 80,000 children in this area have been separated from at least one of their parents. Most of those deported are from Mexico, some from Guatemala, Honduras or El Salvador. Those from Poland or Ireland or other European countries are deported from a different center. Across the entire United States, approximately 400,000 people were deported in 2011, double the number expelled in 2000.

In his subsequent remarks, the archbishop referenced “enforcement-only” approaches to immigration---an element which the PJI and Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants were pleased to see in print---but then he made statements that they saw as diminishing the focus on immigration reform: “Some of these were genuine criminals and should have been deported; but most are ordinary, responsible people who came here in years past when we deliberately didn’t protect our borders from people who came to work.”

Activists approved strongly of his next words, however, which were written with direct PJI input:

The government’s immigration policy seems schizophrenic. On the one hand, there is much hopeful rhetoric and even concrete gestures like allowing those young people raised here to finish college before they have to face again the threat of deportation; on the other hand, the number of people deported is greater than ever.

The legal reform of our immigration system is a politically charged issue, which is why there seems little political will to face the fact that 11 million people who are here without documents and are therefore outside the law are nevertheless woven into the fabric of our family and social life, our parishes and communities, our economy and public life. When an individual is separated from the family and community in which he has made his life, everyone suffers.

...In the meantime...the church is present in prayer and accompanies with practical help those leaving and those left behind. God bless them all. (George 2012)

Over the period of this research, PJI members critically examined each essay and speech that the bishop produced in local media, and they indicated that although they respected the bishop and his office, they felt he still needed “to be moved...to have a change of heart” and to undergo a more thorough conversion in order to stand consistently for immigrant rights. (The concept of conversion is discussed later in this work.) The PJI attempted to push the bishop into a more forceful position on behalf of the movement.

My subsequent analysis of interview data and observations suggested that the PJI had grounds for their frustration with the bishop, although on some occasions he had issued statements that favored immigration reform, both in Chicago and in his former capacity as president of the USCCB. The data supported the assumption that progressive Catholics engaged in discourses that were often at odds with their superiors, and that those superiors also tended to contribute to conservative ideological frameworks; however, one of the characteristics of the PJI leaders appeared to be faith in the prospects of conversion---the belief that hearts and minds would be conditioned toward a greater level of support for immigrants and their families, in the vein of liberation theology's preferential option for the poor.

2.25 Future Leadership

By February 2013 mainstream news media were making regular reports about bipartisan Congressional support moving toward comprehensive immigration reform. The GOP had apparently been so frustrated at losing the Latino vote in the 2012 election that in 2013 even the usually nativist Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity were voicing support for GOP leaders in this legislative effort. Some of the movement activists in Chicago expressed renewed hope at that time, but others indicated that they were as anxious as ever about the future.

PJI priests also expressed these preoccupations, to which they added another set of worries on the assumption that immigration reform would soon be accomplished: Would the descendants of today's Catholic immigrants remember those below them as they attempted to climb the economic ladder? Would they teach a community-oriented, Catholic history and a shared, mutually supportive version of the American Dream, or would they instead attempt to gain individualistic success along neoliberal models? Given the history of Catholic immigration and social incorporation, they worried that today's immigrants or their children might develop into future nativists. On the other hand, some saw hints of more inclusive futures, especially in activist Chicago parishes and some other communities. There is precedence for such inclusive shifts in other immigrant communities, such as the Italian Americans of New York's 115th

Street, who, despite previous decades of discrimination against Puerto Rican arrivals, began to see reflections of themselves in the Haitian Catholics attending the feast of the Blessed Mother (McAlister 1998: 154).¹⁰¹

The data examined in this chapter indicated that although local Catholic leadership operated in relationship to regional, national, and international agents, parish leaders provided the impetus for, and direction of, the national movement on various occasions. Actions in Chicago also appeared to take on a greater sense of urgency, I contend, when these leaders perceived limitations on the leadership of the national Church, including the USCCB. Thus, contrary to prevailing discourses of hierarchical leadership within the Catholic Church---i.e., that international and national leaders determined courses for action, and that local organizers in the immigrant-rights movement chiefly answered calls to action from the Vatican or the USCCB---the data supported the conclusion that local Catholic leaders engaged in numerous attempts at novel forms of protest as well as discourses in support of political and religious commitments supporting the rights of immigrants.

Local leaders and parish-based activists made sacrifices of time, energy, and personal freedom for this social movement, amid numerous delays and setbacks. It was clear that some activists lamented the absence of a national leader in the immigrant rights movement: There was no Martin Luther King, Jr., no César Chavez, and Dolores Huerta had grown too elderly to be more than inspirational. Perhaps the U.S. political climate had become more atomized than ever, they reflected, making such a national leader less likely to emerge. Rep. Luis Gutierrez of Chicago attempted to step into that spotlight, making a showing in numerous national Spanish-language news reports, but despite his face and name recognition, Gutierrez's status as a public figure also limited the extent of his power in the movement, as many Latinos harbored deep distrust for politicians, especially Chicago politicians. In this near vacuum at the

¹⁰¹ This acceptance was said to include the separation of Haitians from labels "as black people" (Orsi 1992: 334; Orsi 1985); yet this inclusivity might have stemmed from the fact that most of the Italians had not actually lived in the neighborhood themselves since the 1970s (McAlister 1998: 150).

national level the importance of local leaders was underscored. Local actions created the initial support for the movement and maintained interest in connecting social and political issues. Local actors also attempted to engage in national activism within the movement's broad-based coalition.

2.26 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has argued that local activists, as concomitant political and religious agents, have played an influential role in shaping the discourses of both the immigrant rights movement and the U.S. Catholic Church, through the use of novel forms of protest and activism. The analysis in this chapter has revolved around two related questions: (1) What happens when novel forms of protest emerge within an institution that in many ways is deeply conservative? (2) What types of discourses arise that are both progressive and Catholic? I have approached these themes via a number of subordinate questions: What happens in the Church when some parish-based priests and laity begin to develop views on social issues at odds with the views of Church leaders? What sources do these activists draw upon to develop a discourse to express their views? Finally, within the context of the Church, how do these leaders mobilize broader groups? In other words, what kinds of events are staged, what forms of protest are developed, and what kinds of symbols are deployed in a movement that is both political and religious?

After briefly revisiting the ways in which movement leaders engage in novel types of activism and examining the effects of that activism on the U.S. Catholic Church, this section discusses a range of progressive Catholic discourses. Then it turns to forms of protest that elicit further understanding of both of these guiding questions simultaneously (the Broadview overnight vigil, the Procession for Arizona, posadas and the census, and the Archbishop of Chicago's speech before U.S. Representative Luis Gutierrez), before ending with additional notes on liberation theology.

2.26.1 Activism within the Institution

The first question has been explored through an analysis of the activists themselves as individuals and

interrelated agents within these parishes (PJI, Latino leaders, and others). This chapter has also argued that their actions and forms of protest can be regarded as novel in various ways, and that their activism has been embraced or resisted by conservative and progressive Catholics alike, giving rise to tensions within their parishes and within the wider Catholic Church. As discourses have surrounded these tensions within the Church, progressive Catholics have also felt pressured to establish their claims to an authentic Christianity because of Catholic and non-Catholic mainstream news media.

In the initial pages of this chapter I examined various connotations of the word novel as applied to this analysis. I have called these protests and movement actions novel because of one or more of the following reasons: (1) many actions were new to the activists themselves (if not necessarily new to history); (2) music, symbols, and actions took innovative form by combining traditional styles with those of the present; (3) some of their protests attained historically unparalleled sizes, such as the massive street mobilizations of 2006; (4) new forms of electronic communication were used or were employed more widely than before, and this became increasingly apparent as each year progressed; (5) progressive Catholic protest groups brought an unusual kind of ethnic mixing to the fore, in that most of the PJI were “white and Anglo” yet they led predominantly Latino lay activists and immigrant parishes;¹⁰² (6) the inclusivity advocated by the PJI in their parishes and in movement actions brought many Catholic immigrants into unexpected contact with Protestants and atheists, as well as (in a true first for many) Jewish and Muslim organizers and congregants.

As ethno-racial blending is one of the aforementioned markers of novel forms of protest, against a backdrop dominated by identity-based politics, the biographical and social backgrounds of these Latino and PJI activists’ lives mattered a great deal to their activism. (While some background on the PJI

¹⁰² As is discussed earlier in this chapter, there were exceptions, mainly in the form of Latino leaders and organizers that the PJI priests had helped install in TRP, the St. Toribio Romo Migrant Center, and parish-based groups. In terms of Chicago priests, however, only one in twenty were Latino, and few of these were progressive activists.

membership is provided in the next chapter, a few notes are appropriate here.) Most of the PJI were white and of European American background (especially Irish American), aged between 50 and 75, although some were in their 30s or 40s. They were nearly all bilingual (chiefly English-Spanish), and some were polyglot. As discussed in the next chapter, many had formative experiences in Latin America and in previous social movements.

The Latino parishioner-activists tended to be younger, mainly in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, although some were older, and a few were elderly. At St. Pius V most were of Mexican heritage, though even at more multinational parishes like Our Lady of Lourdes (which had significant Colombian, Paraguayan, Guatemalan, and other nationalities present) the numbers of Mexicans tended toward a plurality. Most were bilingual, though they tended to struggle with some aspects of English and preferred to converse, sing, and conduct business in Spanish when possible. Their children, among those who had children, tended to be fully bilingual unless they were eschewing Spanish as a subordinate domestic form (a “language of home”) in favor of the language of the dominant culture.

As was noted in the remarks on novel categories of protest, these groups of activists were unusual on the Chicago scene, and on the national scene, because they comprised of cadres of Latinos with white, non-Latino leaders. Although most of their parish groups served as leadership training for Latino activists, ostensibly providing Latino leaders for each predominantly Latino group, they generally regarded their priests to be at the head of their activist efforts as they headed their religious communities, parishes.¹⁰³ Meanwhile, they knew that most Latino speakers at these same rallies tended to be local evangelical

¹⁰³ Exceptions to the rule were activists within parishes that had recently been assigned a priest whom they regarded to be either more conservative or at least less committed to PJI projects. Thus some parishes would build up reputations as community action centers under energetic PJI leadership, only to lose that reputation with the subsequent round of clerical appointments. Some small groups of activists also persevered despite a lack of support from their pastors, though their efforts were decidedly limited.

Protestant ministers who led Latino congregations, or Latino leaders of secular organizations.¹⁰⁴ Did they somehow resent being led by non-Latinos? And did they not desire to take on more of the spotlight themselves at immigrant rights events? Sentiments such as these could have seriously disrupted activism, but I did not interpret any resentment of the sort during the period of field research, at least not in parishes where PJI priests were regarded as staunch supporters of the cause. These lay activists appeared content to be led by “white Anglo” PJI in marches and rallies; in general, they seemed grateful that their spiritual leaders had urged them to join in mobilizations, and they derived sufficient pride from representing their parish groups below the oversight of the priest.

As for seeking the limelight themselves, some lay activists were individually ambitious, but most enjoyed presenting announcements in mass, marching, and protesting as a group---provided they were not always at the front of the group. It seemed that this apparent contentment to serve as a team member, rather than an outright leader, was an expression of Catholic cultural norms privileging the community over the individual. Their contentment in following white, Anglo priests was also a marker of in-group solidarity that transcended race (they saw their priest representing their entire community, regardless of ethno-racial differences), and partly an ethnic adoption of the priest (he “seems like one of us,” etc.). Finally, such ethno-racial boundary-spanning resulted from feelings of ritual enhancement when they saw their spiritual leader before them, lending an ostensibly divine sanction to a risk-taking event. The priest’s position at the front or middle of their mobilizations was interpreted, in short, as a form of blessing as well as an accompaniment. (As is discussed later in this chapter conclusion, however, such apparent ethno-racial harmony might be problematized.)

While the ecumenism of the movement brought new inspiration into Catholic activists’ lives, it also presented challenges, one of which was the periodic need to refuse to help others. Catholics were

¹⁰⁴ They also saw various Latino organizers from TRP, ICIRR, and the newly formed St. Toribio Romo Migrant Center, but these organizers were considered (from their perspective) subordinate to their priests.

circumspect in their use of the power to mobilize, even when risking the ire of coalition leaders from other organizations who might feel betrayed when their newfound allies turned away from them on more than one occasion. Although parish leaders responded on occasion to urgent situations (e.g., ICE raids, or the Sensenbrenner Bill), they tended to opt for purposefully paced, long-term planning for social justice reform. A longitudinal view meant words of caution from PJI priests or the organizers of social action groups when a call to mobilize went out, especially if that call emanated from white secular leftists. On various occasions I heard private concessions such as “You can go, it would be great, and you can represent our parish...but we can’t make an announcement [in mass], can’t take that chance with everyone else.” They viewed all such invitations with a weighty sense of the responsibility they held for the lives and welfares not only of activist parishioners but also the families and community members who depended on anyone involved in a protest.

Few of the Latino activists I met were unemployed for any significant amount of time, although they often felt forced to find work for low pay and under temporary circumstances (e.g., one felt compelled to visit a local Home Depot parking lot daily for a period of weeks, in an effort to join construction or other day-laborer jobs which did not always materialize; another continued to rise before dawn six or seven days a week to open a bakery, at which she was paid well below minimum wage). Yet even low pay and unsafe conditions were worthy of some pride in their eyes, in the sense of providing for a family and home, and this sense of pride---coupled with a feeling of blessing (from priests, from their fellow activist Catholics, and from their sense of communion with God)---redoubled when they made such faith-based sacrifices. Protests that required a day or more off work, without pay, made their sacrifices all the more admirable and valuable in their own eyes, and in the eyes of the PJI and the lay leaders who felt responsible for their safety.

The long-term view of the PJI was calculated to promote community-building rather than focusing on short-term political changes, although they felt that these would be desirable in many instances as well.

As the years of protest witnessed numerous political setbacks, moreover, this long-term view helped pace the energies and levels of enthusiasm of their parishioners: Rather than guaranteeing marchers for the September 2006 trek to the suburbs, St. Pius V supported the event with water and supplies. Rather than marching on various occasions in 2008, parish leaders opted to help TRP with a voter-registration drive. And instead of concentrating only on protests when the movement seemed to stall in most parts of the country, PJI leaders helped social action groups start a series of “leadership and self-esteem” workshops which were soon exported to other parishes; meanwhile, other PJI priests started what they called “Peace and Justice” reading and reflection groups. Coupled with various forms of protest (phone-call campaigns, posadas, bus trips, postcards, etc.) rather than large marches alone, this variegated, creative, and long-term planning, with sufficient concern for pacing as well, helped guarantee that a large number of immigrant and progressive parishioners remained interested in assisting with future actions.

As parish-based activists have developed novel approaches to protest on behalf of undocumented immigrants, they have sparked additionally creative styles of protest and demonstration. These self-reinforcing cycles of protest further informed and inspired the religious actions and reflections of activists. They also promoted parish-linked services and local resources for the undocumented and their families, such as social action groups, volunteers dedicated to the newly created Pastoral Migratoria (Migrant-to-Migrant Ministry), and the St. Toribio Romo Migrant Center. Such religiously infused actions, community groups, and institutions have also become part of the discourse of authenticity marking the boundaries between conservative and progressive Catholics. Thus, this chapter has also been guided by the question: What types of discourses arise that are both progressive and Catholic?

2.26.2 Discourses of Progressive Catholicism

One of the principle aims of this chapter has been to develop a clearer understanding of the frames and discourses of progressive Catholics, i.e., the ways in which Catholics who exhibit progressive ideologies and are involved in progressive activism, including PJI members and laity, engage in meaningful

discourse surrounding culture, political and economic structures, and the role of religion within culture. These discourses arise from at least four related sources: their deep-seated Christian convictions, their sense of empathy for others, their anger at perceived injustices, and their overarching sense of hope for the future. All of these sources relate to immigrant rights in fundamental ways, but they also extend beyond, into broader terrains of Catholic Social Teaching, social justice, and liberation theology. When considered in opposition to conservative Catholic discourses, it is useful to conceptualize these progressive discourses through the anthropological lens of a frame alignment process (Nepstad 2004: 15), wherein activists utilize their skills and creative assets to align their concerns for social justice with fundamental Catholic values.

Their combined ideological and religious inclinations have helped progressive Catholics perceive the world via a shared framework with other activists, and in turn, this Catholic frame has helped them shape and interpret future developments. When thus engaged with the work of social justice and reform projects, these frames contribute to a social movement frame (Nepstad 2004). Thus, when a progressive group undergoes intensive work in support of a movement (e.g., immigrant rights), while a conservative group undergoes similarly intensive work (e.g., supporting nativism), the resulting social movement frames may be so far out of alignment that the two sides find it difficult to come to terms, in the literal sense of the phrase. This kind of disconnect runs counter to the notion of “one catholic, apostolic Church” that all Catholics reference in their professions of faith (a standard prayer that is collectively recited in mass), but, as I argue in the introductory chapter, the reality of the Catholic Church reflects segmentation along various fault lines.

Ritualistic discourses form a significant part of the immigrant rights movement, as prayers and biblical passages that are utilized in mass also appear at protests and vigils. These are simultaneously internalized as spiritual and contemplative discourses, and externalized as biblical links with recommended social practices, including social justice. In addition to biblical references and exegesis, numerous other

discourses are authored by Catholic activists, or altered by them. In so doing they have drawn on resources ranging from Buddhism to political science, environmental science, and economics---all in connection with Christian cultural lexica surrounding love, respect, and social and global responsibility, along with social action. These kinds of discourses were heard in addition to direct quotes from the Bible, accompanied by exegesis interrogating their contexts, meanings, and implications.

Hopes for the future were expressed in religious terms referencing God's love rather than wrath, both in preparations for the future of Earth itself (with a more sustainable environment, and more just social relations) and in terms of a more benign endpoint (the building of a "Kingdom of God" as a positive goal rather than devotion to a vision of apocalyptic destruction). Hope was also expressed in daily life, mainly in sacrifices on the job, in personal discomfort, and in time dedicated to guaranteeing a better future for the children and other members of their families. This complex of hopes was sometimes expressed as the American Dream, but with a broader emphasis on the future of community and society at large rather than on individual notions of success, consumerism, or other markers of material wealth. As one parishioner was quoted in this chapter late one night at a bus stop, "there are lots of people who believe the American Dream means being selfish, like...the mouse who got sick from trying to eat the whole pastry...So I believe that if we achieve what we call the American Dream it has to be a dream of solidarity." The problem with such statements when viewed from a conservative framework is that they might be interpreted as being resentful of U.S. norms, or even as being unpatriotic; from a progressive framework, however, these views are interpreted as highly patriotic, exhibiting a love for one's adopted country but a mature ability to criticize one's new home and improve it. Such references to community and solidarity are, moreover, in line with core Catholic Social Teaching, as demonstrated in the official catechesis of the Vatican (as seen in all parish catechesis lesson plans and on the Vatican website), and many conservative Catholics would recognize this as an additional mark of Catholic authenticity, whether or not their own ideologies would also put such teaching into practice.

For the parish-based activists in this study, immigrant rights were seen as a subset of progressive Catholic discourses. Some of the specific theological underpinnings for these discourses are provided in the subsequent two chapters, particularly in their treatment of liberation theology, but a few can be glossed here. For instance, numerous passages in the Bible instruct the faithful to welcome the stranger, the poor, the widow, and the orphan. The Old Testament provides (in addition to mentions of slavery as a cultural norm) numerous accounts of the injustices of slavery for the chosen people, escaping from slavery, and the consequences of failing to heed the words of prophets. The Sermon on the Mount admonishes those who would seek riches rather than justice and peace. Jesus's parable of the Good Samaritan is known to nearly all Christian congregations but is especially prevalent in the context of the immigrant rights movement. And even Sodom and Gomorrah were discussed in PJI parishes in terms of sins of greed and gluttony---of uncaring attitudes toward the poor and oppressed---rather than focusing on sexual matters, which was the norm in most conservative Catholic parishes. Meanwhile, the PJI have also read, discussed, and published selected quotes from papal encyclicals that deal with the rights of workers, immigrants, and the poor.

Empathy for others has been a driving force behind Catholic charity, which is a concern for conservative parishes as well as progressive parishes (they maintain soup kitchens, provide family counseling for free or on a sliding scale, assist parishioners in need of city services, and make direct donations to charitable organizations). But progressive PJI parishes teach of the need to go beyond charity into the realm of social justice, or at least to see the two as mutually supporting pillars with which Christians should engage the world around them (this dual concept of charity and social action is explored further in the chapter on Women and Other Leaders, in the context of parish leadership workshops).

Lenten discourses of sacrifice and almsgiving have been combined with service and applied to the immigrant rights movement every year. Whereas in the conservative parishes that I visited throughout Chicago, the time of Lent might have occasioned additional calls for charitable giving and tithing (of

understanding that Lenten sacrifices, which were intended for the spiritual realm, could be turned to material use in charitable giving), in progressive parishes PJI discourses linked Lenten almsgiving “on behalf of the poor during this holy season” with alms in the form of one’s efforts in support of social justice. This meant mobilizing in the streets, letter writing, or calling the White House: “The alms that we urge people to give is action for justice and compassion for immigrants. Parish bulletins should remind the faithful of the campaign each week of Lent,” according to the recommendations in the Feb. 2009 letter from PJI leaders to their colleagues.

None of the discursive provisions noted above would, however, apply to all Catholic lay and clerical activists under all situations; the differences among individuals run deep and can lead to stern boundary maintenance between groups, as well as discord that is not easily resolved. While conservative-progressive segmentation is readily apparent, additional divisions and tensions can, and arguably must, occur within parishes involved in a social movement---and perhaps this must occur in any active and evolving group. In other words, the PJI priests and activist parishioners were not homogeneous in ideological outlook, as many were progressive in some ways and conservative in others, and these shifts in outlook did not always align with their fellow activists, let alone other parish neighbors. In addition, Latino laity have discussed and sometimes disputed a priest’s plans for the use of parish finances or other resources, and lay groups and individuals also made competing claims to parish space (in and outside of mass). Additional rifts have emerged over the content of vigils, movement strategies, and movement tactics. Meanwhile, these progressive Catholics have seldom disagreed openly over biblical exegesis, as they appeared to defer to their priests’ interpretations of these passages during mass---with the caveat that PJI priests sometimes heard complaints about sermons after a visiting priest spoke about family, marriage, or other such matters that displayed distinctively conservative ideologies---at odds with the progressive norms of the parish.

2.26.3 Discourses and Actions: The Procession for Arizona

Prophetic voices and prophetic actions were central to the July 28, 2010 event at Most Blessed Sacrament parish known as the Procession for Arizona. The layers of textual, physical, and spatial symbolism at this event combined to produce Christian discourses that were specifically framed for the in-group (of Catholic immigrants and activists) that had been invited to the event, which occurred largely off the media's radar.

By proceeding through stations similar to the Stations of the Cross and dedicated to specific historical and biblical themes, the attendees reflected on Egypt's system of slavery and its order to kill "the first-born of the People of God"; the deportation (exile) of the Jewish people to Babylon; and the abuse of non-Greeks by royal decree. The readings and prayers associated with each of the themed stations referenced exploitation, often in the form of undocumented immigrants. Throughout the evening, divinity was glossed as a caregiver for the oppressed: "God of unity," "God of diversity," "God of the poor, of the orphan and of the widow," as well as "God, Word of the Indian made into flesh" and "God of the pilgrim." These components of political-religious theatre created, I argue, a sense of connection between their perceptions of historical and ongoing oppression.

The movement from one station to the next as well as the rite of passage at the parish steps demonstrated the emotive power of ritual within the context of the social movement. As the woman on the parish van that night related, the sand on the steps pulled her back in time, reminding her of the life-threatening risks she had taken in her journey to Chicago. The sand was simultaneously a sign of hope and a "Sign of Death" as were the empty Pepsi bottles, cast-off clothing, and biblical reflections on slaves, martyrs, and kings. While these rites incorporated parishioners and activists further into the spiritual world, they simultaneously engaged them emotionally and viscerally with the current physical world.

2.26.4 Discourses and Actions: Posadas and the Census

Posadas had become known as events that intertwined Christmas stories with the challenges of immigration when they were performed in activist parishes. By dramatizing the rejections experienced by Joseph and Mary as they sought lodging, posadas provided cultural links with immigrants' lived experiences, in their own feelings of rejection by the U.S. government (at the border and beyond it), by employers who dared not hire them (or who underpaid and exploited them), and by neighbors who mistrusted, denigrated, or informed on them. These dramatizations also underscored migration as a component of Jesus's birth, as the sacred family was obliged by royal decree to return to Bethlehem to participate in a census.

This chapter related how, in the St. Pius basement, Father Dahm wished to make each posada a learning experience rather than a merely "traditional posada" (which had been the desire of one Latino priest who skewed toward the conservative). Dahm used the event to inspire and fortify the undocumented in the parish and to promote the completion of the upcoming census, which would arguably bring much-needed dollars into neighborhoods like Pilsen. Dahm wished to overcome fears associated with the census because he trusted in the political process as a progressive reformer, not as a radical revolutionary. By focusing on both census and posada simultaneously, moreover, PJI were introducing discourses of church and state, in recognition of Christianity's necessary but uneasy relationship with state powers since the beginning, at the birth of Jesus. From this recognition of early church-state links, the progressive Catholic framework was reinforced and its social action agenda appeared more indicative of an authentic Christianity, or a version of Christianity that felt at least as authentic as those ensconced in the frameworks of conservative Catholics.

For immigrant rights activists, posada dramatizations provided a renewable set of symbols, as well as a rejuvenating set of inspirational and entertaining song lyrics, with which to carry forward into further protests. For the Church as a center for ritual and spiritual renewal, meanwhile, these posadas focused

attention on deep Christian foundations while also indicating links to parishioners' daily lives---thus ensuring that the lessons were internalized and crystalized in memory. For the Church as an institution, moreover, these events might be effective tools for retention, demonstrating that engaging and enlivening dramatizations and celebrations could be attached to Catholicism as much as they are to evangelical Protestant churches.

Complications attended these events even in the more activist of parishes, however. The danger in focusing on so many immigrant themes was that conservative Catholics might eschew these posadas altogether or seek out “traditional posadas” at other parishes where conservative frameworks prevailed. Yet when asked about losing parishioners to less activist parishes, owing either to his outspoken advocacy for social justice or his allowance of various cultural connections, Father Dahm opined that the community would be better off letting such people leave, rather than trying to appease them. In his view the reward was worth the risk, as he was engaged in what he regarded to be the most authentic of religious and social frameworks. Not all PJI would take such a stringent view of parishioners engaged in the mobile “marketplace of religious choice”; many have tried to temper their social justice discourses to avoid alienating those parishioners who had neither inclinations nor abilities to engage in activism, but among the PJI leadership, the ideal of the prophetic voice sometimes overrode those concerns.

2.26.5 Discourses and Actions: Archbishop or Congressman

The March 21, 2009 event at Our Lady of Mercy parish was planned as a political and religious celebration in the temple, and as a means of influencing the coverage of the local and national news media in the immigrant rights debate. In the weeks prior to March 21, the plan called for both Representative Luis Gutierrez and Cardinal George, the Archbishop of Chicago, to be the two keynote speakers. The event formed one stop for Gutierrez in his national tour of churches, wherein he was gathering petitions on behalf of the families of the undocumented. For the archbishop, the event was supposed to have been a long-awaited opportunity to speak forcefully on behalf of immigrant rights;

although he had not opposed statements on behalf of immigrants when he served as president of the USCCB, and although he had presided over mass at the endpoint of a major mobilization in Chicago a few years prior, the archbishop had remained fairly silent on immigrant rights. Meanwhile, he had emphasized law-and-order discourses in his regular column in diocesan newspapers, which were published in Polish, English, and Spanish. Now was a chance for the PJI to urge him to provide a more pointed statement on behalf of the undocumented.

In a press conference before the event, Father Larry Dowling had announced, “We believe that prayer changes the hearts of politicians,”¹⁰⁵ in reference to Gutierrez’s plan to change votes on Capitol Hill, and he emphasized, “Saturday we’ll pray...sing...” and hear Cardinal George make “a prophetic statement” in favor of immigrant rights. The choice of the term prophetic was calculated, as it resonated in the risk-taking and justice-seeking of Old Testament prophets and modern prophets as well (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr.). In my interpretation the term had additional cachet for the bishop, as he would have felt drawn toward a favorable comparison between himself and such a valent biblical referent. In the estimation of PJI leaders, who spoke to me at length about these events, the reference to prophets had been intended to shore up the bishop’s courage. In their view he had been waffling under pressure from conservative groups within the Church, both among pro-life lobbyists and anti-immigrant lobbyists utilizing conservative frameworks that were typically in alignment with the bishop’s worldview. Yet frame alignment was not the only issue at stake. These PJI comments indicated that the bishop did not always feel like he could act according to his own conscience, given that his position was a highly “political” one, making him an overseer of many competing interests, the most influential and outspoken of which were conservative Catholics.

¹⁰⁵ Some PJI might have believed in the power of prayer to affect such rapid changes, but they also understood that politicians responded to action in this world. They believed they would change their hearts, or at least votes, if they were sufficiently pressured by people of faith, not divine will alone.

Ultimately the bishop's speech served the pro-life lobby as much or more than the pro-immigrant lobby (according to several of my PJI informants), and this was in keeping with his own predisposition toward pro-life activism. Moreover, the bishop had maneuvered the pro-choice Representative Gutierrez into the pews rather than sharing the podium with him. But many (if not most) of the Catholic activists in the sanctuary, and among the overflow crowd in the church's basement appeared to view Gutierrez more favorably than the archbishop as a result. Against the backdrop of the immigrant rights movement, the segmentation between conservative and progressive Catholics stood in stark relief that day.

Even among progressive Catholics who agreed (and not all did) with the archbishop's stance on reproductive rights, they would have preferred not to hear such details on that particular day, when they had mobilized to support their undocumented parents, siblings, and other loved ones. While they respected the archbishop and even held him in reverence, and while they would not challenge him in public, they did not see him as a tireless defender of the faith where it intersected with the material realm--contrary to their perspectives on PJI priests. Meanwhile, they had seen Gutierrez on TV and in the newspapers, and perhaps more importantly, they had seen him visit some of their parishes in person: he had been at St. Pius V on Nov. 15, 2008, to gather petitions for the undocumented from family members, and he had toured other churches around the country to do the same. As the parishioner from Maywood declared (after the archbishop's speech of March 21) to me during the May 1, 2009 march in Chicago, "Gutierrez is an excellent person for us" who "gives us hope"---and she did not mention the archbishop.

The archbishop did utter the powerful phrase "The raids must stop" in his speech, nonetheless. This was the sound bite that apparently made all of the PJI preparations worthwhile---and indeed the words were soon highlighted in newspaper coverage of the event. For the PJI, that moment was regarded a victory for the immigrant rights movement, while for his part the archbishop was able to enjoy the approval of many immigrant parishioners whose memory of the day was marked by those words. The victory for the PJI soon faded, however, as the bishop failed to follow up with additionally strong statements, perhaps

because of a backlash from conservative Catholics. (Such was the explanation that some PJI members offered me afterward, including a priest who regarded the bishop a close friend.) Instead, the bishop's discursive focus was again on reproductive rights and a host of contemplative issues that were far more in line with conservative Catholic frames than with the PJI. He also turned his attention to a defense of the Vatican inquiry into women religious (as is discussed in the chapter *Women and Other Leaders*), in an entrenchment that frustrated and saddened many PJI members, who regarded the Sisters of Mercy and other affected religious orders as strong allies in the immigrant rights movement and in the struggle for social justice.

2.26.6 Discourses and Actions: Broadview

The overnight action at the Broadview detention center, followed by civil disobedience in the morning, was a massive undertaking depending on weeks of coordination, recruitment, training in non-violent tactics, logistics, and meetings with law enforcement officials to attempt to guarantee safety. The night included an ecumenical range of speakers, chants and songs, entertainment, and anticipation. The morning brought personal risk and an uplifting yet qualified sense of victory when the arrests in the street delayed the ICE prison bus and vans. Although journalists and TV news crews focused on the spectacle of arrests and disruption,¹⁰⁶ juxtaposed with the sympathetic images of ministers calmly blocking the street (with the police chief's lamentation, "I never wanted to arrest a priest"), for those present on the ground the feelings of solidarity and sacrifice offered indelible impressions, far beyond spectacle. A key to the event was the charisma of priests and other leaders facing arrest---a charisma built over years of dedication to their communities and reinforced by their calm demeanors as they neared imprisonment; as Nepstad held, "movement stories must also have likeable protagonists with whom the audience can identify" (2004: 106; emphasis in the original).¹⁰⁷ In hallway conversations before and after Sunday mass that weekend, it was also apparent that some parishioners appreciated the sacrifices (of time, energy, etc.)

¹⁰⁶ The televised and newspaper-photographed arrests of their priests also generated considerable buzz in parishes that Sunday, even among parishioners who generally remained aloof from social justice activism.

¹⁰⁷ Nepstad cites Benford and Hunt's (1992) "Dramaturgy and Social Movements" as a source.

by their local social-action group, in addition to the more literal sacrifice (of arrest and imprisonment) of their priests. This extended and complex action provided a set of new associations for many activists while for others it strengthened historical links with the Civil Rights and Vietnam War eras. According to my observations and conversations over the ensuing months, taken altogether it also appeared to rejuvenate the commitments of Latino parishioners in activist parishes.

The presence of priests and religious in the streets provided an instantly recognizable cultural lexicon of moral authority. Their presence implied that the ethical dimensions of the movement were far-reaching enough to transcend counter-claims regarding support for “illegals” or the framing by nativists of the undocumented as a nearly homogenous population of law-breakers. At the same time, the PJI did not attempt to argue that all immigrants were model citizens, though they did highlight only those who exhibited law-abiding, taxpaying, and community-supporting behaviors. With clerical support, the undocumented could more easily be viewed within frameworks of community, family, and ritual--- frameworks of modern civic and religious participation that resonated with both conservative and progressive Catholics. The movement thus looked to progressive Catholicism to highlight ethical dimensions such as the lives that were at risk, the struggles of workers earning less than minimum wage, and family unification, particularly in the movement’s dealings with news media.

Yet there were risks in relying as such on images of progressive Catholic leaders, as scandals involving Church leaders continued to surface and news reports of the removal of priests garnered more press than any social justice causes. Despite such recent scandals and a more secularized society, however, Catholic leaders and Christian symbolism retained effective power in the public eye, and perhaps even more so in metropolitan areas like Chicago that had seen waves of Catholic immigrants from Italy, Ireland, Poland, Latin America, and elsewhere.

Another risk the movement ran in featuring Catholic symbols stemmed from the fact that so many consumers of news media were not only non-Catholic but Protestant and highly critical of Catholicism, whereas others were nonreligious and disaffected with the Church. Many non-Catholic progressives saw the Church as outmoded, out-of-touch with modernity in terms of women's rights, health care reform, stem cell research, and reproductive freedoms, among other issues that tended to feature conservative Catholics in the news media (as "the other side" of a particular story about an advance in medicine, or a social issue, etc.). I have argued in this work that among the few antidotes to such anti-Catholic sentiments were the examples of more ecumenical behavior and inclusive discourse promoted in progressive Catholic parishes, especially in PJI parishes where Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, and justice-oriented atheist groups alike have been welcomed.

Although the news media tended to focus on clerical collars and nuns' habits as symbols of morality, their framing of secular leftist activists usually educated action (with the potential for violent action) but implied little predisposition for moral guidance (however unfair such framings or depictions might have been to the activists themselves, many of whom I met and observed over the period of this research). In sum, Catholic priests, religious, and the laity beside them were part of a wider cultural lexicon regarding human values, even if these were sometimes viewed as out-of-touch with modernity. Yet progressive Catholics who held the media spotlight attained power, fleeting though it might be, to enlighten the populace and alter the prevailing stereotypes adhering to the followers of the Vatican. When these faith leaders transgressed society norms, "breaking the rules" not only of law enforcement but of cultural stereotypes, they attracted additional media spotlights via a curious and perhaps confused journalistic corps, who in turn offered up these bits of enlightenment to the viewing public. At risk in the midst of these activist-oriented spotlights, however, were their standings within a Church dedicated to ritual provisions and prayers---the contemplative life, as well as spiritual health---as they were continually challenged by the contradictory frames of conservative Catholics.

The PJI understood the effect such symbolic self-sacrificial actions might have on their parishioners, and they assumed that this would strengthen the sense of union and solidarity within their parish communities, but their overriding hope was that the news of priests being arrested would help convert others' hearts and minds in favor of the immigrant rights movement (conversion is a topic of the following chapter).

Another side effect would be, in their estimation, a strengthening of Catholics' spiritual lives as they approximated a deeper and purportedly truer version of their own faith. The PJI knew that Latino parishioners would react viscerally to their arrests, but they wanted to ensure that both Catholic and non-Catholic TV viewers would remember the focus on immigrants; thus they wore photographs of immigrant families around their necks to join symbolically with the sacrifices of the undocumented and their immigrant families.

One of the risks with such actions was that even while they provided inspiration and sets of memorable symbolic associations for the movement, and even while they reinforced aspects of progressive Catholic spirituality, they might also strengthen a conservative backlash. Counter-actions in the political realm were a risk that movement organizers were willing to engage with, but religious backlash was another factor that, for progressive Catholics, might be harder to predict or account for. When viewed from the perspective of a segment of Catholics seeking respect within the larger institution---seeking to show, in effect, that the authenticity of their progressive Catholic worldview should be acknowledged rather than continually challenged by conservative Catholics as inauthentic in its "politicization of religion"---such broadly televised political events could risk shoring up counterclaims to authenticity within the Catholic Church. Despite the intention of the PJI to win more hearts and minds, then, they might see more sympathy for conservative Church discourses calling for a distancing from "illegal activities," the concerns of state, the prospects of future elections, and, according to some conservative viewpoints, unpatriotic expressions and sentiments.

Less confrontational and more clearly law-abiding, the “framing” action that produced a press conference at Old Saint Pat’s Church might offer an example of a progressive Catholic action that would be less vulnerable to a conservative reaction in the Church. Although that press conference was creative, novel, and attention-worthy, however, it lacked the risk and drama of a street confrontation---and thus it would have received a good deal less press coverage, and less cachet among news viewers on television and social media. The rather staid Old Saint Pat’s event did not generate much attention in parish hallways either, nor in Catholic media and mainstream media apart from short news stories. It fit into an otherwise quiet news cycle (otherwise it might not have been covered by journalists at all), and it did arguably provide a bonding ritual and an emotional reinforcement for some Catholic activists and immigrant parishioners. Perhaps it even helped to convert some minds and hearts to favor the cause of the undocumented; yet for all its empathetic symbolism and ritualistic style, it was not nearly as memorable as a protest outside a detention center or ICE office. Unlike the Broadview disobedience, the Old Saint Pat’s press conference did not require any sacrifice or measurable risk, and thus it could have been seen as an attempt at a prophetic voice without the authenticating context of prophetic action. The notion that it might have done little to rile conservative Catholics could be directly proportionate to the fact that it challenged them all the less.

I cannot suggest a course of action that would have helped movement organizers diminish a backlash or reduce claims against their Christian authenticity while simultaneously allowing them to promote the movement in a vigorous manner, but I hold that the contested ideological terrain within the Church feeds on such liberationist actions: On the one hand, the media attention generated around the priests (and their instantly recognizable white collars) served to strengthen their discursive case for an authentic Catholicism defined through progressive ideals rather than in spite of them (i.e., a progressive Catholicism viewed through their own frameworks rather than in opposition to the frameworks provided by conservative Catholics). On the other hand, however, such liberationist projects strengthened the

conservative identities and boundaries within the Church, effectively building resentment and resistance. (Along these lines, see the chapter on Women and Other Leaders for a discussion of the Vatican's inquiry into the lives of nuns in the United States.) Prophetic action and prophetic voices might convert some minds and hearts while hardening others, to borrow the terminology of the PJI. I hold that these novel and creative forms of protest auger for continuing segmentation within the Church for the foreseeable future. This line of thought should not be mistaken for an endorsement of stability within the Church in the face of calls for change; it is a caveat, however, against temptations to label the Catholic Church as slowly or inevitably changing course. A larger course-change toward progressivism could occur, but---if a bit of conjecture can be allowed, given the evidence presented in this work---another plausible scenario is that movements in the direction of a more progressive Church would be met, either immediately or in subsequent years, by conservative counter-movements. Thus we might someday observe an ideological oscillation similar to that which occurred between the papacies of John XXIII and John Paul II, and which may be initiating again under Pope Francis and, later, his predecessors. Moreover, it is just as likely that no larger shifts in institutional course would be maintained, but that instead the segmentations between progressive and conservative Catholics could ultimately lead toward another grand schism, to be formalized either years or decades from the present.

Another set of problems can arise within a given PJI parish which, like all other Catholic parishes, is neither homogeneous in ideology nor in theology. A complex mixture of motivations, interests, and ideologies inform the discourses of each parishioner and parish group. And further segmentation appears to arise between parish groups either because of competition for space, time, financial resources, senses of entitlement or jealousy, or other factors. In the words of a parish council member who was also an UFA activist at St. Pius, "Not everybody likes [our] Social Action...group. They might think we take too much credit or...get in the way" especially if "we make too many announcements" or have "a light shining on

us...instead of on the priest.”¹⁰⁸ He offered that reflection two days after we saw one of his colleagues step forward during the announcements phase of mass, wearing the group’s emblematic green T-shirt; after identifying herself as a member of Social Action (and implying she was thus a spokesperson for the others), she had directly addressed the new pastor, who was presiding over his first official parish masses that day. She intended to challenge the pastor, politely but firmly, on his intentions regarding undocumented activism, yet she knew that she could only approach him as a member of the parish group, not as an individual (not in the midst of such a mass, in any event), to elicit a public response from him. Meanwhile, most of the other members of the group sat in surprised silence because they had not agreed on this course of action---nor had they been consulted. Afterward some of the group applauded her, but one of the men turned to me, saying that she had overstepped proper bounds, and a woman in the group subsequently remarked that she needed to “get control of her emotions...because she was [so upset about] the departure of the previous pastor...and she was crying [in back of us] during the entire mass.”

The outspoken Social Action member’s concerns also underscored my argument that ethno-racial discourses sometimes take center-stage within the immigrant rights movement, against the backdrop of identity politics. Members of Latino groups might perceive themselves as competing for jobs, prestige, etc., even within a parish. Many of the adherents at this parish were telling me before and after mass, that they didn’t know “whether we’re going to like” the new pastor. Some noted concerns over his inadequately delineated stance on immigrant rights, but more parishioners seemed concerned about this identity as a Puerto Rican rather than a Mexican or Anglo priest. When parishioners spoke of their activist priests in accepting, inclusive, and appreciative terms without any mention of status as “white and Anglo” (unless it was to underscore further their appreciation for his crossing the ethnic divide to live among them), they tended to say he was “with us, in our community” and they appeared to be forgetting or subordinating previously salient racial discourses. But the case in point suggested that they might in

¹⁰⁸ Field notes of August 4, 2015.

actuality have been underscoring a preference for whites over other Latinos in leadership roles within the Church. As the reader might be alarmed at this class of suggestion, I offer the following examples to draw out the relevant thought processes.

Puerto Ricans and Cubans, in particular, have been met with distrust by Mexicans and Mexican Americans who have sometimes seen them as competing or failing to comprehend the sacrifices that Mexicans have made to be in Chicago. This kind of ethno-racial segmentation has long roots, and although it has not been a central theme of the present research, it is worth noting that according to my informants it is ongoing. The reactions to a pastor born in Puerto Rico, for example, revealed a concern for class as well as ethnicity, as they knew that the vast majority of undocumented immigrants in their community are Mexicans. Whatever our interpretation of the presence of such white leadership over what are effectively Latino groups, it is a worthy---and decidedly novel---characteristic of the Catholic arm of the immigrant rights movement, when compared with previous U.S. social movements that have orbited around issues of race and ethnic identity. Black ministers led the central components of the Civil Rights Movement, which included some ecumenical allies but in supporting roles. Mexicans and Mexican Americans led the Grape Boycott which involved the rights of mainly Mexican workers, and protests in Chicago for clinics and schools in Latino neighborhoods have tended to be led by co-ethnics. The one exception to this rule might be the Sanctuary Movement, as white ministers played a major role sheltering Latino refugees; however, most of those white ministers were still ostensibly serving (on a daily and weekly basis, apart from refugees) their chiefly white congregations; during the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s there were few large predominantly Latino parishes in cities like Chicago.

2.26.7 Discourses of Liberation Theology

Liberation theology circumscribes social action and spiritual contemplation, and it grounds these in biblical referents. Catholic movement leaders have seen liberationism as a guiding set of principles,

although many priests and lay leaders have preferred to speak in terms of social justice and Catholic Social Doctrine. This choice of terminology may have been in an attempt to seek cover from a hostile hierarchy, as I have argued, or to emphasize terms that are more easily understood by their parishioners, as PJI members have claimed; perhaps both motives have registered among the PJI. In any event, it appears that in the first two years the papacy of Francis, aspects of liberation theology (by that name) were brought into the light at the Vatican again, specifically those aspects that I have argued are closely intertwined with the behaviors and belief systems of progressive Catholics. In the present work, I will call this progressive iteration “U.S. liberation theology” because it is in evidence among my informants although it is clearly not limited to U.S. shores, and although it arguably attained inception among moderates in Latin America before becoming known in the U.S. The term U.S. liberation theology is thus used to distinguish those progressive, reformist aspects of theology and praxis from earlier Latin American versions of liberation theology that have become associated with revolution and armed struggle. Under this mantel, progressive Catholics have felt justified in critiquing the excesses of consumerism, unregulated capitalism (though not necessarily all capitalism), and extreme individualism leading to egotism. Their critique has been bolstered by reading and reflecting on oft-cited passages in the Bible warning against unequal wealth and power, and the corresponding dearth of compassion tied with these admonitions. The prayers and reflections chosen by PJI members for the “Procession for Arizona” in this chapter have been a case in point, linking Christian foundations with efforts to curtail injustice.

Following in the footsteps of Gustavo Gutiérrez, Archbishop Oscar Romero, and numerous Latin American liberation theologians, some of the PJI have been regarded locally as “theologians of our movement.”¹⁰⁹ Since the aspects of liberation theology the Chicago leaders have embraced are not revolutionary in character, the PJI would generally agree with Gustavo Gutiérrez’s caveat that liberation

¹⁰⁹ E.g., Father Larry Dowling was referred to as such by other members of the PJI.

theology should not be intended to embrace physical violence.¹¹⁰ These reformist U.S. liberationists are thus assessed in the present work to be oriented toward civic progress, democratic participation, and the empowerment of individuals and communities. The aspects of liberation theology they embrace are aimed at social justice, which they see as an achievable ideal within a capitalist system that can be changed, with the provision of additional social safety nets for the marginalized and the poor. These reformist characteristics of U.S. liberation theology will be analyzed further in the next chapter, which focuses more directly on the Priests for Justice for Immigrants as an organization. Through these discourses and their concomitant parish-based actions, local leaders have helped construct a movement framework based upon what they have perceived as solid, progressive Catholic foundations, rather than feeling forced to react defensively to the frameworks established and reinforced by conservative Catholics and anti-immigration activists.

¹¹⁰ Gutiérrez's distancing argument is problematic, given some statements in A Theology of Liberation: "In Latin America, the Church must place itself squarely within the process of revolution, amid the violence which is present...it is faced with the dilemma...to be for or against the system, or more subtly, to be for reform or revolution. ...It is evident that only a break with the unjust order and a frank commitment to a new society can make the message of love...credible to Latin Americans" (Gutiérrez 2008: 75-76). However, in citing "the process of revolution" he might be acknowledging that institutions are nested in cultural processes, and that these processes might call for prophetic voices to change them, not weaponry. When he urges support for revolutionary causes he does not openly condone violence.

Perhaps Gutiérrez was theorizing from too pristine a vantage point, pretending that one could support revolutionary ends but not revolutionary means; and perhaps he was not fully prescient of the future course of violence in Latin America when he first published his work. In any event, he placed emphasis on love and defined liberation "as saving life," and he later denounced killings carried out in the name of his theology. It is these non-violent aspects that even John Paul II advocated in a 1986 letter to Brazilian bishops, who had just emerged from a long period of military dictatorship: "Liberation theology is not only timely but useful and necessary. It should be seen as a new stage...in the theological reflection...and...the rich patrimony of the church's social teachings as set forth in documents from Rerum Novarum to Laborem Exercens" (as quoted in Gutiérrez 2008: xlv).

3. PRIESTS FOR JUSTICE FOR IMMIGRANTS

The movement for immigration reform has relied on numerous religious leaders including the Chicago-based association known as the Priests for Justice for Immigrants, or PJI. This chapter examines the origins and development of the PJI, their influence on the social movement, and the ways in which they have authored and authorized parish activities and liturgical innovations, with a focus on the following research question: How does clerical activism on behalf of immigrants transform practices in the Catholic Church? This line of inquiry leads in turn to a second question: How do progressive Catholics make claims to authenticity in the face of conservative resistance?

The chapter addresses the first question through an analysis of ethnographic data gathered in interviews and at immigrant-rights protests, planning sessions, parish offices, and religious services. It argues that recent events have been the result of decades of engagement by priests and lay leaders¹¹¹ in political activism, aimed at creating and transforming practices¹¹² in their communities. The chapter argues that for years the priests identifying themselves as PJI, and in particular the core group of PJI leaders, have engaged in efforts to promote civic and community responsibility, as well as social justice, while

¹¹¹ Transformations from the 1970s through the early 2000s in Pilsen are discussed in Dahm (2004).

¹¹² The practices I refer to are rites or behaviors regularly scheduled (weekly, monthly, or sometimes annually), as in bilingual or Spanish-language masses, or the custom of renting/allowing the use of parish space for certain (Catholic or non-Catholic) groups, permitting specific kinds of celebrations, or conducting a series of events for Christmas and Epiphany. This chapter focuses on practices in progressive parishes, although the arrival of large numbers of Latino parishioners has altered practices at conservative immigrant parishes as well, such as the regular scheduling of Spanish-language masses.

simultaneously promoting a more inclusive and culturally sensitive environment in their parishes.¹¹³

Among the marks of cultural inclusivity (and popular piety) at PJI parishes are the sharing of traditional Mexican foods, marimbas or mariachi instruments in mass, presentaciones de niños (presentations of children),¹¹⁴ Saturday quinceañeras, as well as an acceptance of Day of the Dead traditions.

Clerical activism has also transformed spiritual practices by linking them more closely with social justice and economic and political concerns. The PJI infused homilies, prayers, and announcements with messages about immigrant rights and the campaign for immigration reform while grounding these messages in theological and biblical references (e.g., welcoming the stranger, providing for orphans and widows, escaping slavery in Egypt, the parable of the Good Samaritan, and other narratives emphasizing Jesus's concern for the poor and oppressed). PJI parishes also displayed posters in hallways and vestibules commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, or welcoming the arrival of a workers' rights collaborative, the impending census, and campaigns encouraging Latinos to register to vote. Some of the PJI have regularly sponsored parish retreats or workshops featuring lectures on women's rights, women in the Bible, leadership and self-esteem, and---as part of a retreat titled "Spirituality"---numerous activities aimed at promoting interpersonal communications and social relations as a form of faith-based leadership

¹¹³ The evidence in this chapter indicates that the PJI have attempted to promote more inclusive and culturally sensitive environments. One might argue that more inclusive environments and more culturally sensitive environments are not always compatible, particularly where parishes exhibit significant divides around cultural issues (e.g., separate masses for different languages and ethnicities, or the separate existence of Spanish- and English-language parish committees). From the perspective of the PJI leadership, however, tensions between ethno-linguistic groups are temporary hurdles not indicative of growing gulfs within the community; such tensions are regarded instead as zones of interaction and negotiation upon which greater democratic participation can be built. Inclusivity and cultural sensitivity are not intended to remove all social barriers though they are intended to make a community more just.

¹¹⁴ Baptisms are still scheduled, but some priests allow for presentations as well, which can involve children who have or have not been baptized. A line of parishioners wait with children in the center aisle, and the priest picks up each baby, in turn, to the applause of the crowd; toddlers and larger children might turn to face the crowd beside the priest. Meanwhile the priest blesses the child, and some individuals will bring religious artifacts and mementos to the priest for blessings in the midst of a round of presentations. A mural across Ashland Avenue from St. Pius depicts Father Dahm holding up a baby in a presentation. On viewing the mural while walking to mass, a member of the parish council told me it was "traditional, because...it was started by Jesus Christ, when he was accepting offerings of food, and the poor had nothing, so they placed a baby in his hands instead, and he held it up, a presentation to accept...and to honor the people" (my translation of the Spanish, field notes of August 2, 2015).

training. In addition, PJI priests have made space in their calendars to tend to ICE detainees on prison buses, to lead protests and processions, and to give speeches in the Loop and on the Mall in Washington, D.C., while lobbying congressional leaders for reform. Some of the more outspoken leaders among the PJI have traveled to the Southwest to make “border immersion” trips, in which parish staff accompanied youths to speak with undocumented immigrants and Scalabrinian, Dominican, or Jesuit brethren who bring emergency water and shelter into the desert.¹¹⁵ On returning home they have incorporated emotive reflections on these experiences in their homilies and parish bulletins.

Given that the PJI have been engaged in multiple forms of creative discourse and have taken political positions on behalf of their parishioners, a related theme also merits consideration: In what ways have the PJI’s activism and transformational approaches to parish leadership resembled the entrepreneurial efforts of Protestant evangelical preachers? This chapter argues that entrepreneurial leadership has been exhibited by the PJI since its inception in 2005, when their calls for group prayer and fasting took on the form of weekly instigated “religious occupation” of Congressional offices, federal buildings, and detention facilities. Since then, they have manifested their entrepreneurialism in various ways, ranging from promoting changes to basic money-making projects (e.g., street carnivals) and leadership workshops at the parish level, to organizing and joining “bus caravans” to Washington, D.C. and mobilizing in Chicago’s streets in support of immigration reform. PJI entrepreneurialism also helped initiate the St. Toribio Romo Migrant Center and new archdiocesan ministries. It could be argued, in the interests of uncovering the matrix for these behaviors, that the calculated risk-taking of the PJI ultimately stems from the preexisting entrepreneurial spirits of Pilsen and Little Village priests who started The Resurrection Project (a neighborhood development corporation) in 1990, and who labored in their individual parishes to schedule Spanish-language masses and social justice actions on behalf of parishioners in previous decades. This chapter traces such organizational and behavioral roots, and it analyses the ways PJI

¹¹⁵ Many PJI parishes also offered soup kitchens and charity of other kinds; these longstanding practices required significant staff, planning, and money, but they are not a major focus of the present research.

behaviors are analogous to the key markers of entrepreneurialism observed in leading Protestant evangelicals as well as other “Cultural Creatives,” including the creation of feedback loops (more open communication), the taking of calculated risks, the building of trust through lasting connections with constituents, and the assumption of personal responsibility (energetic leadership “from the front”) rather than complacency with the actions of bureaucracies and the sinecure offered by some hierarchies. One of the key arguments of the chapter is that the cultural entrepreneurialism of the PJI has emerged primarily through their dedication to the concepts of “prophetic voice” and “prophetic action,” and that these Old Testament models for action are, in turn, linked fundamentally with liberation theology.¹¹⁶ In this way, entrepreneurial behaviors lend further support to the claims of authentic Catholicism that are made by the PJI and their constituents in the face of conservative resistance.

Because of the significant level of autonomy afforded the pastor of a given parish, priests who were ideologically committed to immigrant rights and social justice could, I argue (with some caveats), dedicate significant time and effort to these concerns, with or without the support of Church leadership. This was particularly the case for priests who were members of religious orders such as the Dominicans, Scalabrinians, and Jesuits, but it was also true of some diocesan priests, provided they met other obligations (of liturgy, spiritual services, budgeting, staffing, etc.) which were necessary for parish governance. As the data in the chapter also indicate, however, budgetary and staffing issues (limited funds and the lack of sufficient support staff) could effectively limit the autonomy of parish priests. Meanwhile, their leadership in the immigrant rights movement has been resisted, on occasion, by parishioners who are more ideologically conservative, along with those who wish to focus the parish’s attention on more narrowly defined, contemplative/spiritual matters; these oppositional laity, who have included both non-Latinos and Latinos, have resisted PJI leadership in the movement by voicing direct complaints (some of which I have personally relayed to pastors), joining a more conservative parish (since parishes are no

¹¹⁶ Additional discussions of cultural entrepreneurialism, including comparison with evangelical preachers, is given in the sections 3.12, 3.13, and 3.14 in this chapter.

longer strictly defined, geographical areas), and/or restricting monetary support in protest (which the PJI have referred to as “taking a hit at the collection plate”). In addition, the PJI reported that some have occasionally walked out of mass in the midst of a social-justice themed homily or announcement. Progressive pastors have, nonetheless, been working to strengthen democratic processes in their communities through shared parish governance, i.e., by delegating responsibilities and allowing for a degree of entrepreneurial planning among their expanded (more representative) and democratically empowered parish councils.¹¹⁷ This chapter’s analysis of the PJI’s transformed and transformational practices, which are often formulated in opposition to conservative Catholic practices, thus leads to arguments surrounding Catholic identity and authenticity.

The second research question focuses on the ways progressive Catholics make claims to authenticity in the face of conservative resistance. This chapter engages in an analysis of Catholic meaning-making within the movement for immigrant rights, interrogating the ways a particular kind of Catholic identity (progressive Catholicism) has been envisioned and defended as authentic or true by the PJI and their supporters, given that conservative Catholics have been so effective at claiming their own ideological frameworks as normative---to the extent that they have insisted that left-of-center Catholics have effectively politicized their views while rhetorically denying that “politics” and “politicization” are part of conservatives’ own religiously inflected worldviews. As the PJI orient their own rhetoric and actions toward social justice, progressive Catholics have turned to liberation theology for guidance; they have perceived liberation theology as generally compatible with social justice activism and a progressive Catholic worldview, albeit with some modifications appropriate to the U.S. context (and thus in this chapter I use the term “U.S. liberation theology,” which was introduced in the previous chapter).

¹¹⁷ This is not the norm at many other parishes in Chicago, however, where pastors seldom give up central planning and veto power. It should also be noted that some aspects of shared governance have existed in select U.S. parishes for generations; thus, progressive power sharing is not necessarily a “novel form” of Catholic behavior initiated by the PJI, though it can be regarded as a further example of risk-taking (cultural entrepreneurship) intended to strengthen the community and its lay leaders.

The PJI's dedication to social justice and the immigrant rights movement has formed in binary opposition with a large bloc of nativists, whom they regarded as chiefly political conservatives, both within and outside of the Church. Although the chief opponents of immigration reform were often pictured as rich, white, non-Latinos, others were known to be working-class non-Latinos (who were often white but sometimes African American). The PJI knew also that some Latinos were among the nativists, including a Chicago-area woman whom reporters often interviewed as a local spokesperson for the Minutemen. Evidence presented in this chapter establishes that the opponents to immigration reform had strong support in Washington, D.C. (see section 3.2) while contributing to a cultural climate that supported ethno-racial discrimination (exclusivity) and institutionalized oppression ranging from racial profiling at the hands of local police to the lengthening of the U.S.-Mexico border walls. The PJI workshop titled "Between a Rock and a Tea Party" (which is described in Section 3.9) was a clear indication that the PJI saw far-right-wing politicians and their supporters as a challenge to the movement.

Lay activists in their parishes indicated (in numerous conversations with me in hallways, during workshops, after mass, etc.) that they shared and reinforced PJI leaders' views of these oppositional relationships, with the caveat that the laity were far more likely to identify ethno-racial intolerance as a component of the struggle, citing numerous examples of discrimination and racially linked exploitation suffered at work, at school, and on Chicago's streets (including instances of racial profiling).¹¹⁸ Their perceptions of struggle thus fed the binary opposition, as they placed their ideals of an inclusive and progressive Church on the one hand, and those of a more exclusive, intolerant and conservative Church,

¹¹⁸ Among the ethno-racial interactions often on PJI leaders' and parishioners' minds at St. Pius V were the annual mass and dinner held to celebrate a "Sharing Parish" relationship in which St. Pius received regular financial assistance from another Dominican-led parish: a largely white, elderly, Italian American church in western Chicago. Representative groups of "ambassadors" alternated in visits to the other parish. During these masses the PJI asked undocumented immigrants to speak of their families' struggles; at such moments, however, the priests typically reported seeing at least one of the white male parishioners walk out---an act the PJI interpreted as protest against either their purported politicization of mass or their support of illegal actions vis-a-vis the presence of admittedly undocumented immigrants.

on the other. Given that numerous passages in the Bible refer to the suffering of oppressed peoples and the poor, the aforementioned examples of opposition served as additional support for the PJI's claims to espousing, in progressive Catholicism, a more authentic form of Christianity than their conservative opponents. The struggle for justice and immigration reform strengthened their claims to "true Catholicism" whenever they could symbolically link the theological claims and counterclaims of conservative Catholics with the rhetoric of nativists.

While progressive Catholics have thus been engaged in linking theological and pragmatic concerns, they have also been hoping to change the general direction of the Catholic Church, beginning with its U.S. dioceses. One of the arguments presented in this chapter is that the PJI and other activist priests have authored local, parish-based initiatives that have, in turn, encouraged the formation of national campaigns (such as the USCCB's Campaign for Immigration Reform). Despite the evidence for this local impetus and local inspiration behind the movement, however---as well as the importance of local organizers in planning and fueling marches and rallies that have achieved national recognition---members of the Church hierarchy and the mainstream media have tended to frame Church participation as top-down, emanating from the USCCB to parishes or from the Vatican first. The ethnographic evidence indicates, however, that progressive Catholic pastors have brought a mixture of entrepreneurial risk-taking and a concern for democratic processes into the Church, and that their leadership in the immigrant rights movement has also been an expression of that entrepreneurial spirit, dedicated to social change, rather than being a reflection of the dictates of the Vatican hierarchy.

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I heard the padre say that today there was going to be a trip, to ask President Obama for...an immigration reform, ...and those of us who could, well, we should accompany him [on the trip there]. And I am...standing up for all of my Latino friends, and also for the padre who, well he has cared a lot for us, the Hispanics. I mean that in the church of St. Pius, the priests have struggled, together, with all of us Hispanics, and they have

always been seen with us, and that's why I am accompanying them---till wherever the padre goes, I'll go along with him.¹¹⁹

The determination this parishioner expressed in the middle of the night, in a caravan of buses headed to Washington, D.C., was not merely for the office of the parish priest; his motivations and loyalty were linked to the priest's "always [being] seen with us" in shared sacrifice. Parish leaders and diocesan officials often referred to accompaniment as a relationship of solidarity and respect, including a sharing and mutual reinforcing of spiritual lives (not merely charitable giving).¹²⁰ Beyond the legitimacy accorded their office (Cano 2007), activist priests attempted to establish stronger ties with their parishioners over years of daily effort.

Because of these years of effort, frameworks for the immigrant-rights mobilizations of 2006 were established in several parishes, transforming them into community centers and movement centers---i.e., incubators of talent, nodes for communications and idea generation, and environs supporting cultural traditions. The years of preparation inspired lay leaders. Lorenzo, a catechist at one of the immigrant parishes, clarified that leaders in 2006 were not only priests:

The same people [asked] how we were going to participate. Then...what was done was to organize all the [established] parish groups and convoke a congregation for the march. ...The people just responded, there wasn't any need for so much organization or

¹¹⁹ Oct. 12, 2009 caravan interview with Antonio, who lived in Cicero and Berwyn but attended St. Pius V and visited the shrine of St. Jude ("the patron saint of lost causes"; also called the "intercessor in difficult problems" in Spanish) and the shrine of Virgin of Guadalupe there. My translation from the Spanish.

¹²⁰ The term accompaniment indicates empathy and a determination to share burdens, at least through open conversation. An act of accompaniment would be intended to alleviate suffering by shifting an experience into a more social and less isolating framework. The term is nearly synonymous with solidarity, although this might be possible at a distance whereas accompaniment implies proximity, i.e., literally walking or sitting beside someone for any significant length of time. A simple handshake might not be accompaniment, but a handshake with a period of sympathetic listening could be. In the latter example, the term could apply to the charitable acts of conservative Catholics, whereas progressives might also apply the term to protests or mobilizations. Liberation theologians envision accompaniment as acts that reinforce "the preferential option for the poor" (see e.g., Goizueta 2009, 1995; Gutierrez 2008). Such a broad range of possible interpretations was acknowledged when the archdiocesan Pastoral Migratoria ("Migrant-to-Migrant Ministry") was designed and its volunteers' goals were defined as "the accompaniment of migrants." Catholics use the term in both conservative and progressive parishes, sometimes in reference to Jesus's apparition "On the Road to Emmaus" (Luke 24: 13-35).

motivation, well it was something that followed from so many years of communication. The people were attentive and they knew what to do.¹²¹

In my analysis of this data, I argue that Lorenzo was mistaken about the lack of “much organization or motivation.” These had indeed occurred during the “many years of communication” between priests, staff, and laity. In order to trace the development of the movement over time, with a focus on the challenges it faces, I will discuss the ways in which priests in Chicago attempted to promote social justice while simultaneously tending to daily matters. Then I will turn to anthropological insights on PJI history and tensions between the PJI and the Church hierarchy.

3.1 Meeting Material and Spiritual Needs

Parishes serve as centers for family and community problem-solving, both as a response to the needs of immigrants and as a continuation of the role the Church has played in poor communities in Mexico and other parts of Latin America. Previous work with Juan Martinez and R. Stephen Warner (Davis et al. 2010) underscored ways in which priests have acted to support their immigrant parishioners, including basic material support (immediate food, shelter, and other keys to survival) and cultural connections in terms of music, decor, the sharing of food, liturgical choices, and holidays and rituals reminiscent of home. Activist priests also worked to unite their often diverse parishioners within social as well as liturgical contexts.

Yet some attempts at collegiality and sharing were unsuccessful; as one north-side parishioner lamented after organizing a party to welcome a new priest from Mexico, “we tried to invite people from the English-language mass” but with little success, as “only two people came. We wanted to join with them,

¹²¹ Interview of December 4, 2006, with Lorenzo (a pseudonym) in Spanish: “La misma gente estaba preguntando como vamos a participar. Entonces básicamente lo que se hizo fue organizar a todos los grupos de la parroquia y convocar a una congregación para la marcha, reunirse aquí y salir de aquí caminando a donde salía la marcha. Eso es lo que hicimos. La gente sola respondió no hubo necesidad de tanta organización o tanta motivación pues es algo que seguía de tantos años de comunicaciones. La gente estaba atenta y sabia.”

but [to no avail]....”¹²² Anglophone and Hispanic parishioners saw conflicting spiritual needs as well. After 20 babies were baptized at one north-side parish ceremony the pastor said “That’s it,” and set the limit to 15 babies on two Saturdays per month, because (as the parish secretary reflected) “people don’t like it when it...feels like it’s a factory.”¹²³ Meanwhile, some priests were willing to provide Spanish masses but restricted translations in church documents, parish council meetings, and other contexts.

Not all PJI members approached cultural and ethno-racial inclusivity in the same way, however. A moderate PJI member in the northern suburbs insisted on English-only parish meetings in the hopes of “avoiding racism” and generating a more unified population. He wished everyone “would work to get the different communities to sit down at the same table” by forming different counsels where people who spoke English, Spanish, and Italian were at the same table---all speaking only English.¹²⁴ In this pastor’s view, a measure of coercion might be necessary in order to get parishioners together at “the same table,” including curtailment of some of their marks of cultural/ethnic and national pride. According to the viewpoints of other PJI members, however, this pastor’s aim of “avoiding racism” might suggest an overreaction, akin to conservatives’ charges of “reverse racism” when they perceived Latinos or African Americans receiving preferential treatment. (In this pastor’s defense, nonetheless, an argument could be made that even in the most progressive and activist parishes in Chicago, a significant percentage of the Latino parishioners are either bilingual or monolingual English speakers; moreover, within Latino communities the relationship between bilingualism and latinidad, or “authentic Latino identity,” is sometimes a topic of heated debate.)

Other priests argued that the table would not be filled unless the faithful were reinforced with cultural connections. Sometimes the table was literal---e.g., the long table set for the Seder celebration in the St.

¹²² Field notes from the Hispanic Ministry meeting at a north-side parish, August 29, 2010. Translated from “...solo dos personas vinieron. Queríamos convivir con ellos, pero....” The term convivir meant to reunite with or to share an experience with others, rather than merely living alongside others.

¹²³ Interview of July 13, 2010, with the receptionist/secretary and the pastor at a north-side parish.

¹²⁴ Interview of August 16, 2010, in Lake County.

Pius V basement every year (a reminder that Jewish and Hispanic traditions are linked with Old Testament prophecy). Sometimes it was figurative: The walls in more than one PJI parish's reception area featured a poster of the martyred Archbishop Romero. One parish had a painting depicting violence and poverty in Haiti; a painting of Jesus "welcoming the stranger"; and a flag, map, and miscellaneous artwork from Mexico. Another rectory's hallway featured photographs from "border immersion" trips, immigration rallies, and community service; while in another, a reception room highlighted Spanish-language Church publications along with images of the Eastern European history of the parish.

The most determined of the PJI inserted immigrant rights and social justice into nearly every homily, utilizing interactive Q&A or storytelling techniques, while others relied more on the selection of music, images, and short dramas by parish groups.¹²⁵ Some utilized all of these tactics over a period of months. Most PJI were not constantly speaking of social justice in direct ways but instead paced and interspersed these messages with others, making explicit calls for social action only in response to upcoming rallies, surprising events/news, or calls from other priests and organizations. Some PJI believed, in contrast, that they were being sufficiently active by using the Sunday bulletin or the reading of announcements (from the podium during mass) to keep the lines of communication open. However, this could be an unsatisfactory approach. I saw requests for volunteers result in responses from only one or two parishioners (out of thousands in the pews) after some masses. The more effective calls to action coincided with an urgent need (a tragedy or major event) in the locality, and they were reinforced in several ways, including the use of the priest's voice and the repetition of messages over more than one Sunday. Litanies of announcements were seldom effective without dramatic or tonal variation.

¹²⁵ The latter group of tactics might have been a way for a priest to deflect criticism (as complaints would be directed at "that group" rather than at "his" sermon or message), but it was also a way to help conserve a priest's time and energy.

3.2 The History of the PJI

The Chicago-based Priests for Justice for Immigrants (PJI)¹²⁶ was formed in 2005, largely in response to the threats posed by the Sensenbrenner Bill (as discussed in the previous chapter). Its core group of priests came from Pilsen, Little Village (La Villita), and other parts of the city and suburbs where immigrant parishes thrived. Attendance at monthly PJI meetings increased rapidly by early 2006, and the total number of affiliated priests soon reached the hundreds. In 2009 and 2010, between 15 and 40 priests continued to attend fairly regularly and to include regular immigrant-rights and social-justice themes in Sunday masses and parish groups. Many in this core group appeared often before television cameras and in Chicago streets in support of the city's immigrants, including Fathers Mike Shanahan (Our Lady of Lourdes), Charles Dahm and Brendan Curran (St. Pius V), John Hoffman (of suburban La Grange), Don Nevins (St. Agnes), Don McNeill (St. Ana), Larry Dowling (St. Denis, then St. Agatha), Sean O'Sullivan (St. Procopius), Mike Boehm (St. Maurice church in Blessed Sacrament parish), Marco Mercado (Good Shepherd parish; archdiocesan director of Hispanic Ministry), Tony Pizzo (St. Rita of Cascia, southwestern Chicago), Gary Graf (Holy Trinity in Waukegan; St. Gall in Chicago), and others, as well as the auxiliary bishops John Manz and Gustavo Garcia-Siller (who was later named the archbishop of San Antonio).

The formation and rapid growth of the PJI owed much to the support and leadership of a small number of staff at the Chicago Archdiocese working with Elena Segura, the director of the Office of Peace and Justice.¹²⁷ A determined director with an approachable manner, Segura was an immigrant from Peru. Her oratory style indicated the vocabulary and evangelical energy of the Carismáticos (the Catholic Charismatic Renewal); she made such frequent references to Christian faith and the love of God and Jesus

¹²⁶ The name was written in different forms in Spanish but was most commonly “Sacerdotes pro-Justicia para Inmigrantes.” The Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants was sometimes given as “Hermanas y Hermanos por la Justicia de los Inmigrantes” emphasizing that justice for immigrants was also their goal.

¹²⁷ On some documents her department was called “Archdiocese of Chicago: Department of Evangelization, Catechesis, and Worship: Office of Peace and Justice” and was listed as supporting the Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform [CCIR], Catholic Relief Services [CRS], Domestic Violence Committee, Catholic Campaign for Human Development, and Parish Sharing.

in her comments and narratives that on first meeting, one might wonder whether she were a representative of an independent Christian church rather than a Catholic. Yet her mannerisms appeared to be genuine expressions of faith. She was respected by the priests, the auxiliary bishops, and the archbishop, to whom she directly reported. Marilu Gonzalez, who had worked with Segura on numerous projects, also became a regular force behind the PJI and immigrant-to-immigrant workshops; she was often listed as a PJI contact for the public and the media, and she was frequently quoted in Chicago newspapers.

The PJI started small according to Father Mark, who became involved in the organization almost as soon as it formed in 2005. Its first steps focused on seemingly apolitical commitments built around sharing something they all understood well, calls to prayer. “In the beginning it was to get together to pray. We committed ourselves to spending time praying and fasting during Lent.”¹²⁸ However apolitical this prayer might have seemed at the outset, it began to take the form of religious occupation: “We also committed ourselves to a few rosaries at different places, like the Federal Building¹²⁹ and [Speaker of the House] Dennis Hastert’s office [in the Chicago suburbs] and...the detention center at Broadview. ...and also to talking to our people.” While engaging in these vigils the priests came into contact with staff from the nearby Resurrection Project and also community organizers from secular Chicago institutions. The various activists began to talk of a March 10 mobilization in Chicago. There was little time or space separating the political from the apolitical it seemed; rather, the term political began to be applied when the movement became more public, garnering more media attention and numbers. (The inadequacy of the term political is discussed below.)

The priests decided to meet at a different public “and symbolic location” each week, where they would “pray for people during the Lent experience,” and they encouraged turning this idea into a “local parish

¹²⁸ Interview with Father Mark (a pseudonym) on February 27, 2007.

¹²⁹ This was one of a handful of nearly identical black skyscrapers in the Loop serving as federal office buildings for a mixture of judges and courts, FBI, ATF, NSA, IRS, and other agencies. Many rallies and gatherings downtown occur on Federal Plaza, a wide, concrete-paved expanse beside one of the buildings.

idea” as well as a citywide effort. They held a press conference on the morning of Ash Wednesday to announce that “we would do this throughout Lent,” and they combined the vigils and Lenten messages with a bit of Lenten homework. They asked “every parish for people to continue to spend the six weeks signing postcards” and join them “a week before Holy Week [doing] a prayer service in Batavia, in front of the office [of Speaker of the House Hastert].”¹³⁰ From the time of its inception, then, the PJI became a testing ground and idea factory for calculated risk-taking, or cultural entrepreneurialism, of Catholic organizers within the immigrant rights movement. (Entrepreneurialism is analyzed in more detail in this chapter’s sections 3.12---3.14.)

During the four or five months after the initial PJI actions, the idea merely simmered because of the Church calendar: “Christmas and a lot of holy days for a lot of different religious traditions” demanded attention, which “slowed the media response” throughout the winter. Yet the idea was not forgotten: “Community organizations and churches were finding any way to become vocal and whatever way to promote the response. Churches, ourselves from the pulpit” and lay leaders, as well as representatives of the archdiocese “realized that we have to speak out, for human dignity’s sake if not for other reasons. This is simply an inhuman, irresponsible, unethical, immoral response to this national problem.”¹³¹ Early efforts started to bear fruit in the secular realm:

It was successful, it got attention, and, I don’t use this word badly, but it got politicized in a sense, that other community groups also joined, and we started kind of having parallel meetings with all the other...lay groups...and the priests and the Office of Peace and Justice group from the archdiocese. We were kind of running parallel...and eventually...part of the trigger [for the marches] was certainly, the sense of vulnerable immigrants...and on the political side and the Church...we agreed on the [date of] March 10 [for a mobilization].¹³²

The street mobilizations were only one of the protests directed at the federal government in 2005 and 2006. The PJI and parish volunteers joined in a hastily organized trip to Washington, D.C., where they

¹³⁰ Interview of Sept. 21, 2006, with Father Brendan Curran of St. Pius V parish.

¹³¹ Interview of Sept. 21, 2006, with Father Brendan Curran of St. Pius V parish.

¹³² Jan. 27, 2007 interview with “Father Anonymous.”

met 4,000 other faith leaders in an attempt to lobby Congressional leaders. When they entered Congressional office buildings, however, they heard “disrespectful comments about immigrants” from some Senators, an experience that discouraged them at first but ultimately “fired them up” as they developed a collective insight “that this is going to be a long struggle...maybe the next major national movement...and then we realized that in Illinois there is a...feel for this legislation but we...were feeling alone, like an island compared to other states.”¹³³ Illinois, meaning mainly Chicago, seemed to stand alone---and yet this added to the mythos of the big-shouldered city driving onward despite the rest of the nation. In the years that followed, activists would remark that “nothing else is going on in the nation” so that Chicago “is it.” Indeed, observers later credited Chicago as “the epicenter” of the movement.¹³⁴

Rather than an amorphous grassroots effort forming itself into the March 10, 2006 mobilization, the movement grew out of a combination of stresses, protests, religious and secular expressions of disapproval, and what PJI members called prophetic voices and prophetic action (in reference to the cries for justice of Old Testament prophets).¹³⁵ The March 10, 2006, mobilization was encouraged by and partly organized around the actions of faith activists, “an amazing display of faith and an amazing display of the Church’s power to come together”¹³⁶---although secular organizations also played key roles obtaining city permits, and planning for safety and logistics.

¹³³ Interviews of Sept. 21 and Sept. 23, 2006, with Father Brendan Curran of St. Pius V parish.

¹³⁴ “1 May 2007...series of nationwide marches...in over twenty cities. ...The largest rally was in Chicago, ‘perhaps the epicenter of the immigrant rights movement’” (Gonzales 2009: 283, citing Juan Mora-Torres’s presentation, “La Primavera del Inmigrante: Media and Voice in the Making of Chicago’s Immigrant Rights Movement, 2005-2007,” at the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies, Austin, Texas, March 20, 2008).

¹³⁵ As expressions linking biblical discourses with social justice, these were envisioned as the result of following one’s conscience as a Catholic. Prophetic actions (and prophetic voices, as words are verbal acts) stood in opposition to the paralysis of fear, which “close[d] the mind and harden[ed] the heart,” in the words of one priest. The prophet in this sense was expected to risk harm in order to support others, i.e., to confront and risk the ire of the powerful, including wealthy donors and one’s own superiors, and to risk personal and professional sanctions. These concepts are examined (in section 3.16) below, titled “Prophetic Fears, Theological Protections.”

¹³⁶ Jan. 27, 2007 interview with “Father Anonymous.”

Bolstered by the March 10 and May 1 mobilizations which they nevertheless contextualized as “just a continual part of the process,” the PJI pressed the case in Washington with a low-key, less confrontational visit---a far cry from the previous trip there. A small delegation of “four priests and a bishop and our associate director of Peace and Justice” met with Speaker Dennis Hastert and four Republican leaders on immigration reform, only to be shocked at their views against comprehensive reform and their rhetoric about shutting down the border. There was

an opinion in Washington...which is absolutely anti-immigrant...[meaning] our position for immigration reform as a Church is something they are vehemently opposed to and absolutely beat us up on...[in an] absolutely disrespectful [way]. ...We felt we needed to respect their process by not going to the press. But...the average citizen would’ve been shocked at the level of abuse in that conversation. ...that’s when we realized how serious a dangerous situation we are in.¹³⁷

After that visit, parishes began working with and through various organizations to change tactics, encouraging those eligible to become citizens and register to vote. This was a challenge because “our numbers are dreadful on voting and the people we are electing into leadership...are directly affecting our immigrant community.” In April 2006 the PJI and lay leaders helped organizers at TRP with one of the “most successful in history” voter registration drives, headquartered at St. Pius: “we had nearly 300 people attend a citizenship workshop. They filled up the church and...basement and a line went 3 blocks down, blocking traffic.”¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Interview of Sept. 21, 2006, with Father Brendan Curran of St. Pius V parish. The “absolutely anti-immigrant” attitude that PJI leaders witnessed was also exhibited in 2009 and 2010, when Catholic activists, nuns, and priests returned via “bus caravan” to Capitol Hill and attempted to meet with the Republican senator for Illinois, Mark Kirk, and a Democratic senator for the southwestern Chicago neighborhoods near Midway Airport, Dan Lipinski. In both instances, the overflow crowds of activists were apparently avoided by their Congressmen. In the hallway outside of one office, the chief of staff eventually spoke with the crowd only after being cajoled by Ashley Wooten, a community organizer from SWOP. The experience confirmed the suspicions of parishioners that most U.S. politicians were generally aloof, white, wealthy (or at least well-funded) non-Latinos who distanced themselves from immigrants and other minorities whenever possible; thus a binary opposition was reinforced. (They tended to hold higher opinions of another well-funded, white U.S. Senator, however: Dick Durbin had worked to reform immigration laws and made appearances at many pro-immigrant rallies in Chicago.)

¹³⁸ Interview of Sept. 21, 2006, with Father Brendan Curran of St. Pius V parish.

3.3 Support or Silence in the Hierarchy

By 2009 the PJI counted more than 200 priests, though in 2010 and 2011 there were sometimes reports of up to 300 signing on---a claim to nearly a third of the thousand priests in Chicago's archdiocese. They represented many parts of the hierarchy and diverse backgrounds, even among the core members of the organization. Elena Segura, director of an archdiocese office that supports the PJI, stated: "The beautiful thing about this movement is that we have order priests, diocesan priests, old priests, new priests, all kinds. Of them, 30 to 40 priests on a monthly basis are working their butts off" (Callaway 2009).

A core group of priests regularly attended PJI meetings, vigils, and protests during the period 2005-2011. All were personally known to Segura and Gonzalez, who helped maintain regular contact between the ICIRR, the national Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform (an office of the USCCB in Washington, D.C.) and other organizations. At the same time, many PJI members developed personal acquaintances with the leaders of various groups. Chief among their contacts, and sometimes chief on their list of challenges, was the Archbishop of Chicago, Francis Cardinal George (who had served as the president of the USCCB), a man of influence whose presence was often sought but not often granted at immigrant-rights events.

Although the archbishop provided formal institutional support¹³⁹ (staff salaries, office space, and a budget for supplies) and gave tacit approval in private conversations with various PJI members and staff, and although he made key appearances at some PJI events, Church activists often revealed their frustration at

¹³⁹ This institutional support was in the archdiocesan budget. On a flyer distributed in advance of the March 21, 2009 event at Our Lady of Mercy, Segura and Gonzalez noted the Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform (CCIR) "is a program of the Office for Peace and Justice, Department of Evangelization, Catechesis and Worship, Archdiocese of Chicago." Segura and her staff occupied offices in proximity to the archbishop's in the Meier Center, an administrative building on the south side. When I visited to interview Segura, on opening a stairwell door I found myself face to face with a kindly older priest in collar and black shirt. I only later realized he was the archbishop himself. When I told a PJI friend of the encounter, he barely registered a reaction, then reminded me of the archbishop's delays in promoting the movement, and of the PJI's exhortations for him "to act rather than react."

his overly cautious approach. They saw him as a separate entity who favored immigrant rights but was not always willing to speak on the question---at least not in English-language venues. Meanwhile, the PJI, the affiliated Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants (members of religious orders engaging in similar social-justice activism), and the aforementioned diocesan staff formed three vital corners of a triangle of Chicago diocesan leaders necessary to the planning and execution of the Church's part in the movement.

The spread of the PJI throughout much of the Chicago archdiocese stood in contrast, meanwhile, to other parishes where priests or parishioners ignored or actively opposed Church efforts toward immigration reform. As the Hispanic/Latino bishops of the USCCB lamented, "It pains and saddens us that many of our Catholic brothers and sisters have not supported our petitions for changes in the immigration law that will protect your basic rights while you contribute your hard work to our country."¹⁴⁰

After years of pressure from priests and laity the bishops were eventually said to have "had a change of heart," becoming "very vocal, and very forceful, about this immigration issue."¹⁴¹ And yet, in the mainstream media and academic circles the higher echelons of the Church tended to be named as the reason for Church participation in social justice issues, rather than local activists. Even Church publications reinforced this myth: On the diocesan website,¹⁴² Segura wrote that the Office for Immigrant Affairs "was built as a result of our archdiocese's [response] to the call" of the USCCB's Campaign for Immigration Reform, which launched in June 2005. It might be argued that Segura must call attention to the USCCB out of a need to maintain legitimacy for the movement---i.e., the strategic need to say that activist priests were following the lead of superiors rather than acting on their own authority. And yet,

¹⁴⁰ Letter of the Hispanic/Latino Bishops to Immigrants, Dec. 12, 2011. Signed by 33 bishops of the USCCB, the letter was released "from Los Angeles and San Antonio, the sees of the two highest ranking Hispanic archbishops." The latter archbishop, Gustavo García-Siller, was an auxiliary bishop in Chicago until only recently; in the months prior to his departure he attended several PJI events and contributed to the visibility of the movement by recounting (reluctantly at first) an experience of racial profiling that he endured while being detained at Chicago's Midway Airport. The bishops' letter is accessible at http://usccbmedia.blogspot.com/2011/12/estas-son-las-mananitasof-hispanic_12.html

¹⁴¹ Jan. 26, 2007 interview with Father Mike Boehm.

¹⁴² Accessed July 6, 2010, at <http://www.archchicago.org/Immigration/>

activists wanted to see archdiocesan officials like Segura speak more often of local factors in the movement, because she had seen migrants themselves as well as local priests, parish activists, and a few outspoken bishops acting as prime motivators. These local actors were the reason the hierarchy began to take notice of the movement; these were not people who began to act only in following the lead of the USCCB.

While I could not fault Segura or other Church functionaries' seeking of legitimacy for the movement, in my analysis this sort of rhetorical framing overemphasized obedience to the hierarchy. This framing occurred, I argue, because of the aforementioned need to claim legitimacy but also, to varying degrees, because of oversimplification, protection, and cognitive dissonance. The oversimplification tended to be broadcast by Catholics who knew that parish and local actors did, in fact, influence the Church in calling for change with prophetic voices, but who found the dialectical history too confusing to sort out or explain to most audiences; their framing of movement actions as "the Church" or "the USCCB" resulted from a desire to communicate too quickly and efficiently. In addition, some activist Catholics might have been reaching beyond a basic framing of legitimacy by attempting to provide themselves with theological cover from reactionary elements within the hierarchy; thus, in public venues they might (re)frame progressive or radical actions under the banner of obedience to superiors and biblical mandates. However, I would argue that this was not a cynical ploy: The data indicated that they provided these theological links not as a veneer but as a sincere attempt to reconcile local Catholic activism and prophetic voices with at least some of the Church's higher echelon leadership. Finally, various levels of cognitive dissonance might also have occurred as unconscious alterations despite contrary evidence---i.e., evidence of the impetus of local rather than national, hierarchical, or international leaders---because it was psychologically easier to ally one's views with a prevalent myth, such as the myth that "the Church moves in unison." I do not mean to argue that hierarchical leadership has had no impact on social

movements; it has, but when Catholic social activists spoke of the hierarchy they more often noted its potential for quelling prophetic voices rather than encouraging them.¹⁴³

Progressive priests in Chicago wished to follow the model of biblical prophets speaking truth to power. They looked nonetheless for Church reform, not overt rebellion, melding structures of the Church with popular piety, formal ecclesiastical traditions with popular aspects of Latino religion and culture. But their dream of growing the movement, of seeing the actual conversion of hundreds of their fellow priests to the movement, remained elusive.

3.4 A Church for Justice for Immigrants?

“A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side” (Luke 10: 31, story of the Good Samaritan).

The PJI became activists in part because of the shortcomings and failings of their orders and the Church at large. The consequences of not acting were severe, they believed, as they saw millions suffering. The closest biblical parallel was the parable of the Good Samaritan, which contrasted the uncaring attitudes of priests and co-nationals (Levites, Jews, etc.---the same ethnicity as the victim by the road) with the love and compassion of a Samaritan, a stranger/foreigner who yet became a neighbor through his acts (Luke 10: 29-37). This kind of love for the stranger, and the poor, was taught by Jesus as one of the only ways to find eternal life (i.e., a place in heaven)---in one of the few passages in the Bible that was explicit about this theological mystery (Matthew 25: 31-46).

The longstanding efforts of the PJI and archdiocese staff to bring the archbishop into a more public role bore more fruit in the spring of 2010, when Cardinal George acquiesced to sending a letter, asking all

¹⁴³ The era of Vatican II was an exception. Pope Francis has also faced resistance from conservative frameworks. Many conservatives reacted with shock, for instance, when he ceremonially washed the feet of males and females in a juvenile detention facility rather than the feet of priests. The Church’s reactionary echelons feared the new pope would attempt reforms indicative of his Jesuit origins.

pastors to speak about immigration to their congregations. A priest in Lake County recalled he “directed us to speak on that in one of our masses” so information was also in the bulletin and incorporated into the homily. Yet he saw a few indications of displeasure:

I think people don’t like to have politics discussed during mass so there might have been a couple people complain about that. There was one person who walked out at one of the masses, but as a general rule I think people listen.¹⁴⁴

PJI members struggled to design tactics to awaken the Catholic Church to the need for a spirited fight for immigration reform by focusing on the conversion of their colleagues, i.e., the opening of their hearts and minds to the immigrants and social-justice priorities among them. Their concerns over low Catholic participation were confirmed by my observations: At most immigrant parishes where Spanish masses were given, messages specifically directed at social justice actions and the immigrant-rights movement were seldom heard, with a particular lull in activity between 2008 and 2010 (a time when few large mobilizations took place). Even die-hard PJI members were not consistently inserting related messages into their weekly bulletins. In some cases priests were not taking a consistent lead on immigration questions but were nevertheless allowing groups of lay volunteers to represent the parish, as with the Lake County priest quoted above, who said that within the parish’s “social services committee that meets monthly there’s one member whose supposedly attending to the immigration issues.”¹⁴⁵ In the view of PJI activists this level of activism did not seem promising enough to tip the balance, especially since a near total silence pervaded many parishes. The more outspoken and dedicated of the PJI raised the issue at monthly meetings and decided on a collective attempt to increase the attention given to immigrant rights among their colleagues. They would begin with a symposium designed to raise conversions among their friends, in what one priest called “an opportunity to change the conversation on the ground.” The resulting Oct. 5, 2010 event, which they called “Between a Rock and a Tea Party,” is described in section 3.9, after additional treatment of PJI motivations and social justice in the Church.

¹⁴⁴ Interview of August 16, 2010, in Lake County.

¹⁴⁵ Interview of August 16, 2010, in Lake County.

3.5 Why Do Priests Become PJI Activists?

Within the larger social movement for immigration reform, priests have provided inspiration and links between disparate activists (Badillo 2006; Warren 2001; Gittell and Vidal 1998; Tarrow 1998; Wood 2002); however, activist priests accounted for only part of the faith-based leadership within the movement, and in many parishes, Catholic priests appeared to take little or no action in the struggle. In these parishes, there were varying levels of contention between priests (some of whom were seen by progressive Catholics as standing in the way of reform) and lay activists calling for increased participation in the movement. It should be noted from the outset that Latino priests were no more likely (than Anglo priests) to be activists in immigrant communities, and in any event, Latinos accounted for only about five percent of Chicago priests.¹⁴⁶

Men entered the priesthood as the products of myriad cultural factors and with diverse kinds of experience, personalities, and worldviews; just as there were many varieties of U.S. Catholics there were many kinds of priests. In their journeys through the seminary and in their early posts they developed leadership styles and social concerns through a sometimes random and sometimes articulated set of relationships with superiors and colleagues in the Church hierarchy, parish staff (other priests, religious brothers and sisters, and laity), as well as personal and professional networks as exemplified by groups such as the PJI. The data analyzed in this research indicate that concerns for social justice in Chicago were neither entirely innate nor formed solely by consciousness-raising owing to events in immigrant parishes, but their activism became political despite it being born of deeply held religious beliefs, and despite the avoidance of that term by many within the Church. In a general sense their calls to activism related to a political and spiritual syncretism, as the separation of politics from religion was a modern

¹⁴⁶ Father Marco Mercado, director of the diocesan Office of Hispanic Ministry, noted in an interview for a Catholic newspaper, “We have...more than 50 Hispanic priests [in] the Archdiocese of Chicago. Ninety percent of them were born not in the United States.” Accessed at <http://www.catholicnewworld.com/cnwonline/2011/0410/8.aspx> on April 11, 2011.

Western construct. The PJI also related to various motivations and “interests, identifications, trust, group consciousness, and beliefs of individual citizens” (Cano 2004: 5, citing Verba and Nie 1972; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). But that aside, there are also more identifiable sets of personal, professional, and social factors that have shaped PJI vocations.

Activism was strongly linked to faith for PJI members, even for those not wishing to be associated with the word political. Most PJI members would be able to find common ground with progressive political activists, some liberal politicians, and even some conservative ones---while keeping other conservative agendas at a distance. While some PJI have also become active in debates surrounding reproduction, others have remained largely silent on the subject; few PJI would find themselves comfortable making alliances with conservative politicians. However, we should not conflate immigrant-rights activism with allegiance to any political party; such affiliations were often anathema, as most priests learned to distrust politicians and to maintain a professional distance from them. Nor would many priests wish to exclude conservative or reactionary parishioners from their spiritual care.¹⁴⁷ Whatever grievances an observer might have counted against the Catholic Church, in the eyes of insiders these activist priests were “true men of God” who devoted their lives as expressions of faith---though neither faith in God nor in human beings were unwavering, unchanging qualities.

While attempting to answer questions of PJI membership, motivation, inspiration, and solidarity, we are approaching one of the goals of anthropologists---describing religious belief from the perspective of the believer: “How is it that believers are able to believe?...Whence comes faith?” (Geertz 1968: 102; see also Geertz 2000a-d; Geertz 1970). The present research offers an approach to these questions, though not a complete answer to them: The faith of these men---when faith is defined as a changing condition replete

¹⁴⁷ It could be argued, however, that the binary opposition reinforced by the PJI led to the exclusion or marginalization of some parishioners within their purportedly “more inclusive” parishes---indicating a contradiction emerging from within the opposition. Perhaps parishes that became more inclusive for some groups were becoming more exclusive for others.

with conflict, development, doubt, and conversions (as described in more detail below)---comes from or is at least melded with the communities they serve, the parishioners and other people they interact with on a daily basis, including non Catholics. Influences from the social milieu (as I would argue is the case for all religious leaders) play far greater roles in their spiritual quests and worldviews than the kinds of quiet contemplation that are so often attributed to holy men. The evidence revealed in their interviews, homilies, and comments have pointed to a Durkheimian interpretation of the power of crowds (and communities) in the formation and development of faith, as well as the faith-building power of interpersonal relations. In essence, some priests have formed a spirituality artificially cloistered from the popular world, but those priests who have become strong PJI activists appear to have been moved or called to action by their interactions with, and empathy for, their parishioners. Yet something more than empathy has been required for social justice.

During interviews about the 2006 marches, several PJI members reminisced about the 1960s and early 1970s, a time when many were either in the seminary or beginning their careers as priests. As one PJI member recalled:

As a young priest we were together on the Grape Boycott, and some of the other Civil Rights stuff. [So in 2006] it was good to see some passion around again. We'd kind of been hiding, hiding in the background for so long [silent on social justice and immigration]. It was good to see so many people [in the streets] feeling strongly about this.¹⁴⁸

Several Chicago priests had distinctive memories of the Civil Rights movement and would proudly note that priests and religious marched along with Martin Luther King, Jr. One priest noted being impressed as a youth by the struggles of anti-war protestors during the Vietnam War. The 1980s seemed, for many, a time of neoliberalism and egotism, but for others it heightened their resolve as activists through the

¹⁴⁸ Jan. 27, 2007 interview with "Father Anonymous" on Chicago's Southwest side.

Sanctuary Movement and news of the dirty wars in Latin America, including the rape and murder of Maryknoll nuns and the assassination of Archbishop Romero¹⁴⁹ in El Salvador.

As part of Catholic Social Gospel, also called Catholic Social Teaching, social-justice education had a respected place within the seminary, and it struck a chord with many priests. Some named specific seminary teachers to whom they owed a debt of gratitude for guidance in the Social Gospel. Yet no single kind of academic preparation or early experience seemed to hold across the group. Nor did K-12 Catholic schooling seem to be a determining factor. This is in line with earlier research showing that decades of Catholic education did not make one either conservative or liberal: In the Notre Dame Study of Parish Life (Leege and Gremillion 1981-1989), researchers were surprised to find that “Catholic schooling of itself accounted for little in the strictness of boundary definitions” (Leege 1985: 9).

When priests joined religious orders an amount of self-selection took part; those with an interest in social justice were more likely to be attracted to the Jesuit, Scalabrinian, or Dominican orders, for instance. Shared ideologies were then reinforced in additional seminary training in those orders. Dominicans studied questions of social justice as part of their yearlong novitiate in Denver and their four to six additional years of study in St. Louis.¹⁵⁰ A Spanish-language brochure published by the Dominicans recruited new members by promoting social-justice “transformation of our community”¹⁵¹ as a pillar of religious life---prayer, communal life, study, and ministry. A Dominican priest told me, with some hint of

¹⁴⁹ Romero wrote that Christians who “work for a world more just./...against the abuses of unjust authorities,/ against the wrongfulness of humans exploiting humans;/ all those who begin their struggle/ with the resurrection of the great Liberator--/they alone are authentic Christians” (Romero 2009: 41-42).

¹⁵⁰ As noted in the brochure (which Dominicans made available in parish lobbies): “Una Jornada en Proceso: Dominicos, Orden de Predicadores; River Forest, Illinois 60305; www.op.org/domcentral.”

¹⁵¹ Social justice was at the literal center of the brochure: “Como frailes dominicos continuamos el trabajo de Santo Domingo hoy a través de una vida activa y contemplativa. Nuestra misión incluye la predicación, la enseñanza, y la promoción de justicia social en una variedad de ambientes. ...Vivimos en una edad en que el materialismo y el individualismo son entendidos como una experiencia vital de la vida humana. A través de la predicación y su transformación diaria, los dominicanos conectamos la Palabra de Dios con la experiencia de gente en maneras que...impulsan la transformación de nuestra sociedad” (Una Jornada en Proceso: Dominicos, Orden de Predicadores; 7200 W. Division Street, River Forest, Illinois 60305; www.op.org/domcentral).

pride, how a prominent theologian defected to the Dominican order: Father Gustavo Gutierrez had coined liberation theology in Peru, but he emigrated as Opus Dei (a right-wing and perhaps reactionary element of the Church) became too powerful there. He accepted a post at Notre Dame University but also left the Franciscan order to take vows as a Dominican.

Parish histories highlighted the concern for community development and activism among religious orders. St. Pius V parish saw Dominicans moving into the parish in the 1920s to serve an immigrant Polish population (most of the Irish having left already). Similar lines of influence obtained among Jesuits at St. Procopius parish and Cristo Rey high school, and Scalabrinians in Melrose Park. Membership in certain religious orders was thus a predictor of activism among Chicago priests, though other factors also prevailed. Not every Dominican, Jesuit, and Scalabrinian priest and religious in the metropolitan area was equally active in the movement, and many leading PJI members were actually diocesan priests not affiliated with a specific religious order.

Once they had become priests, the PJI learned about the dangers of dealing openly on questions of social justice with an increasingly conservative Church hierarchy. In the 1960s and 1970s, the organizer Saul Alinsky recognized in many of them an outlook not mired in dogma. In these youth he saw potential allies as agents of community, and eventual national, reforms---leading, as Alinsky hoped, to a specifically non-Communist series of societal reforms in the direction of social justice (Horwitt 1989). In Rules for Radicals (1989 [1971]) Alinsky determined that “the politics of change” demanded a recognition of “the world as it is” not the world of the future---because this “is a world not of angels but of angles, where men speak of moral principles but act on power principles” (1989: 12-14). He painted a dark picture for those wishing to climb the Church hierarchy, of “the priest who wants to be a bishop and bootlicks and politicks his way up, justifying it with the rationale, ‘After I get to be bishop I’ll use my office for Christian reformation,’” thus making “a world of religious institutions that have, in the main, come to support and justify the status quo” and remaining spiritually bankrupt:

Each year...the activists in the graduating class from a major Catholic seminary near Chicago would visit me for a day just before their ordination.... Once...one of the seminaries said, “Mr. Alinsky... We’re going to be ordained, and then we’ll be assigned to different parishes, as assistants to---frankly---stuffy, reactionary, old pastors. They will disapprove of a lot of what you and we believe in, and we will be put into a killing routine. Our question is: how do we keep our faith in true Christian values, everything we hope to do to change the system?”

That was easy. I answered, “When you go out that door, just make your own personal decision about whether you want to be a bishop or a priest, and everything else will follow.” (Alinsky 1989 [1971]: 13)

Father Dahm expressed a nearly identical insight to me while we conversed in the St. Pius V rectory one afternoon. It was likely that he first heard this advice from Alinsky or from a colleague who also recalled talks with Alinsky. Dahm had also shared the concern for “true Christian values” raised by the priests in the above passage. This recalled Lancaster’s frame of analysis for liberation theologians in Nicaragua, where radical Catholicism was justified as authentic Christianity (1988: 67). His informants appeared “deeply conservative in their radicalism” (1988: xviii) but not reactionary, since they grounded their views in biblical passages.

The shifting boundary between institutionalized Church power and social activism was broadly acknowledged in the U.S. Church. As Leege (1985: 2-3) of the Notre Dame Study had it, leaders “also have personal aspirations. Promotion up the ranks often follows conformity to the will of current top leaders. Thus, which principles are professed, which norms are enforced, and which boundaries are maintained may depend, in part, on the mid-level leader’s organizational ambitions.” Not all of the top echelons have failed to acknowledge outspoken critics, however. The force behind Vatican II, Pope John XXIII, was once said to have told a young cleric: “You may rest assured that on the day of judgment Jesus is not going to ask you: And how did you get along with the Holy Office?” [i.e., Vatican leadership] (Arendt 1968: 63). It was possible John XXIII also related this to his troubles “getting along” with reactionary curia who were working against him (Gardner 2011: 166-167). Pope Francis might be experiencing similar patterns today.

Most of the PJI founders who have remained at its core knew one another before 2005, some for years, others for decades. They already respected one another as friends or in professional capacities. A few had been in seminary together but most met after being placed in Chicago parishes. They lived and worked in geographical proximity in immigrant neighborhoods, particularly in Little Village, Pilsen, and Back of the Yards. They attended vicariate and parish cluster meetings together and sought one another out for advice, spiritual support, and inspiration. Their bonds were mutually reinforcing to a degree greater than they experienced with other faith leaders and activists. Many who became active in one arena (e.g., gang violence) also took up other causes (e.g., domestic violence, immigrant rights).

In 1990 priests in Pilsen and Little Village helped create The Resurrection Project (TRP), a neighborhood development organization promoting affordable housing, new homeownership, and a halt to gentrification. TRP headquarters arose only a block from the 18th Street “L” stop, within easy reach of the Loop. Several of the priests who later became PJI members were involved in the 1990s in leadership workshops and parish community-action groups.

The plans they began to formulate centered on parishes as communities but also cast an eye on Washington. Some priests began to send communications to their bishops and the USCCB requesting support at higher levels, but the lines of communication between these local agents and the hierarchy were not always clear: Few priests who had earlier established reputations of speaking out on social-justice issues enjoyed harmonious relationships with their bishops.

3.6 Social Teaching: Not Liberation Theology in Name

Catholic Social Teaching was frequently mentioned but often ignored except in progressive and radical parishes. It has been called “the Church’s best-kept secret,” and many considered liberation theology to be at its core. Yet liberation theology was not a term often used in Chicago, following decades of

suppression by Pope John Paul II, Cardinal Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict),¹⁵² and other Vatican and USCCB officials living through the Cold War and neoliberal expansions.¹⁵³ One PJI friend recalled that the founder of liberation theology “was shunned bitterly” by the hierarchy for decades (Father Mulligan, personal communication, June 6, 2015).¹⁵⁴ In six years I did not hear a priest, nun, or lay activist in Chicago speak the term unless asked about it directly---not even at St. Pius V, despite Father Dahm’s having endorsed it in his 2004 book. When questioned about these apparent omissions, my PJI friends acknowledged that the term fell out of currency during the papacy of John Paul II, yet they believed that they themselves avoided mentioning it only to choose other terms that were more clearly understandable among their constituents. While displaying support for its tenets, they were nevertheless aware that many Catholics misunderstood or distrusted the term, partly because of its association with armed rebellions in Latin America. One saw it as “a dimension of the Gospel” that was not being rekindled except for the Pastoral Migratoria (Migrant-to-Migrant Ministry) in Chicago, though “we need this now more than ever” throughout the Church, he argued (Father Mulligan, personal communication, June 6, 2015). Another priest clarified that although he did not say the word he used its tenets often: “Liberation theology, in its peaceable manifestation is great,” he explained, because it builds community and a sense of “shared responsibility” while also fostering an “ongoing analysis of life situations and how to change structural injustice, all rooted in the Gospel”; and yet, he cautioned that the term “is regarded as too liberal in the

¹⁵² Pope John Paul II distrusted liberation theology yet used the expression “preferential option for the poor” on several occasions (Gutierrez 2008: xxvi). He repeated the radical Pope John XXIII’s phrase “the church of the poor” (Gutierrez 2008: xli), and in his April 1986 letter to the bishops of Brazil, John Paul wrote “Liberation theology is not only timely but useful and necessary. It should be seen as a new stage...in the theological reflection that began with the apostolic tradition...and, more recently, the rich patrimony of the church’s social teaching as set forth in documents from Rerum Novarum to Laborem Exercens” (cited in Gutierrez 2008: xlv). Some theologians and historians thus argue that John Paul II would have been more welcoming if not for the influence of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI). Ratzinger led the office called the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and became one of Gutierrez’s most tenacious critics; he twice issued official warnings to him (Santella 2009).

¹⁵³ An article in Our Sunday Visitor (Kreutzer 2010) implied priests might be associating with the safer phrase “empowering”---especially when tied with land ownership and entrepreneurialism, even when focusing on landless Mayan laborers: “a Minnesota priest,” Msgr. Gregory Schaffer, worked since 1964 to raise Mayan families out of poverty/landlessness. He helped create “a processing plant that guarantees farmers a fixed price by cutting out middlemen” and grew the program from six to over 650 families. He won “the Order of the Quetzal, Guatemala’s highest award for work in social justice.”

¹⁵⁴ Father Mulligan is pseudonymous.

growing conservative circles, including [among many] clergy” (Father David, personal communication, June 9, 2015).¹⁵⁵

In contrast to the term liberation theology, the term social justice carried less Cold War baggage but could be a proxy for many of its goals.¹⁵⁶ One PJI informant indicated that his preference for social justice was due, in large part, to the ease in communicating the meaning of the term not only in the parish but to the larger “Catholic assembly” (Father Mulligan, personal communication, June 6, 2015). In addition, the liberationist phrase “preferential option for the poor” was mentioned in social justice arenas.

Such suppression, or at least verbal selection, within the Catholic Church might have harmed ecumenical connections because liberation theologians were admired by Protestants, Jews, and Muslim activists.¹⁵⁷ I heard liberation theology noted by Protestants at many immigrant-rights events from 2005 to 2011, with admiring comments whenever Catholic activism were a topic. There was hardly a development in the Church that garnered more interest among agnostic and atheist scholars as well.

The precursors to liberation theology have often been traced to three roots: (a) Pope Leo XIII’s Rerum Novarum; (b) the 1962-1965 bishop’s council (Vatican II) which, in turn, inspired profound changes in national churches and impelled Latin American bishops toward (c) the region’s historic “second episcopal conference” (1968) in Medellín, Colombia. Then the official coining of the term came from the poor

¹⁵⁵ Father David is pseudonymous.

¹⁵⁶ The Vatican web pages at http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P6N.HTM and http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM (accessed March 27, 2009) outline the catechism, with an article on social justice and subsections on respect for the human person, equality and diversity, and solidarity.

¹⁵⁷ Members of various Protestant denominations, on hearing that a priest or parish might be active in social justice, immediately asked whether they were involved in liberation theology. They also shared prayers and songs with Catholics, and used language regarding the need “to walk with the stranger” as “Christ was a refugee,” a stranger, and in league with the poor (Nawyn 2007: 146). This language did not mix well with conservative “gospel(s) of wealth.”

urban zones and Andean villages where the Peruvian priest Gustavo Gutiérrez labored.¹⁵⁸ While continuing to support the work of those who brought immediate help to the poor, liberation theologians argued the necessity of investigating and changing the root structural causes of poverty, even if that analysis resulted in condemnations of economic and political systems. To reduce suffering was to prepare for the Kingdom of God and fight “cultures of death.”

Gutierrez symbolized this theological direction as one who “challenges the notion that religion has nothing to do with ‘secular’ things like economic and legal systems and the common good” and aided understanding of the biblical “obligation to stand with the poor and to understand and alleviate the causes of poverty” (S. Alan Ray, quoted in Santella 2009). Social justice was also theologically grounded in the Sermon on the Mount and in numerous other biblical passages. As expressed by Dahm (2004: x-xi), a theology of social justice involved respecting the “strength and wisdom” of immigrant parishioners; helping to “transform the voiceless victims...into powerful advocates”; addressing poverty and immediate needs; providing classes and assistance; instilling “the vision of sharing in community”; and supporting “cultural traditions and values...from liturgies to meetings, always with special attention to the sharing of food.” As a lay activist reflected, “They speak of God who is on the side of the oppressed, and...this reality of social justice that also exists, so they [are called to] represent immigrants.”¹⁵⁹

Priests influenced by liberation theology have, for the most part, read major selections of Gutierrez’s work as well as those of Archbishop Oscar Romero. They often said, however, that their theological grounding was in papal encyclicals such as Rerum Novarum (which underscored the dignity of the worker), Exsul Familia (migration might be necessary), and Pacem in Terris (people had the right to

¹⁵⁸ A Theology of Liberation (1971) grew from an essay he wrote after bishops mused about “a time of zeal for full emancipation, of liberation from every form of servitude” (Gutierrez 2008 [1988]: xvii).

¹⁵⁹ Interview of Jan. 25, 2007, with Alfonso (a pseudonym). My translation of: “Hablan de Dios que está del lado del oprimido, y pues de esta realidad de justicia social que también hay para que representen a los inmigrantes.”

migrate for “just reasons”). Few also spoke openly of Paulo Freire’s Pedagogy of the Oppressed¹⁶⁰ and its call for praxis (theory with action, or action-reflection) in service to the poor (Menjivar 2007: 117; De Genova 2005: 259n14; Klaiber 1998: 10, 22). Yet they highlighted the name of César Chavez (Sandoval 2006: 119-125), and many were once linked with a group of Mexican American priests called PADRES (Priests Associated for Religious, Educational, and Social Rights) and nuns called Las Hermanas (Sandoval 2006: 83-85).

3.7 Converting the Converted: More than Nominal Catholicism

Some of the PJI members had been attempting to reach out to fellow priests through an effort they called the Pilgrims campaign, a long-term effort designed to show that immigrants were worthy of respect, love, and dignity. But the Pilgrims initiative “just kind of stalled,” whereupon they asked for feedback from their fellow PJI to plan on either dropping it, waiting a year or two before continuing, or moving forward without pause. Their colleagues were undecided. One worried about the group being “stretched too thin” with so many concerns as a core group of about 30 was taking on most of the PJI activism, despite the purported membership ranging from 200 to 300 Chicago priests. Yet some gave examples of how successful the Pilgrims campaign had been in their parishes, particularly when a Latino from another parish would visit “and tell their story.” Father Mike Boehm argued that it was important to raise the level of understanding and empathy: “converting them...talking about immigration,” and consciousness-raising resulting in “tremendous support” for the movement “by being a conversion for everyone.”

I first heard a PJI member using the word conversion in reference to immigration reform during an interview in 2006, and by 2010 the term was used frequently among PJI throughout Chicago, in reference to their efforts to reach out to colleagues and build activism in the movement. They had felt considerable resistance from many of their fellow priests as well as many “who sat silently by” doing nothing. Many of

¹⁶⁰ Some called Freire a Marxist, others a liberationist, or both. Some activists (Catholic and non-Catholic) have argued persuasively that the Gospels---and much of the New Testament---were socialist texts in their calls for assistance to the poor and warnings that the rich would not gain access to heaven.

the latter oversaw Anglo congregations, where greying hairs tended to indicate (as some PJI opined) a greater prevalence of right-wing anti-immigrant views. Others, however, led predominantly Latino immigrant parishes. As one of the more activist members remarked while a PJI planning meeting was concluding, much work remained in the matter of “gaining the hearts and minds” of their brethren.

Conversion was a term that others used in religious, theological contexts, often in regards to attracting Catholics away from the Church into evangelical sects. However, as a notion that hearts and minds should be combined with action, conversion might have been part of the lexicon in faith-based organizations and Chicago’s immigrant parishes for many years. It appeared in the writings of Virgilio Elizondo, but it was enshrined in the immigrant-rights movement when the joint conferences of bishops of the United States and Mexico issued their 2003 pastoral letter “Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope”:

The need for conversion: We need to change people’s heart first, before we change the law. First, we need to see the other/ the stranger as my brother and sister, as someone who I’m connected to.... I will be moved to act. I will be in solidarity. I’ll participate to seek justice for immigrants.¹⁶¹

The letter added, “Conversion of mind and heart leads to communion expressed through hospitality” as well as “belonging and welcoming...in the communities where migrants are arriving” (2003: 41). This kind of conversion was, in my analysis, a mixture of spiritual enlightenment and education, like the transference away “from...shame and sorrow” that Elizondo (2008: 111-112) denoted as part of the historical process of mestizo theology. Elizondo interwove the theme of conversion through his interpretation of the Guadalupe story, which he linked to Latino (and all U.S.) Catholicism today: The “conversion of the bishop completes the good news---the evangelium---of the Guadalupe events,” he explained, and “This represents the ongoing call to conversion, especially of those who use their position to oppress, dominate, and exploit” (2008: 108). Another way to frame the argument was “Ethnicity is no longer something to be ashamed of. Mestizaje can be embraced as a gift from God” (Carroll 2008: 70).

¹⁶¹ As quoted by the Office for Immigrant Affairs, Archdiocese of Chicago document “The Journey Towards CIR, 2000 to 2007” in the “Between a Rock and a Tea Party” event folder, Oct. 5, 2010.

Catholic priests could not freely oppose their bishops, however, even where the choice was between blasphemy, in Elizondo's sense of the word, and hierarchy. But the Church had a large enough range of sanctioned voices to provide theological cover for those with left-of-center worldviews. Cover was provided by John Paul II's interpretation of the Social Gospel, which cut both ways. Although the world-traveling pope wrote and spoke in favor of labor unions, migrant rights, and social justice, he was nonetheless wary of, even antagonistic to, liberation theology¹⁶² ---a stance that put him at odds with some of his predecessors, namely Paul VI who wrote fundamentally in favor of it. In John Paul's apostolic exhortation "Ecclesia in America" (2000), he called for encountering (respecting and supporting) marginalized "strangers and foreigners" in order to better encounter God and our own baptism (as a symbolic "new creation"). John Paul also linked the sharing of food and space with spiritual communion. By specifying that "Jesus is the host and we are the invited guest" while in the world "our communities are the host," he held that hospitality reinforced the act of communion in mass (in an inadvertently Durkheimian nod). Conversion and communion led in turn to solidarity, entailing struggles for justice and human rights. For a Polish pope active on the world scene during the Solidarity Movement (of Poland) of the 1980s, the word solidarity was of special importance.

John Paul II's worldview embodied a third way for the Church: liberal on many labor and justice issues but conservative on other issues. His views were reflected in the apparent contradictions and heterogeneity of the institution. One of the most influential functionaries at the Vatican, Bishop Ratzinger (who later succeeded John Paul as Pope Benedict), steered the Church to the right; yet after becoming pope he espoused broader views on questions of Church inclusivity---and after Benedict resigned (in an

¹⁶² When the term liberation theology appeared (rarely) in mainstream Catholic publications prior to 2014, it was often negatively framed by conservative writers and editors---e.g., although Bermudez (2010) recalled David Stoll's mistaken 1991 prediction that evangelicals would overtake Catholics in many Latin American countries by the year 2000 (in Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth), he agreed liberationism might be blamed for this "Protestant reaction" to Catholics. He quoted Peruvian theologian Francisco Interdonato's 1991 claim "there is no doubt that a map of where liberation theology has been most successfully promoted almost perfectly overlaps with a map of evangelical growth." However, note that Bermudez was (per OSV) "director of ACI Prensa news agency...[writing] from Peru"---a country skewed toward the reactionary Opus Dei ranks of the Church.

apparently exceptional and unprecedented act of humility), in turn, Pope Francis altered Vatican discourses in favor of liberation theology.

3.8 Conversion as an American Contribution

Conversion, in Elizondo's framing of the term, was a quintessentially American (not only U.S.) contribution to the world, and the post-biblical narrative most strongly linked to conversion was the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe on Tepeyac, a hill near (now in) Mexico City. The Guadalupe event has often been cited for its gendered and ethnic significance (as discussed in the chapter on Women Leaders) and the biological mixing inherent in mestizaje. Juan Diego was a simple indigenous (Aztec) man, and the Virgin was consistently labeled La Morena ("the Dark-Skinned woman"). She stood with "la más desamparada (the most abandoned [v. 35]), carrying the children of European conquest and rape to an elevated plane (Elizondo 2008: 65, 67). Thus mestizaje was "a theological gateway to understanding the historical experience of Hispanics"; Elizondo styled Guadalupe "as the myth allowing access to the heart of Mexican and Mexican American culture and identity" (Sandoval 2006: 129). When John Paul II elevated Guadalupe's status to that of the "Savior of the Americas," the pope who had disapproved of many aspects of liberation theology unwittingly reinvigorated its foundations in a specifically Mexican and American context.¹⁶³

A flyer¹⁶⁴ distributed at a PJI meeting made conversion a central goal: "We convert and transform the minds and hearts of our brothers and sisters in pastoral leadership as well as the people of our parishes, by heightening awareness of the contributions and struggles of our undocumented brothers and sisters." This was consciousness raising furthered through PJI preaching and theological reflections. The discourse of

¹⁶³ This is my interpretation of John Paul's partial conversion, not Elizondo's, who nonetheless hints at the renovation of the Church's heart: "The pope's creation of a Guadalupe chapel right next to the tomb of St. Peter in Rome is indicative of his own intuition.... In Senegal in 1992, John Paul II...begged forgiveness for the atrocities of the 'so-called Christians' of Europe who had enslaved millions...for their own gain, honor, and glory. ...Worldly power made the following of Jesus impossible for those obsessed with gold and religious absolutism" (2008: 97).

¹⁶⁴ Undated flyer (2008?) distributed at the Oct. 5, 2010 "Between a Rock and a Tea Party" workshop.

conversion also represented, in the words of a parish youth leader, a nexus between “creation, from Ur to the lands of Canaan...from this world to God’s Reign,” uniting Church leaders with immigrants and refugees: “The journey of the displaced people, whether it is from the war-devastated lands of the Tigris and Euphrates River, the clandestine boats from Haiti, Morocco, Cuba, or the lands of Central and South America, requires great flexibility and adaptation,---in other words, conversion” a complicated process in peoples’ minds and hearts (Esparza 2010).

One Friday at the Broadview detention vigil the director of Chicago’s New Sanctuary Coalition, Jenny Dale (aka Juanita Dale), referenced interfaith and intrafaith conversion: “Not only are we an interfaith movement, but we are also a nonviolent movement. ...and though I’m from the United Church of Christ, I offer to you a prayer from the Sisters of Providence”:

Provident God...I ask the gift of courage to identify how and where I am in need of conversion in order to live in solidarity with the Earth and all Creation. Deliver me from violence of superiority and disdain. Grant me the desire and the humility to listen to those whose experiences and attitudes are different from my own. Deliver me from the violence of greed and privilege. Grant me the desire and the will to live simply so others may have their just share of Earth’s resources. Deliver me from the silence.... Deliver me from the violence of irreverence, exploitation, and control. Grant me the desire and the strength to act responsibly within the cycle of creation...¹⁶⁵

It might not be surprising that more liberal Protestant churches, such as the United Church of Christ, would produce activists like Dale who were in tune with Catholics in the movement, referencing much of the same symbolism, songs, and prayers---using much of the same language of faith and spirituality despite specific theological differences. Moreover, the ecumenicalism of the movement did not appear to entail a threat of activist Catholics’ departing for Protestant churches.

The language of conversion did, however, evoke terms and frameworks consistent with denominational conversion (from Catholicism to Protestantism) against which the hierarchy had been struggling. But it

¹⁶⁵ My recording of November 6, 2009, at the Broadview detention center vigil.

should be noted that for some Catholics, the most fervent of Protestant evangelical efforts did not lead invariably to conversion away from Catholicism. Because of the disdain some Catholics in Chicago parishes evidently had for evangelicals, one pastor felt it necessary to remind people to show respect to these “well meaning Christians.”

Excepting a few individuals (particularly carismáticos [Charismatics]), the Latino Catholics I observed in Chicago’s activist parishes did not appear to enjoy most styles of evangelical discourse; in daily conversation they did not seem comfortable with the kind of religious vocabulary of “los cristianos” (evangelicals)---the repetitive patterns in everyday speech (e.g., “...Christ said...” and “...come to the Lord...”).¹⁶⁶ As with most Catholics, the Latinos I observed preferred to avoid repetitive nominalizations of God and Christ, although they might wear crucifixes, have santos or altars in their houses, and cross themselves while passing churches. Since the 1980s proliferation of Christian radio, televangelists, and Republican faith-based politics, popular media had been nearly saturated with Christian messaging, and yet in most Latino Catholic households I visited in Chicago not even Catholic radio stations were the norm. The terminology and narrative frameworks of PJI conversion would more likely succeed from being “more Catholic” than from being “more Christian” in a Protestant evangelical sense.¹⁶⁷

Conversion between religious sects has been examined by anthropologists such as Robert Hefner (1993: 17), who argued that deep shifts in personal, internal systems of meaning were not necessarily the paths to conversion; instead, the key was “at least nominal acceptance of religious actions or beliefs deemed more fitting,” or more pragmatic, in a given culture. In some changing sociopolitical contexts, early

¹⁶⁶ Some felt these terms manipulated the listener. They might also be interpreted as code for anti-Catholicism from evangelicals emphasizing the “sins” of Catholicism as “false Christianity,” the “anti-Christ” pope, etc.

¹⁶⁷ In this line of inquiry, I am not pretending that evangelical Protestant churches have failed to attract converts in Latin American and Latino communities. Yet contrary to the claims of Bermudez (2010) and others who have blamed liberation theology (and thus, progressive and radical Catholicism) for departures from the Catholic Church, I argue that the activist, community-building, progressive Catholics I have observed might instead represent a bulwark against the loss of adherents to other sects.

conversions to Christianity might follow pragmatic motivations (safety, economic prosperity, access to medicine, etc.) although later generations, once separated from initial conditions, might come to see new conversions as more internal and personal decisions (Kipp 1995). For those who regarded notions of conversion and faith as primarily individual and internal, PJI appeals to individual spirituality might be most efficacious in some instances. But for others, especially immigrant Catholics, communal and social connections were to be emphasized. The individual could not be separated from the community, and the pressures and needs of the community emerged as the PJI impressed upon colleagues the need for change.

3.9 Between a Rock and a Tea Party

On Tuesday, October 5, 2010, the PJI and Elena Segura's archdiocesan staff held an event designed for the "theological formation for priests and pastors" at Old St. Patrick's Church on the west side of the Loop. PJI members reached out to their friends and colleagues with personal invitations to ensure greater attendance. At planning meetings they brainstormed on invitees and the responsibilities of phoning the resulting "list of 72 names."¹⁶⁸ The event's program was drafted at PJI meetings with the intention of beginning with a collegial lunch and then dedicating three hours to "Preaching for Justice" via:

(1) An hour of theological instruction by Father Robert Schrieter,¹⁶⁹ focusing on homiletics, pillars of Catholic Social Teaching, or CST, fears of preaching about immigration, things "that

¹⁶⁸ I could not verify whether the count was precisely 72 names, but to the priests this number referenced Chapter 10 of the Gospel of Luke: "After this the Lord appointed seventy(-two) others whom he sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit./ He said to them, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest./ Go on your way; behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves." (New American Bible, quoted from the Vatican website, http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_PWT.HTM, accessed May 27, 2015.)

¹⁶⁹ An email that the archdiocese staff and PJI circulated prior to the event includes the following information on Father Schreiter: "Robert Schreiter, C.P.P.S., is Vatican Council II Professor of Theology at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, and directs the Program in Reconciliation and Peacebuilding at its Cardinal Bernardin Center for Theology and Ministry. He also serves as theological consultant to Caritas Internationalis in the Vatican for programs in peacebuilding. He has lectured and led workshops on peacebuilding around the world, and is considered one of the world's leading authorities on the subject." The fact that such an internationally prominent theologian was invited to this event might be seen by some scholars as evidence that the movement did not ultimately depend on local actors. I argue, however, that Father Schreiter's presence did not undermine local leadership, but instead showed how local leaders in Chicago were well situated for national and international networking; local leadership was still fundamental to the movement, but they availed themselves of all resources at their disposal.

need to be called out of the darkness into the light and how do we [as clergy] respond...” connecting with scriptural and Eucharistic foundations;

(2) A half-hour talk by an immigration attorney dealing with legislative updates, the political climate, and “How has [this work] touched you and your faith?”;

(3) Testimonials: One from a woman at Blessed Sacrament Parish whose husband was denied permanent residency for life, and one from “Adriana,” an undocumented student at another parish who “shares her challenges of living in the U.S.”

(4) A discussion of the economics of the current system, including free trade between Mexico and the U.S. and the “impact of immigrants on the economy in the United States” by Father Larry Dowling, pastor of St. Agatha Parish;

(5) Time for discussion among workshop participants and group problem solving; and

(6) “Preaching on Justice: How Do I Respond As a Pastor?” a conversation led by Father John Hoffman, pastor of St. Francis Xavier parish in La Grange, Illinois.

The event unfolded in the basement of Old St. Pat’s. Forty-two priests and religious attended, of whom 37 or 38 were Anglo and four were Latino. Four women were present, including Elena Segura and Marilu Gonzales, who had worked to organize the event. The “Tool Box” to aid in preaching and activism was a binder given to all of the priests attending. Titled “Between a Rock and a Tea Party: Preaching for Justice,” its authors were listed as the Office for Immigrant Affairs & Immigration Education, the Priests for Justice for Immigrants, and Justice for Immigrants: A Journey of Hope. The binder included essays, encyclicals, homilies, news reports, statistics, and other documents treating immigration demographics, motivations to migrate, and the broken federal immigration system. Also discussed were the USCCB and the campaign for immigration reform, theology, and homiletics (sample sermons, statements from bishops), as well as two versions of the cardinal’s statement at the March 21, 2009 event (as is examined in chapter two).

3.10 Vectors of Influence

Although the PJI was formed in 2005 and quickly grew in size and influence, the stimulus that it provided to regional and national Church officials was not emphasized in most diocesan and national Catholic narratives. The Chicago Archdiocese and the USCCB claimed to be sympathetic to, and supportive of, the interests of new immigrants, and elements of the Church hierarchy promoted legislative reforms to improve or save the lives of immigrants while benefitting the country as a whole. And yet few dioceses and parishes were expected to lend resources (“time, talent, and treasure”) as well as communications

from the pulpit, in weekly bulletins, in parochial schools, etc., in the service of this cause. Some priests and bishops joined the movement for immigrant rights whereas others ignored the issue, and some outspoken conservative priests and bishops adamantly opposed the cause of immigration reform, either from the pulpit or in Catholic publications and the mass media. Thus an archdiocese like Chicago could contain some of the country's most dedicated priests, in the PJI, as well as apolitical, disaffected, or highly conservative priests in regards to immigrant rights. This disconnect existed because the Vatican does not, and does not attempt to, exercise direct control over the daily actions of its bishops and priests except in rare instances where the central tenets (dogma) of the Church are deemed to be ignored or threatened.¹⁷⁰ National policies on migration control do not come close to meeting that criteria for direct action; thus, the pronouncements of bishops and of the pope himself on immigrants' rights, labor rights, and related matters are seldom more than advisories. (Nor does the notion of papal infallibility still hold sway, so arguments presented in even the more highly regarded of papal encyclicals can be questioned or ignored.) At the national level, too, congresses such as the USCCB are advisory rather than governing bodies; thus the statements of the USCCB in favor of comprehensive immigration reform cannot compel action on the part of any specific bishop or priest within the U.S. Within a given diocese (including large dioceses, called archdioceses), a bishop might occasionally request or even demand that priests share a particular message from their pulpits, but priests are afforded such a large degree of local autonomy that such direct edicts from their bishops are considered rare and difficult to enforce. Instead, it has become more acceptable to see limited discretionary funds allocated, at either the national (USCCB) or diocesan level, for the staffing of a particular office or commission that can provide some logistical support to

¹⁷⁰ Even these cases seldom see immediate action, however. The pope could demand the resignation of a given individual, owing to the lines of official power within the Church (pope-bishop-priest), but the sheer number of Catholic priests and bishops would make such personal control untenable; thus, for diurnal matters as well as more serious sanctions the pope tends to rely on input from Vatican committees/offices, as well as various national conferences of bishops (e.g., the USCCB), and the hierarchies of religious orders (Jesuits, Dominicans, etc.) which operate almost as transnational syndicates, akin to large labor unions; rather than the popular misconception of the papacy as an absolute monarchy, then, the reality of the Church more closely resembles a vast Vatican-headquartered bureaucracy with multiple, and often overlapping, flows of information and influence. Even the election of a new pope by the College of Cardinals is far more complicated behind the scenes than is typically reported by the mainstream media, as years of networking and social capital are involved before the fact.

activist priests who themselves lead the call for immigrant rights from their local communities (parishes) as the PJI have done.¹⁷¹

As an example of local initiatives driving the Church's support for immigrants, the PJI emerged because significant power did not flow downward through the Church in support of this issue. Local pressure groups such as the PJI came into existence in order to create and maintain strong Church support for the movement for immigration reform. Their efforts were linked to the knowledge that there existed various ideological segments within the Roman Catholic Church, including the competing conservative and progressive elements. They operated in recognition of this ideological minefield usually out of the public eye, for these potentially divisive segments were seldom described from the pulpit nor published in Catholic newspapers, partly out of a desire to encourage (small-c) catholic unity and spiritual support---a welcoming which was, in part, an expression of the evangelical mission of the Church. The record of realistic and nuanced, ethnographically supported portrayals in academia, excepting the work of a select group of scholars specializing in social science and religion, was hardly better. American Catholics nevertheless shared among themselves a quiet understanding that differences in theology as well as style existed among the thousands of different parishes, priests, lay staff, and religious functionaries that made up the purportedly (c)atholic entity. Activist priests navigated these differences while following what they considered to be a truer Catholicism through focus on social doctrines.

If one were to quote the social doctrine published on the Vatican website, which was also echoed in the lessons of catechists and statements of bishops, one might assume that the entire Church accepted Catholic social teaching at face value and thus attempted to put it into practice. Thus, we heard of the Sermon of the Mount ("the meek shall inherit the Earth") and Jesus's caveat about the camel passing through the eye of a needle (a warning that the rich will not find a place in heaven) within any number of

¹⁷¹ In this light, a diocese is a geographical area made up of parishes with many unique characteristics; it is a multifaceted territory within which various leaders, initiatives, and movements may emerge.

homilies from any given pulpit. But I argue that for Catholic clerics and laity with a more conservative frame, these were largely admonitions to consider giving to charity. Few such priests developed conservative worldviews after taking their vows, just as few moderate, progressive, and radical priests joined the Church without a social and political matrix; their formation and conversion did not come from a vacuum. Yet once placed in parishes, they were subject to years of influence from the prevailing needs, socioeconomic realities, and popular forms of worship (popular piety) in their communities.

3.11 Influences from Parish Community

PJI members credited their parishioners with providing examples of “creating the Kingdom of God on Earth” through popular expressions of faith, joy, and love, and through forgiveness: These parishioners often informed me that they felt they were faced with racism and discrimination on an almost daily basis--at work, especially, but also in community and police relations---and they were further reminded of their marginal status by mainstream news and television programming. And yet, they tended to speak of these situations as unfortunate circumstances to which they seldom attached animosity; they resembled other Mexican Americans in this regard for, aside from the rare news item to the contrary, “Mexicano communities display little rancor toward their Anglo neighbors, certainly much less than these neighbors express toward them” (Gonzales 2009: 303).

One PJI member likened his relationship with the parish community to that of a marriage wherein leadership shifts between spouses:

Well, life in a parish is like a marriage. Sometimes the priest steps out, and other times the people lead...and Church history is full of that, where the people have taken the lead on things and all of the sudden [Church] authorities will come around...in any given parish it's a marriage, and issues...are responded to in a good parish, or...I should say, in a parish that's dialoguing.¹⁷²

¹⁷² Interview of Jan. 27, 2007, with the pastor of a southwest-side immigrant parish.

The marriage metaphor was not as commonly cited as others (e.g., “parish as family” or “parish as close-knit community” or “parish as diverse community”) but in all of these, greater participation was desired by the leadership. Priests involved in community activism tended to feel called toward more participatory elements in Sunday mass. They were not the only priests to introduce or allow innovations in this realm, but they recognized the temple as a space where calls to action were naturalized beside other religious themes, not set apart or shunned as political. The Church activism they fostered was curtailed, of course, by priests’ schedules and the lack of free office time. There also appeared to be a cost to the priest’s stamina for taking on a more permissive attitude toward groups wishing to make announcements and appeals during mass. They might also engage in more Q&A during mass (an interactive homily style) or afterwards, and they needed to factor in time to find and convince people to provide brief personal testimonies akin to the witnessing that happens in many Protestant congregations.

Advocates for this interactive, community-parish model have argued that priests received a great deal more in return for such efforts. Payback (reciprocity, as per Mauss) was in community involvement, volunteerism and gratitude (e.g., planning birthday parties for the pastor, etc.), and generally stronger social bonds¹⁷³ which, despite the public nature of the priest’s job, were deeply appreciated. Priesthood could be a lonely office, especially in smaller parishes, as no one shared the life a priest must lead.

Some parishes actively sought feedback. Ushers at St. Pius have handed out questionnaires which the presiding priest urged parishioners to complete before leaving. One flyer asked “Why do we belong to St. Pius V Parish?” and “What should St. Pius V Parish and all its parishioners do in the future to be faithful to Jesus?” immediately below the parish Mission Statement: “Our commitment is to promote the message

¹⁷³ See Dahm’s (2004) Parish Ministry in a Hispanic Community, a quasi-ethnographic view of this life.

of Christ through personal, spiritual, and social development in a community that respects¹⁷⁴ race, religion and social condition.”

Neighborhood outreach had also become a periodic undertaking at St. Pius, exemplified by the biannual “Knocking on Doors” campaign that was partly an effort at recruiting in an area continuing to function as an immigrant entrepôt (and which therefore saw new strangers becoming neighbors every year), and partly a “take back the streets” initiative reestablishing the Church’s presence on streets that may be better known for gang activity or other delinquency. Since the campaign involved significant planning and preparation it also functioned to build community within and among parish groups---a potential entailed in most challenges involving both logistical and time commitments. Meanwhile, the skills and cooperation needed to complete the campaign might also be considered training for “get out the vote” campaigns, and vice versa. At Our Lady of Lourdes and other parishes, similar efforts were engaged under the name of the Welcoming Committee, which might take on a lower level of engagement, such as leaving flyers and information packets on doorknobs; there was no substitute for face-to-face greetings, however, which fostered greater respect even between atheists and parish volunteers, when proper training and patience were urged.

3.12 Entrepreneurial Risk-Taking

Among the concerns of the early stages of this research were the ways the risk-taking leadership of the Priests for Justice resembled the entrepreneurial efforts of Protestant evangelical preachers as well as other innovators in U.S. society. A case could be made for interpreting activist priests as entrepreneurs, though other frames of analysis might also apply. In the U.S. religious context an entrepreneur was usually envisioned as Protestant, often of a Baptist or non-denominational Christian sect, who felt called to ministry and so gathered a group about himself or herself (Warner 1993: 1081); some of their

¹⁷⁴ The reverse side included this message and questionnaire in Spanish, with the phrasing “...desarrollo espiritual, personal, y social en la comunidad respetando raza, religión y condición social.”

entrepreneurial methods resembled the direct-selling organizational models of Amway (Biggart 1989) as they sold salvation and recruited membership (Warner and Wittner 1998: 23).

Early theorists of “achievement motivation” held that desires for achievement were approached via goal-setting, the assuming of personal responsibility, the collection and use of feedback, and the taking of calculated risks (McClelland 1985; Spangler 1992). Catholic priests do not fit well into this model under most circumstances except perhaps for those wishing to climb the hierarchical ladder. Instead, the efforts of activist priests might be better described in terms of charismatic leaders¹⁷⁵ who “advocate change and, thus, challenge the status quo” thus risking strong resistance from “defenders of the status quo who are in positions of substantial power” (House and Aditya 1997: 416). Political scientists developing exchange theory in the 1980s noted significant “group entrepreneurs,” who acted energetically and aggressively to build and mobilize their group or association (Cigler 1989), and shortly afterward Nownes and Neeley (1996) used survey data to argue that entrepreneurs (their group leaders, or founders) were vital to the processes of group formation and mobilization, to a far greater extent than were patrons or recruits. And yet, they turned away from faith leaders: In the public-interest groups they surveyed, “aggressive, independent,” self-motivated leaders far outnumbered those who stepped to the fore at the behest of church councils and other patrons.

¹⁷⁵ A term like “charismatic leadership” should be used with caution as it may lack analytical utility. A charismatic leader might exhibit, for example, most or all of the “six constants” that Howard Gardner (2011: 274-279) has identified: (1) A central story or message that can “address the sense of individual and group identity” if aspects of it are “already known” such as “those drawn from religion or history”; (2) the audience, meaning the complex and interactive “relationship between leader and audience...a dynamic interplay...between the needs and desires of the audience” aided by an authorized status within “a preexisting hierarchy”; (3) the organization, such as a “church, a corporation, or a political party,” with which the creator attempts to maintain institutional and popular connections as his or her movement evolves; (4) the embodiment of the group or movement’s story in the creator’s life, “although he need not be saintly”; indeed, “the credibility of some leaders may actually be enhanced if they have had---and have come to terms with---a rocky or even a counterstory past (as did Saint Augustine)”; (5) direct and indirect leadership “through the symbolic products that they create,” particularly when they can “have the advantage of more time for reflection and revision,” although creative leaders may need to choose whether to focus on a more local or national field of influence; and (6) the issue of expertise, which can be a particular challenge when directing a heterogeneous group.

In addition, scholars of religion have cautioned against the framing of faith-based communities and church leaders in terms of “marketplace and market exchange” dynamics.¹⁷⁶ Other scholars have questioned whether the concept of entrepreneurship was being overextended in service of neoliberal agendas. In a study of the ways in which Central American indigenous communities and migrants were conceptualized and narratively framed by NGOs and development policymakers since the 1990s, DeHart (2010) argued that neoliberal proponents had reclassified communitarian spirits as community self-help, pushed the concept of entrepreneurialism onto indigenous and migrant groups without appropriate distinctions, and ignored rising inequality within communities. Within the neoliberal agenda, immigrants were accepted as uniquely able entrepreneurs, while ignoring concerns for community, equality, and desire to remain apart from market forces. House and Aditya (1997) cautioned that no theoretical approaches to entrepreneurship were convincing unless leaders’ cultural matrices were examined. Some would call this an accounting of situational relevance, but we might call it an ethnographic approach.

One of the key findings to emerge from this project, I argue, is that the entrepreneurial risk-taking of PJI leaders is closely tied to their desire to claim the mantel of authentic, perhaps even mainstream, Catholicism for themselves and other progressive Catholics. Cultural entrepreneurialism, in this light, is inherent in the “prophetic voices” and “prophetic actions” that they feel called toward, in order to defend the oppressed (undocumented immigrants) and to connect theologically and symbolically with the Old Testament prophets. These links with the prophets demonstrate a connection with “the preferential option for the poor,” the central tenet of liberation theology. (The link between prophetic action and entrepreneurialism is further treated in section 3.13.)

¹⁷⁶ Although the term “religious market” was readily accepted in popular discourse in the United States, where it implied freedom of choice and movement of adherents (from one sect to another, and between churches in the same sect), the framing of church as “market” ran against deeply held theological views. In essence, it placed U.S. church leaders (and scholars) among the money changers at the temple, against whom Jesus railed. Terms like “marketplace of _____” might be central to the U.S. mainstream, but they were allied with the ills preached against, in many religious institutions (excepting “gospel of wealth” sects). From this perspective, the term “entrepreneurship” might be seen as guilty by association.

For the last quarter century, scholars have been increasingly exploring the work of religion as an active rather than a passive cultural force, focusing on the competitive behavior of religious adherents and the risk-taking agencies of Protestant religious leaders (Fligstein and Dauter 2007; Iannaccone 1997; Hatch 1989; Warner 2008) who have engaged in creative, growth-oriented ministries (León 1998; Stark and Finke 2000a, 2000b; Finke 1997) to make churches socially and spiritually relevant while revitalizing congregations (Olson 2002; Hertzke 2006). This kind of risk-taking leadership has been seen in Black churches from the Civil Rights Movement to the present time (Harris 1999; Nelson 1996; Morris 1984) and in media-savvy evangelists like Oral Roberts, Joel Osteen, and Mark Warren of the Willow Creek megachurch (Elisha 2008). Most researchers have assumed that Catholic priests were too enmeshed in institutional constraints to take similar risks or activist stances; however, some Catholic priests have engaged in sustained civic or political activism. Among these were priests who led parishes as large as Protestant megachurches (e.g., Brachear 2008) and others who established community organizations and sought non-traditional financial support (Skerry 2003-2004; Badillo 2006). Some even had styles of oratory and fervor that resembled Protestant evangelicals (e.g., McClory 2010), or supported Catholic “Charismatic Renewal” groups that embraced tactics and styles similar to those used in evangelical revivals (Ebaugh and Chavetz 2000; Neitz 1987); however, they didn’t place a sign over their desk reading “What is our business? Who are our customers? What do they value?” as was said to have been the custom of Reverend Bill Hybels of Chicago’s suburban Willow Creek megachurch.¹⁷⁷

Some PJI members have actively cultivated connections with business entrepreneurs. In 2009 the group began “looking for people in the business world, CEOs or people who could understand the reality of immigration, for them to do the visits to our legislators who are still voting no to comprehensive immigration reform,” according to the archdiocesan PJI coordinator and director of immigrant education Elena Segura (Callaway 2009). Despite business connections, however, they were not in business for

¹⁷⁷ Emerson and Smith (2001: 137) noted it was “said to hang over the desk of Rev. Bill Hybels, pastor of the 15,000-member evangelical Willow Creek Church in Chicago and head of the national...Association.”

themselves, nor were they launching an independent enterprise. They were dissimilar from business entrepreneurs in that they were not risking their own capital and salary, room and board. Priests and lay volunteers were more akin to founding leaders who, according to entrepreneurial public-service studies, were relatively unconcerned about salaries and initial benefits (Nownes and Neeley 1996).

Against the objection that priests pertained to a subgroup that was unlikely to engage in socially, spiritually, or economically entrepreneurial activity because they were too ensconced in the hierarchy, too secure in their financial or professional futures, or too lacking in motivation for change, it could be argued that they used their sinecure as a base from which to launch into risk-taking, community-building, and social-justice endeavors. While neoliberal narratives and popular myths might lead one to question secure or guaranteed bases as seemingly foreign to the notion of entrepreneurship, we might consider instead that few top business entrepreneurs arose from penury, and those who did tended to benefit from socioeconomic and educational networks as well as other previously existing opportunities. As with Carlyle's "Great Man Theory of History," the notion of the lone entrepreneur should fade from unquestioned favor. Social entrepreneurs also tended to have well-connected or somewhat privileged backgrounds, with exceptions only proving the rule. Examples of the more socially connected risk-taking leader abounded as well in social movements: without minimizing their qualities and struggles, recall that Gandhi was a lawyer who traveled internationally, while Martin Luther King, Jr., had earned a PhD. Although Rosa Parks was often mischaracterized as a lone catalyst/movement entrepreneur who sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the church-connected leaders of the movement had witnessed an earlier bus boycott in Baton Rouge; moreover, since 1943 Parks had been a secretary for the local NAACP, and she had already participated in training and activism for civil rights: "Clearly, then, Mrs. Parks's arrest triggered the mass movement not only because she was a quiet, dignified woman of high morals but also because she was an integral member of those organizational forces capable of mobilizing a social movement" (Morris 1984: 51-53).

Priests with sinecure and institutional power could be impediments in some instances; they were shown in the Bible as opposing prophets who clamored for justice and risked the displeasure of leaders. Although PJI members spoke of the need for prophetic voices, they also analyzed the ways in which prophetic actions interfered with any ambitions they might hold, as well as their parish finances. Conversely, they learned to be wary of institutional attachments that might work against community activism.

The Church's policy of rotating¹⁷⁸ priests made the activist's call to community empowerment an urgent one, and its detrimental effects were clear when comparing these parishes to others where activist, inclusive pastors had years to develop thriving practices. During his unusually semi-permanent, two decades of tenure at one parish, Father Dahm (2004) wrote a book that was nearly an ethnography of clerical leadership. He recalled how priests in Chicago used to turn Latinos away from their doors¹⁷⁹ and commented on his parish's efforts (2004: 82-83) toward "the opening of a soup kitchen, a secondhand clothing store, a legal aid office, a religious goods gift shop, an overnight shelter, a youth center, a family counseling program, and a program for victims of domestic violence." In the period 2005-2011, the parish also had groups active in couples counseling, domestic violence, community safety, catechism, charismatic worship, Guadalupano celebrations, youth mentorship (not primarily as a Bible study or youth ministry, although there was some participation in religious activities), ant-war protests, voter

¹⁷⁸ Limits were placed on most appointments "because when parish priests stay around for too long" they run the risk of developing "their own little fiefdom," as Father Charles Dahm noted during his farewell mass of Oct. 22, 2006; he was obliged to step down as pastor of St. Pius V after 21 years---an unusually long tenure, owing to a series of exceptions to the rule---but he did not leave. With the advocacy of the new pastor, Father Brendan Curran (whom Dahm had brought to St. Pius), Dahm was able to continue at the parish as an associate pastor. It was "where I belonged," he told me, because he would not be content "nor very effective as the pastor of a suburban parish."

¹⁷⁹ The examples of ethnocentrism and racism he noted were legacies, in part, of a Church infrastructure that did not adapt to changing constituencies or plan for the changes that were to come. As reported in the 1920s by Jones (1999 [1928]: 244-246), in one of Chicago's south-side Catholic neighborhoods, "with eleven churches of that faith...there is no Spanish speaking priest," which forced Mexicans to "go to St. Francis Church, 12th Street and Newberry Avenue in order to find a Spanish speaking priest." St. Francis still stands on the corner of Halsted and Roosevelt, beside UIC's campus. Its pastor called it a chiefly Spanish-speaking parish with a full schedule of baptisms, weddings, and quinceañeras (15th-year birthdays, which are almost indistinguishable from weddings when glimpsed from the street) as well as masses, though most parishioners commuted from around Chicago and the suburbs.

registration, leadership formation, and immigration reform. Dahm also developed expertise in applying for and obtaining grants for several St. Pius programs, a kind of entrepreneurship that Margarita Mooney (2007) underscored in her research among Haitians in Miami. At activist parishes such as St. Pius V, reflexive, active segments of the parish community depended upon the reflexivity of the priest, from whom the laity often required nudges¹⁸⁰ while the most socially effective of priests also engaged their parish councils, group leaders, and many other parishioners in feedback loops, combined with recruiting and delegating---e.g., the person who brought an idea to the fore was often chosen to lead that project.

3.13 Cultural Entrepreneurs, Prophets, or Creatives?

The problematic term “social entrepreneur” was, according to Purdue (2001), based on “trust relationships” accumulated as social capital, as community leaders create, engaged with, and regenerated “partnerships” as resources; in this sense, social entrepreneurs might also be envisioned as high(er)-status “community representatives” or “transformational leaders” who used their skills and risk-taking to pursue goals or visions for the neighborhood. Although social scientists might be wary of calling priests social entrepreneurs---as academics typically saw Catholic leaders as indicators or defenders of patriarchy impeding women’s rights, overly beholden to business/neoliberal interests, etc.---Chicago’s activist priests approximated Purdue’s category of social entrepreneurship in their abilities to mediate between power-holders (in government, media, and business) and the populist base in their respective communities. Activist priests in immigrant neighborhoods met Purdue’s description of key change agents, I argue, through their “ability to cope with risk and uncertainty; creativity in solving problems through divergent thinking; highly competitive, yet collaborative, efficiency in use of available resources” as well as an ability to “secure the trust of others...through their reputation for competence...and goodwill by their personal attributes of vision, commitment and energy” (Purdue 2001: 2215).

¹⁸⁰ Clerical leaders set the tone and instigated or, in contrast, curtailed parish activities. Dahm (2004: 82) saw negative examples: priests who feared Spanish services “because the demand may grow out of hand. For them, it is better not to raise unrealistic expectations” or to risk overtaxing staff or parish budgets.

Some styles of leadership might also be labeled as a complex of creativity and active community leadership, a kind of cultural entrepreneurialism. Leaders of these types would exhibit characteristics of people Ray and Anderson (2000: 190-193) labeled as Cultural Creatives. Citing data from the Integral Culture Survey of 1995 and an EPA survey of 1999, they argued that three religious groups accounted for the largest percentage of Core Cultural Creatives: more than one-fourth were mainline Protestant (a slightly greater number than mainline Protestants in the general population); less than one-fourth were Conservative Protestant (a smaller number than the 45 percent in the general population); and about one-fifth were Roman Catholic, though these accounted for more than one-fourth of the general population. These three groups were followed by nonreligious Americans, representing about 15 percent of Cultural Creatives, a number the authors claimed was three times larger than their representation in the general population. Whether Catholic, Protestant, secular, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist, those designated Core Cultural Creatives stood apart from the mainstream by exhibiting greater respect for nature, a sense of Earth as a living organism. They tended to have a deep spirituality not usually based on fundamentalist biblical interpretations, as well as purpose (personal drive) and a marked sense of altruism. Core Cultural Creatives were described as tending to be theologically liberal “with relatively few (compared with the overall population) Catholics and conservative Protestants” (Ray and Anderson 2000: 192-193). The aforementioned criteria take on greater valence when we recall again the inspirational link that the PJI feel in the “prophetic voices” and “prophetic actions” of the Old Testament; if prophets are thus envisioned as the cultural entrepreneurs of the Old Testament, then the calculated risk-taking of social justice organizers today is another means by which they strengthen their connections to Christianity’s symbolic roots, as well as claims to an authentic Catholicism despite the counterclaims of conservative Catholics.

If the PJI were entrepreneurs they were not the first Chicago priests to have led communities in such a manner. Parishes uninvolved with Latino immigration have undergone creative, risk-taking periods of

growth and change instigated, it was said, by certain priests, though we might assume that they did not act alone, and that many other factors in their parish communities supported their actions. One could argue as well that entrepreneurs charted a part of the earlier history of St. Pius V. In the 1960s, for example, the “parishioners organized many dances and in the summer, outdoor carnivals; men promoted boxing events, and parents renovated the basement to accommodate a roller rink that operated nightly from September through May.”¹⁸¹ Thus the kinds of events that add vitality to parish life today, tied to the leadership styles of individual pastors, were part of a long line of entrepreneurial, spiritual, communal/social, and moneymaking activities.

3.14 Entrepreneurial Autonomy: Democratic Risks

A few years ago a pastor in Pilsen struggled with his parish council to allow greater public access to a green space beside his church, and to change the date of the annual Kermes street festival. In both cases, lay leaders were key in either opposing or advocating for the priest’s proposed changes. At other parishes, social-action oriented associate pastors (priests not controlling their own parishes) felt that their creative ideas were silenced or unfairly limited by their more conservative, moderate, or apolitical pastors; they also sympathized with lay volunteers whose own requests were rebuffed (e.g., to place a table near the door or make an announcement during mass), sometimes with the seemingly practical concern “there wasn’t enough time in mass” or “we have too many other things happening right now.” At another parish, an anti-war group joined with an immigration-reform group to invite speakers to the meeting hall, although some parishioners (and some priests) did not feel entirely comfortable with the “almost un-American tone.”¹⁸² Meanwhile, a north-side pastor found himself “repeatedly selling” his parish groups on the need for a parish Internet site that would include password-shielded schedules to facilitate the sharing of spaces and resources, such as the signing out of microphones and other equipment.

¹⁸¹ Accessed Sept. 7, 2009: http://www.stpiusvparish.org/en/Parish_History

¹⁸² CAMI (Comité Anti-Militarización) flyer in advance of an event on Feb. 21, 2010.

Entrepreneurialism in parish leadership might rely more on an open, encouraging atmosphere, which can entail a different sort of risk-taking for the pastor, i.e., in allowing others to lead and in delegating authority. When a north-side parish's music director informed his Hispanic Parish Council about "the disappearance of the Flor y Canto books," he and the council needed the pastor's permission to modernize with a video projector instead, but the idea for the innovation and the work to ensure its success were theirs.

A pastor in Chicago, seeing tensions between his parish's ethnic groups, decided to require attendance at council meetings not as a controlling measure but to force more interaction and foster ties between groups, as a price for individual and small-group interests. In the words of one lay volunteer, "Groups that want to be active in the parish have to come to Comité Hispano" (Hispanic Parish Council) meetings. Groups will have to be in contact, integrated, not isolated."¹⁸³ Another pastor decided that those who signed up for a caravan to Washington, D.C., would pay part of the cost to guarantee they had a stake in the event. Rather than requiring that they pay out of pocket, he agreed to let parishioners approach local businesses and donors to seek sponsors; he entrusted to them a signed letter which promised, "The person with this letter is trustworthy and authorized by St. Pius V to collect funds for this trip."¹⁸⁴

Beyond creativity, many priests wished to share power with laity. While a priest in Lake County allowed, he believed, for enough participation in various parish councils and committees for the ideas of immigrants and other newcomers to be heard, he deferred at times to older or more established parishioners. As a diocesan priest, he was not a permanent fixture like some of the laity, he explained, and he thus accorded respect for seeing the parish as their home: "These people have been here 5, 10, 50, 100 years it seems sometimes, so I think respect for them and if they want to do something that's great."¹⁸⁵ That may have meant empowering parishioners to contradict or veto their pastor. Fathers Dahm and

¹⁸³ Notes from the August 29, 2010 Comité Hispano meeting at a north-side Chicago parish.

¹⁸⁴ Letter of October 2, 2009, in Spanish and English.

¹⁸⁵ Interview of August 16, 2010, in Lake County.

Curran have frankly admitted to being vetoed by parish councils, taking the negation as evidence that larger goals of community-building and leadership-formation were succeeding, and these goals required the curbing of one's ego in daily interactions.

Some of their PJI colleagues have attempted to build up similarly powerful councils and committees. At one parish, I witnessed a consequence for a recently installed associate pastor, whose idea for an event was firmly but politely sidelined by council members. It was clear from the first instant that the lay leaders did not feel obligated to take direction (I noted the shared glances, a knowing look, a glint in the eye of another---and the freshman priest did not attempt to force the issue); yet they also took steps to shield him from hurt feelings. The chair of the council, Señora Marquez,¹⁸⁶ politely thanked Father for his suggestion but then adeptly, quickly deflected it; her brush-off began with the sidelong phrasing "...the thing is, that we have to..." ("...que es que nosotros...") in which she spoke for, and with, the entire group rather than as an individual parishioner confronting a priest (strength in unity and numbers). This brief exchange, which could have ended tensely, allowed a glimpse into the parish's pecking order where the pastor is the leader but can be challenged, particularly in a collective meeting, but a new associate pastor would require some time and accumulation of influence before he could emerge from the shadow of the parish matriarchs---if, indeed, he should attempt such a move. Moreover, even experienced pastors respected this reality. When Father Patrick¹⁸⁷ saw that his southwest-side parish's Kermes (an annual or semi-annual street fair and fund-raiser featuring ethnic foods, music, raffles, and games) was suffering from lower attendance and depressed levels of community involvement because school children tended to be away on vacation in summer, he wished to alter the calendar. This proposal meant facing stern "opposition from a room full of matriarchs" until, at last, "one woman stood up, took the floor" and suggested giving the priest's plan a try. That one key voice among the matriarchs was enough to shift the other votes in support of the entrepreneurial change---but it had occurred at the last minute, when the

¹⁸⁶ A pseudonym.

¹⁸⁷ A pseudonym.

priest had nearly lost hope in the proposed reform. (This showed a democratic respect for the matriarchs as a matter of principle and as a practical matter; he could not have simply demanded the change, as the festival required enthusiastic cadres of volunteers.) With scenes like this in mind, we see why some pastors were not comfortable with the idea of fully democratic processes within their parishes---and some that I interviewed have scoffed at the notion though they recognized that this more democratic dynamic existed at other parishes.

Money was another route to parish influence, and although activist priests might wish to resist, they were affected by the withholding of cash at the collection plate. As their annual financial reports showed, immigrant parishes in Chicago have often been cash-strapped and must look to donors, including the archdiocese itself, to make up the perennial shortfall. I was approached on various occasions by wealthier parishioners requesting assistance in communicating with priests; in one case a retired non-Hispanic man insisted on an audience to discuss gifting thousands of dollars for the renovation of one altar inside the church---but he implied some strings would be attached (e.g., in preserving the altar a certain way, in keeping people of other popular Catholic traditions from interacting with it “inappropriately by stuffing flowers or notes into it,” etc.). In another instance a retired non-Hispanic woman at a church picnic told me she was “looking for a parish where I could donate my fortune” although she did not indicate what conditions might be attached (and indeed, her relaxed demeanor indicated that she might not have had any in mind). Even without coercion from individual parishioners, care was taken to avoid ruffling too many feathers in English-language masses where Sunday collections outweighed attendance. At one southwest-side parish where Spanish-language masses regularly filled 500 to 1,100 spaces in the pews, English-language masses were smaller (150 to 500 people) but provided sizeable collections. The average donation per capita was twice that of Spanish-language masses, and the 7:30 AM English mass itself was up to fourfold greater¹⁸⁸ as more elderly, established parishioners attended.

¹⁸⁸ I made these calculations based on data published in an Oct. 2006 bulletin at a parish offering Spanish-language masses.

If lay leaders depended too much on a pastor or small subset of staff for leadership, they risked establishing “a fiefdom” (in the words of one priest) or a personality cult leaving a shallow legacy when they departed. In 2006, for example, one southwest-side parish had a reputation for activism; however, in the next few years the parish lost both a priest and a nun to archdiocesan reshuffling, and its lay activists struggled to regain momentum as they saw visiting priests, as well as a shift to conservative orthodoxy under a temporary pastor---a Latino priest who was technically capable but politically connected (favored by the archbishop), as evidenced by influential posts he occupied in the archdiocese. By 2010 this parish had fallen virtually silent in the immigrant rights movement---e.g., its parish bulletin of May 2, 2010, made no reference to the marches of the day before, nor to any concerns of immigrants. However, the PJI attempted to extend aid from other parishes, and by 2011 lay activists from neighboring parishes were permitted to begin a new series of workshops designed to foster lay leadership inside the parish.

The pastor of the north-side parish Our Lady of Lourdes, Father Mike Shanahan, would often explain, “My heart is centered on social justice,” but the time and energy required to oversee other parish activities were weighted against those concerns. A leading PJI spokesman, Shanahan attempted to include social justice in catechism, homiletics, and parish meetings, yet the daily demands of parish administration made this difficult. One small success was a workshop with a group of parishioners dedicated to reading and discussing Shannon McManimon’s The Way of Peace: Exploring Nonviolence for the 21st Century (2003).¹⁸⁹ This textbook/workbook was divided into chapters encouraging the identification of various kinds of violence, the need for nonviolent responses, supportive means of communication, action, and reflection. As of 2010 only a handful of parishioners had joined the pastor in reading and discussion, but reinforcement from even that small group encouraged his organizing of a border-immersion trip for parish

¹⁸⁹ Field notes based on conversations with Father Shanahan in 2010 and 2011, and the Our Lady of Lourdes (OLOL) bulletin of March 14, 2010.

youth---an experience that affected him so deeply he made it a theme of subsequent homilies and rallies, to the apparently enthusiastic approval of his Latino, Philippine, and African parishioners, among others.

3.15 Bridging and Coalition Building: Priests and Outside Groups

On the first page of a Sunday bulletin a note called on Catholics to welcome “agnostics, etc.” if the aforementioned were interested in helping society, and volunteering for the community and the parish. The message was clarified during the homily as Father Curran argued “it doesn’t matter” whether they were “Christian Catholics,” members of another religion, or “agnostics, etc.” An open invitation “to all who want to just do good” in the world, the message surprised some in the pews, but others immediately nodded their heads in agreement. Less than two weeks later the same message was given in a parish workshop, with notable additions. In a discussion of spirituality, Father Dahm urged participants to strengthen bonds with others who would become activists, organizers, or volunteers by arguing that “even people who do not believe in God...even atheists” could have spirituality.¹⁹⁰ The linking of hopelessness to atheism appeared to have roots in folk religion, as expressed by adherents of the Popular Church of Nicaragua (Lancaster 1988); however, the inclusivist framings of these parish activists encouraged not only a more hopeful view of atheists (provided they were involved in social justice) but also a more hopeful view of Catholicism.

One might not expect to hear such inclusive statements from the pulpit, even from an activist priest in a smaller setting, yet these words reflected the views of faith leaders who engaged with and built broad coalitions for social change. Moreover, there was papal sanction. In an extended Our Sunday Visitor article (Shea 2010), unusual in its explicit focus (for a paper with mainly elderly and conservative readers), Pope Benedict XVI’s calls for stronger “interreligious understanding” in encyclicals such as Nostra Aetate, were accompanied by brief treatments on the merits of paganism, satanism, eastern spirituality, Judaism, Mormonism, Protestantism, and Eastern Orthodoxy. As Benedict wrote in the 2007

¹⁹⁰ Field notes from October masses and Oct. 27, 2009, parish leadership/self-esteem workshop.

encyclical Spe Salvi [Saved by Hope], “The atheism of the 19th and 20th centuries is---in its origins and aims---a type of moralism: a protest against the injustices of the world and of world history (No. 42)” though he worried it was without hope.¹⁹¹ We have seen recent examples of the ecumenism of Pope Francis, but it is notable Benedict had already made such inclusivist gestures---albeit they might have been ignored or opposed by framers of conservative, exclusionist views on Catholicism.¹⁹²

3.16 Prophetic Fears, Theological Protections

Courage was at the heart of prophetic action, along with the realization that the risk-taking inherent in raising one’s voice within the Church paled in comparison with the risks that immigrants have taken. Prophetic action, moreover, was not confined to one issue but propelled links to other concerns over oppression and marginalization. Priests at St. Pius V highlighted the need for prophets in many of their homilies, and the May 3, 2009 Spanish-language bulletin held that “the prophet protests against the greed of investors and corporations who, in their desire to increase profits, transfer factories to other countries and pay unjust salaries.” The prophet also “denounces all violence, in the home or in the street...especially in war.” The duties of the prophet were also similar to those of the pastor, and “the most important pastors are the fathers and mothers of a family.” The prophet risked sanction from the government, from the wealthy and the donors within a parish, and from one’s own superiors.

Fear was recognized as quotidian for undocumented immigrants’ families. Thus the PJI were not enthusiastic about youth-activist slogans such as “No Papers, No Fear” and “Undocumented, Unafraid”

¹⁹¹ Shea (2010: 10) had Benedict opposing “the common cheap dismissal of atheism as ‘godless immorality’” for “atheism is typically intensely moralistic: full of rage against injustice, oppression and wrong that both Old Testament prophets and saints of the Church have felt”; yet he warned that “A world which has to create its own justice is a world without hope.”

¹⁹² In anticipation, I suspect, of complaints about the article (“eighth in a 12-part series” on theology) it showed a picture and quote of the pope: “all truth is God’s truth, [so] it follows that any truth and any goodness to be found anywhere in creation owes its existence to God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” Circular reasoning aside, this provided cover in a paper known for conservative letters to the editor. It might also reveal influence of a religious order: “Dominican Sister Janet Schaeffler, a former director of adult faith formation...” is credited (p. 9) as consultant for the “What every Catholic needs to know” series.

which reflected intentions not reality. Fear of arrest and deportation kept many immigrants from participating with coalitions that they did not entirely trust while also motivating some of their family members to speak out for them, to join in social-justice groups at activist parishes. Prophetic action and the fears inherent were addressed at the PJI symposium in October 2010, in a lecture on homiletics by Father John Hoffman:

Are we victims of fear? Fear closes the mind and hardens the heart... [People say] we have to be careful...but we need [to understand] how close fear is to evil.... Fear-based hatred can move like a tsunami.... Immigrants are a target for an unfounded anger and misplaced fear. What would Jesus do? ...[we] must not oppress the stranger...and, as Catholics, we...[must] live by our own conscience... not enraged conscience, but our own. ... “I was a stranger and you made me welcome.” In the Gospel of John, Jesus said many times, “Do not be afraid.” ...There is a need for family unity, basic human rights, a...need for comprehensive immigration reform....¹⁹³

The PJI at the symposium pledged to assist their colleagues in overcoming such fears:

We’ll be there to help you. If you want to vent, or to respond [to angry parishioners] we’ll help.... We know it can be difficult...there is a lot of misunderstanding. There is push-back [but] there always has been...Jesus was crucified, [that’s] push-back. I don’t think any of us will be [crucified for this] however.¹⁹⁴

Laughter accompanied the final comment. They have often joked about “being raked over the coals” or “dragged through dirt” by traditionalists in their own congregations, and other anti-immigrant voices, including editorials to Catholic newspapers and social media. Such fear-fighting was also necessary, however, as another bridge with popular religiosity or popular piety.

Popular Catholicism among Latinos “focuses on a rich devotional life of prayer to saints (both official and unofficial), the use of material objects to aid in prayer (candles, holy water, statues, and rosaries)” and, among Mexican Americans, “a special devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe” (Walsh 2004: 13). As another extension of popular piety, home altars were an element seen as ultimately reinforcing formal

¹⁹³ Father John Hoffman, quoted in field notes, Oct. 5, 2010, “Between a Rock and a Tea Party” PJI event.

¹⁹⁴ Father Larry Dowling, field notes, Oct. 5, 2010, “Between a Rock and a Tea Party” PJI event.

Catholicism rather than running contrary to it. This was likely an ancient custom, and it was observed in the 1800s as “very commonplace to have a small altar and shrine in the home, where the family regularly prayed” (Dolan 1985: 218). The same was true in the early 21st century in many Mexican American homes, from Tucson to Chicago.¹⁹⁵

The lines were also blurred between U.S., Latino, and Mexican traditions in other moments, including mass itself. On one occasion Father Dahm introduced parishioners at St. Pius V to a song called the “Canción del Inmigrante” which came to him from an unspecified provenience,¹⁹⁶ though he had recently revised the words himself. Sung to the tune of “De Colores,” it called immigrants the “friends who come from outside [far away].” It then credited their dreams, their building of society through hard work, and the lifting of their voices (calling for justice) to God, all as justifications of their struggle for social change. In his analysis of parish ministry, Dahm (2004) argued for the necessity of these popular connections at his parish, St. Pius V, and at other immigrant parishes in Chicago. His view was that an effort to honor the traditions of immigrants might blur the somewhat arbitrary line between popular and official Catholicism while energizing faith.

3.17 Refocusing on Prophets

Long before forming the PJI its members would preach from the pulpit that “a prophetic voice” was needed to reach out and attempt to correct society’s ills rather than merely wait for “the Kingdom of God on Earth.” Prophetic voices were actively invoked in PJI masses and in other contexts, whether or not they wished to encourage linking that voice with political actions. While describing prayer vigils, one PJI priest recalled:

I think all of us started with a sense of [witnessing] injustice...the immigration process had changed so much that it was time to make a statement. And we intended to be peaceful, we

¹⁹⁵ Maintenance of home altars by Mexican American women (*altaristas*) is examined in Turner (2008).

¹⁹⁶ At a 2009 vigil Jenny Dale of the New Sanctuary Coalition noted she had heard a version of this song as early as the summer of 2008, sung by a Latino immigrant group during a rally in Washington, D.C.

didn't want it to be political...and you know, haranguing the government but, I suppose, more like the prophets calling attention.¹⁹⁷

Some bishops, too, shared the penchant for prophetic invocation. The group of 33 Latino bishops of the USCCB issued such a statement in December 2011:

We who are citizens and permanent residents of this country cannot forget...we or our ancestors, have come from other lands and together with immigrants...have formed a new nation. Now we ought to open our hearts and arms to the recently arrived, just as Jesus asks us to do when he says, "I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was an alien and you took me into your house" (Mt 25:35). ...new immigrants among us...were hungry in their land of origin; they were thirsty as they traveled through the deserts, and they find themselves among us as aliens. (See Daniel G. Groody, CSC, "Crossing the Line," in *The Way*, Vol. 43, No. 2, April 2004, p. 58-69). Their presence challenges us to be more courageous in denouncing the injustices they suffer. In imitation of Jesus and the great prophets we ought to denounce the forces that oppress them.... Let us pray and struggle to make it possible for these brothers and sisters of ours to have the same opportunities from which we have benefited.¹⁹⁸

The activist, progressive priests in Chicago emerged from different backgrounds to navigate contradictory interests. As the PJI advocated for immigrant rights and social justice in tandem with staff and lay volunteers, they developed social-justice themed vigils, marches, and rallies as well as culturally sensitive religious events. Their actions demonstrated respect for elements of Popular Catholicism (Lancaster 1988), especially in expressions of popular piety brought by Latin American immigrants. They also exhibited an openness to the daily, lived expressions of religion that were not as often associated with the largely conservative hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Their motivations for greater inclusivity within each parish accompanied goals of improving the life prospects for their immigrant parishioners as individuals, as family members, and as contributing members of local communities while also addressing their spiritual needs.

¹⁹⁷ Jan. 27, 2007 interview with "Father Anonymous" on the Southwest side.

¹⁹⁸ USCCB Hispanic/Latino bishops letter, http://usccbmedia.blogspot.com/2011/12/estas-son-las-mananitasof-hispanic_12.html

3.18 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has centered on two related research questions, beginning with: How does clerical activism on behalf of immigrants transform practices in the Catholic Church? The data indicate that PJI priests, and especially core PJI leaders, have engaged in activism in their parishes and in the broader social movement while simultaneously promoting innovations ranging across many fields, from social justice and civic and community responsibility, to practices that are more inclusive and culturally sensitive to the needs of immigrants. Their activism on behalf of the political and economic rights of immigrants, I argue, has encouraged the PJI to be more inclusive of immigrants' cultural contributions, and vice versa, as the sharing of experiences has encouraged parish leaders to empathize more with the daily lives and concerns of their congregants. Notable among their efforts to promote cultural inclusion are Spanish-language masses and rites, mariachis or marimba players playing during mass, and presentaciones de niños (presentations of children). The basements of PJI parishes have become meeting places for social-action groups, catechists, and Guadalupanos (with many parishioners spanning more than one group, as cross-pollination is encouraged). Parish life in these activist centers is further enlivened by immigrant-themed posadas, Seder dinners (and other ecumenical celebrations), and massive birthday parties (both for priests and for quinceañera celebrants), as well as post-mass convivencias (get-togethers) around traditional Mexican foods.

The core members of the PJI have demonstrated their commitment to the social movement via the regular inclusion of homilies, bulletins, portraits, commemorations, prayers, and announcements in mass highlighting immigrant rights, immigration reform, and related narratives concerning the martyrs for liberation theology and social justice. The PJI have also been at the front of marches, vigils, and protests for immigrant rights, engaging in measures of risk-taking on behalf of their constituents, owing in part to the inspiration they have felt from readings on the Old Testament prophets. (Over the course of this research, moreover, I have often observed parishioners thanking their priests for speaking in what they regard to be prophetic voices and engaging in prophetic actions.) Many of the PJI discourses are

contextualized in exegesis surrounding the poor, the oppressed, and the stranger, and this chapter has argued that the PJI and other Catholic activists depend on these biblical interpretations---as filtered through the liberationists and other theologians interested in social justice---as they have engaged in discursive work regarding the authenticity of their progressive Catholic worldviews. This work is elaborated against a backdrop of conservative Catholic frameworks casting doubt on the quality and authenticity of progressive Catholic worldviews.

Thus, this chapter's second research question focuses on concerns over authenticity: How do progressive Catholics make claims to authenticity in the face of conservative resistance? Progressives in the Church, concerned that the frameworks established by conservative Catholics effectively relegate progressives to a subordinate and inauthentic status, dedicate significant effort toward providing alternative frameworks. As conservatives effectively claim that social justice is a "politicization" of religion, progressives counter that their interpretation of Christianity is more closely tied to the original biblical narratives concerning unequal wealth and the sins associated with abuses of power. By examining priestly activism as well as theology, connecting Catholic Social Gospel with spiritual concerns, the chapter has analyzed claims to authenticity as informed by liberation theology, which the PJI and activist laity sometimes more broadly categorize as social justice. Priests active in the immigrant rights movement have made numerous claims to an authentically Catholic identity on behalf of progressive Catholics, I argue, by referencing theological foundations and biblical exegesis as the general context for their political activism, thus forming and reinforcing a framework of discourses around what many PJI regard to be a progressive Catholic worldview.

This chapter has also demonstrated links between progressive leaders' entrepreneurialism and Catholic authenticity, initially by arguing that the calculated risk-taking of the PJI on behalf of their parish communities might be categorized as cultural entrepreneurialism, which is analogous to the behaviors of Protestant evangelicals and other "Cultural Creatives" intent on challenging the status quo. In my

analysis, the PJI have demonstrated entrepreneurialism in creative approaches to social justice activism, and in the risks they have been willing to face on behalf of their constituents; this risk-taking applies, in turn, to the concepts of the “prophetic voice” and “prophetic action” in the Old Testament, which are models for action indicative of divine sanction, in the view of the faithful. (Their sense of anger at injustice is also a symbolic tie with the Old Testament prophets.) Prophetic voice and prophetic action can also be interpreted as aspects of “the preferential option for the poor” that is central to liberation theology. The PJI have thus reinforced their claims to an “authentic Catholicism” which is, in the eyes of the PJI and lay activists, more biblically grounded, more Christian, and more meaningful to their sense of obligation “as Catholics”---to the extent that it helps pave the way for their reframing of progressive Catholicism as a mainstream Catholicism (or the mainstream as they believe it should be), thus reinforcing their oppositional framing vis-à-vis conservative Catholics. It is further evidence that the very conservative resistance that threatens their claims to authenticity has become a foil that ultimately helps create and strengthen their sense of a truer understanding of Christianity and a more authentic Catholicism, coupled with a progressive worldview.

I have argued that the progressive Catholics in this study have perceived themselves to be located in binary opposition with conservative Catholics, just as the undocumented immigrants in their parishes have envisioned themselves in binary opposition with nativists. Moreover, these oppositional frameworks have combined in the worldviews of PJI leaders, who see themselves as the prophetic counterbalance to a large bloc of conservative Catholics and nativists resisting attempts to strengthen immigration rights. The PJI and activist laity reinforce their strongest oppositional emotions and symbolic associations when faced with the nativist politicians of Washington, D.C., among whom are both Republicans and, to a lesser extent, Democrats who have treated PJI members and parishioners with disdain, or who have failed to grant them audiences after they traveled thousands of miles in bus caravans. The stories of unsuccessful lobbying on Capitol Hill may have strengthened the resolve of Catholic activists within this binary opposition, as they have linked such specific episodic struggles with passages in the Bible that call

for prophetic action on behalf of the oppressed and the poor. The struggle for justice and immigration reform thus contributed to a stronger sense of what they regarded to be their “true Catholicism” when they met with such conservative resistance.

PJI attempts to encourage the “conversion” of their fellow Catholics into a more authentic version of Catholicism (i.e., progressive Catholicism inspired by liberation theology) are linked to pastoral concerns, or direct service at the local scale. Pastoralism, in the form of service/accompaniment among one’s community as well as tending to spiritual needs, is a tradition ostensibly tended to by the pastor of each parish. In actuality, however, PJI members note that some pastors are more effective, involved, and energetic than others---and some acquire reputations of being, in contrast, ineffective or lazy. Although not all PJI members are known for making great sacrifices of time for pastoral concerns, the more activist core of the PJI are highly engaged in the daily life and social-justice concerns of their communities, to a far greater extent than their liturgical duties require. The energy that they dedicate to pastoralism, according to the more charismatic of leaders, is returned many fold by their parish communities.

The PJI also tend to interpret the call for accompaniment (a term that was introduced in Chapter 2) as implicating volunteerism, social action, and community-building actions rather than mere charity; moreover, it is regarded to be driven forward by “the preferential option for the poor” underscored in liberation theology. In this sense, the PJI would argue that pastoralism is less commonly seen in conservative parishes than in their own communities. Progressive Catholics also set themselves apart from conservatives in working to make their parishes more inclusive. This inclusivity lends itself to the movement for immigration reform and the annual “Knocking on Doors” neighborhood campaign, as well as other bridging efforts in the community. The PJI and other progressive Catholics thus open their doors not only to immigrants from Latin America but also to visitors from other faith traditions (ecumenism), as well as atheists and agnostics, provided the latter are dedicated to causes favoring social justice. The latter

example, in particular, exhibits a level of ecumenism that they feel would make many conservative Catholics uneasy.¹⁹⁹

While progressive Catholics thus declare the intention to make their parishes and the larger Church more inclusive, and while they engage in bridge-building between Catholicism and other religions, they simultaneously risk, one could argue, the creation of a less welcoming Church for conservative Catholics. The PJI have prayed that the conversion of hearts and minds would ultimately shift the balance, nonetheless, so that more Catholics might be counted among (and included within) the ranks of the progressives, if not in every social issue at least in select areas such as the movement for immigrant rights. I have placed particular emphasis on the PJI conversion project in this chapter; however, I am not arguing that the failure of conversions to a more progressive framework would necessarily entail a schism within the Catholic Church. Neither my informants nor my own observations suggested that such an official split were looming. Moreover, if a schism were to occur in the coming decades, I would place odds on its being led by a breakaway conservative faction of the Church rather than progressive Catholics. Progressive Catholics have seen their hopes for the future rekindled via the 21st-century papacy of Francis, as well as personal and institutional memories of the mid-20th century popes John XXIII and Paul VI. At the same time, however, many conservative Catholics have exhibited marked unease under Francis, and whatever the length of his tenure, one might wonder if the patience of conservative Catholics might be sorely tested should the succeeding pope also incline toward a more progressive course. Even in this imagined scenario, however, I would argue that the Church's institutional strength might lay in its diversity and in the strength of local parishes, as many a conservative home would still be available to right-leaning Catholics despite the hierarchical leadership in Rome.

¹⁹⁹ My observations of mass at dozens of conservative parishes throughout Chicago support these insights, as do evidence in parish bulletins, diocesan newspapers, national Catholic newspapers, social media, and mainstream news coverage quoting conservative Catholics. These statements by conservative priests and bishops, as well as nativist and exclusivist laity, contrast strongly with the more open and inclusive styles of pastoralism I have observed in progressive Catholic parishes, particularly in PJI parishes.

At the local level, the ethnographic data suggest that PJI activists knew they could not lead only on the basis of their own priestly authority, nor on charisma and personal abilities, if their aim was to establish vibrant communities. Parishioners wishing to break new ground, expand an activity, or change a major event looked to the priest for an official go-ahead or a veto, but even in the quietest of parishes there existed people ready for delegated authority and councils that went beyond mere advisory capacity. Activist priests who arrived in a new parish wishing to establish dynamic councils were obliged to contend with older parishioners eager to defend “the way we’ve always done it,” though this reaction, too, was democratic to some extent. They dedicated themselves not to immigration reform alone but to parish life as a civic project, engaging undocumented and documented parishioners alike in actions and reflections on aspects of community building and civic responsibility, as well as spiritual development.

PJI members were able to engage in prophetic action and prophetic speech in part because of the autonomy afforded the pastor of a given parish in the Chicago Archdiocese, although a corollary also emerged (i.e., that associate priests or “associate vicars” subordinate to a pastor could be constrained by his ideological framework as well as his leadership effectiveness). Priests, or at least pastors, who were thus ideologically committed to immigrant rights and social justice could, I argue, dedicate significant time and effort to these concerns---provided they also dealt with fiscal and staffing constraints, etc.---and this relative freedom to engage in social justice was especially the case, in my analysis, for Dominicans, Scalabrinians, Jesuits, and the members of some other religious orders. This analysis helps explain why so many PJI leaders were able to join the movement (though they remained a minority of the total number of priests in Chicago), and this further broadens the argument in favor of seeing the Catholic Church as more of a confederation of local, parish leaders and bishops rather than as a strictly top-down hierarchy, with all significant innovations emerging from the upper echelons. Instead, the ethnographic data support an argument in favor of seeing Catholic innovations, entrepreneurial efforts, and inclusiveness as emanating primarily upward, from pastoral connections. This is not to argue that the formal Church

structure (pope-bishop-priest) has had little impact on events in Chicago or in the U.S. more generally; on the contrary, this chapter's discussion of papal sanctions on liberation theology suggest that the Vatican has remained extremely important---as does the next chapter's discussion of women religious "facing the Vatican"---and that even the most outspoken of priests and religious understand the power and influence of the Vatican hierarchy. Yet if we recall an obvious point---that Pope John XXIII was once a local priest, as was Pope Francis, whose formation was in the Jesuit order---the broader implications for research conducted at the parish level might become more clear.

4. WOMEN AND OTHER PARISH LEADERS

This chapter explores the ways the Priests for Justice movement is linked to women's leadership in parish workshops, community organizations, and religious ministries. Since the mid-20th century women have taken on increasingly visible leadership roles in the U.S. Church, sometimes in defiance of boundaries around the domestic sphere²⁰⁰ and structural subordination. Women have planned, served in, and benefited from parish programs designed to combat domestic violence and empower local leaders. They have also advocated for Church reforms, including women's ordination to the priesthood and the need to reinforce the Social Gospel.

The Church has often been maligned for attempts to exert control over women's bodies and reproductive regimes (e.g., see Chinchilla and Haas 2006: 254), but this chapter does not engage chiefly in discourses on reproduction nor in women's marginalization by hegemonic forces. Instead, it focuses on the attempts of progressive Catholics to empower women, and the influence women have on parish governance. This chapter describes how women have contributed to Latino activism through the Church, and sometimes in opposition to it. It also describes how Latin American traditions have influenced and transformed activism and Church practice, while aspects of Church teaching have also influenced certain Latin American traditions, including machismo.

²⁰⁰ Although many Latin Americans tended toward conceptions of public space as masculine and private space as feminine, there were exceptions in Mexico and in the U.S. Among Haitians in the U.S., public spaces were open to women in lower classes (owing to the need for second and third incomes) but women who entered middle classes felt constrained to home as a mark of acquired status (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001: 135). Women in sending countries have been accustomed to public labor and the autonomy this brings (2001: 133-137). But in some contexts (e.g., restaurants) psychological stresses intertwined when either men or women were placed in occupations that they traditionally saw as oppositely gendered (Smith 2006: 27-28, 95-96; Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001: 136-139).

In this discussion I am not claiming to make significant contributions to the anthropology of gender or feminist theory, though women are central to this research, and though I have self-identified as a feminist for more than a decade. Gender studies and feminism have thus helped to inspire this research, though I cannot pretend to advance theory in those arenas. This chapter examines women in practice if not in theory, within the anthropologies of religion and of social movements. Much of the theoretical framework for this chapter follows Lancaster's (1992) elucidation of gendered violence as a component of discourses on religion, specifically his examination of domestic abuse, as well as the blurring of rhetorical lines between copulation and violence (1992: 34-47, 86, 120). With Liberation Theology on one side, and machismo on the other, he analyzes links between faith and gender relations (1992: 20, 34-35, 235-238). In addition, Nepstad's (2004) anthropological framework has previously established the dual potentiality of the Catholic Church as both a constraining and enabling institution; following Giddens (1984) and Sewell (1992), Nepstad conceptualizes the viewing of the Church primarily through activists' frames of reference rather than through the dictates of the hierarchy.

In discourses on the roles of women laity, both progressive and conservative framers utilized biblical exegesis as well as syncretic and popular expressions of Catholicism, such as Marian devotions (notably the Virgin of Guadalupe). Most Catholics also acknowledged the daily leadership of women in holy orders and in parish management, with conservatives underscoring such contributions as charity and sacrifice while progressives more likely underscored social justice and empowerment. An example of the latter is the following opening stanza from a song featured in parish "leadership and self-esteem" workshops:

Woman, if ideas have grown within you
 they're going to say very ugly things about you
 like 'you are no good'
 like 'if only something [were different]' ---

like ‘when you shut up
you look much more beautiful’.²⁰¹

This stanza opened the song “Mujer,” by Gloria Martin, which was emblematic of a series of parish-based leadership development workshops run largely by women. The courses were designed to focus on the self-esteem of newly arrived immigrants from Mexico, although they were not often advertised as such, as “leadership” was a catchier tag line than “self-esteem.” Based on workshops that were once developed and taught by Father Charles Dahm, the classes were the product of collaboration with the parish’s “Social Action” group, beginning in January 2009. Over the next two years lay activists took more responsibility in the planning and teaching of the course, and they also delivered lessons to other parishes. Thus the course, designed to help create new leaders in the parish, had its greatest impact on people who were already leaders in some sense by reinforcing the leadership qualities of the women (and some men) who taught it.

An undercurrent of Catholic voices has been calling for increased recognition of women as originators of social, institutional, and economic life in the parish. These themes were echoed in the remaining lines of Gloria Martin’s song: “Woman.../ chain of ancestral links/ strong ovary/ ...life begins/ when we are all equal./ ...tomorrow is too late, and time is running out.” Reframing woman as an incubator of ideas rather than of babies, the growth of the mind was reconciled with reproduction, first by noting mental marginalization, then by acknowledging reproductive prowess, and finally by opposing censorship: “Woman, if ideas have grown within you/ they’re going to say very nasty little things about you---/ when you don’t want to be an incubator/ they will say ‘They’re no good, these women today.’/ ...thinking is

²⁰¹ “Mujer,” lyrics and music by Gloria Martin (as noted in parish workshop flyers). Translations are my own, from the Spanish: *Mujer, si te han crecido las ideas/ de tí van a decir cosas muy feas/ que, que no eres buena/ que, que si tal cosa/ que cuando callas/ te ves mucho más hermosa.// Mujer, espiga abierta entre pañalas/ cadena de eslabones ancestrales/ ovario fuerte/ dí, dí lo que vales/ la vida empieza/ donde todos son iguales.// Angela James, antes Manuela/ mañana es tarde, y el tiempo apremia.// Mujer, si te has crecido las ideas/ de ti van a decir cositas muy feas/ cuando no quieres ser incubadora/ dirán no sirven estas mujeres de ahora.// Mujer, semilla, fruto, flor, camino// pensar es altamente femenino/ hay en tu pecho dos manantiales/ fusiles blancos/ y no anuncios comerciales.// Angela James, antes Manuela/ mañana es tarde, y el tiempo apremia.”*

supremely feminine...” Cognitive growth thus incubated philosophy, self-respect, and equality. But there was a sense of urgency: “time is running out,” as the chorus reminded us.

As this song played on a boom box at the front of the room, the course participants listened and read the lyrics. The discussion afterward centered on the framings of women in cultural and economic life, and on equality at birth, which the men and women in the room saw as a call for democratic reform. The workshop thus bolstered the mujerista (“womanist”) theme of personal value over corporeal reproduction. Through these song lyrics, a feminist concept was effectively introduced within moments of the opening prayer, and within a staunchly Catholic setting---in this room facing the parish’s front door. While it was clear that neither the song nor any content in the workshop minimized the status or worth of a mother, there was opened a field of greater possibilities in loose alliance with feminist ideals of privacy, independence, and (for some present) what reproductive-rights advocates might call choice.²⁰² Yet the lyrics were not specific to these points but elicited a range of interpretations.

As the preceding vignette reminds us, the “matriarchal core” of Latino Catholicism included feminists (Badillo 2006: 189). However, few of my friends at St. Pius V and Our Lady of Lourdes called themselves feminists, a term which may have more negative connotations than in the Anglophone world.²⁰³ More were comfortable with the term mujerista (Isasi-Diaz 2004), although my friends tended to self-identify only as “women who are Catholics” or as “empowered Latinas.” This skewing of the matriarchal core reflected a broader shift, I believe, since the 2006 Faith Matters survey indicated that

²⁰² Choice is a term I use here although none of my Catholic friends ever voiced the word directly, neither in English nor Spanish, despite the usually unspoken understanding that “people’s lives are complicated,” and that women made difficult choices about their bodies. Many in these settings became mothers while pursuing higher education, community activism, and other “thoughts [that] have grown within.”

²⁰³ Anglo-Catholic feminist history was examined and celebrated by the historian Mary J. Henold (2008), although much of Henold and others’ feminist history has focused on Anglos lacking strong bonds with Latina/os.

“deeply religious Americans” were adopting less traditionalist views about gender roles than even their secular counterparts held a generation earlier (Putnam and Campbell 2010: 241).

As a caveat, Putnam and Campbell noted that the survey’s questions on whether “women have too much influence in religion...[or not] enough influence”---i.e., the desirability of “a bigger role for women in the church”---elicited responses by Latino Catholics that differed from the norm, namely, more than half of Latino Catholic respondents stated that women have “too much influence in religion” (while less than 10% of “Anglo” Catholics gave the same answer). Apparently accepting this at face value, Putnam and Campbell claimed this discrepancy revealed “a firmly traditionalist minority...among Latino Catholics” (Putnam and Campbell 2010: 244). This interpretation seemed at odds with the qualitative data I have gathered. Thus, I suggest they have missed the mark with this broad generalization, owing to a common error in survey translation and interpretation---i.e., the term demasiado should not be used as it can mean “too much/too many” or, on the other hand, merely “a good amount, enough.”²⁰⁴ On Spanish-language surveys, the term demasiado is thus ambiguous enough to nullify the diagnostic value of such a question, and surveys administered to bilingual speakers should also avoid “too much” and “too many.”

The alternative visions of women presented in parish workshops were not only issues of gender and religion but of class, ethnicity, and other factors. The workshop leaders were aware that their embrace of these tensions might be resisted by some parishioners; nevertheless, they were also aware that tensions were a component of immigrants’ daily lives. Workshops and activist groups in immigrant parishes functioned as zones of transition in which the liminal was not equated with marginalization or exclusion;

²⁰⁴ The question should have said “in excess” or “excessive amounts” instead. The question could also have been interpreted as appraising men’s participation (which fell short). Moreover, the question on women’s influence did not expressly ask about women leading services and actions, whereas another question on the survey did. Asked whether they favored allowing female clergy (women priests), 57% of Latino Catholics responded in the affirmative (compared with 75% of “Anglo” Catholics) on the 2006 Faith Matters survey (Putnam and Campbell 2010: 243). Though 57% was not as strong as 75%, it was still a commanding majority.

however, the nurturing and expansion of such zones might bring tensions between rival parish groups, with spaces and practices contested owing to contrasting visions of ethnic, generational, and traditional normalcy, as well as differing views over gender norms.²⁰⁵

On the reverse side of the “Woman” song sheet were the lyrics of a song “Man.” Although not of the same emotional caliber and implication as its female counterpart, it highlighted the dangers of ambition and impatience (“The one who moves quickest is not the best/ At walking long distances”), work ethic, and constraints imposed on expressions of male identity (“Just because he looks more like a man doesn’t mean he is/ And just because he yells more and frightens/...Or because he has more women,/ Or because he can handle drinking more”).²⁰⁶ The latter stanza was a commentary on physical and emotional abuse; some of the workshop organizers and many of the participants have dealt with aspects of domestic violence and substance abuse. Some have left abusive spouses and established lives as single parents with the express support of their priests and other parish leaders.

St. Pius V was a center for domestic violence counseling, and its program served as a model for other churches. During his homily on Oct. 11, 2009, Father Curran spoke of domestic violence as a series of shadowy perils worth “confronting like no other parish in the country”; more than 400 patients sought help with professional counselors at St. Pius in 2008, and most of these were women seeking either “to fix” or escape from abusive relationships.²⁰⁷ Yet while progressive priests have spoken of domestic abuse, violence prevention, and “the sin of machismo,” other pastors either refused to admit the problem was

²⁰⁵ See e.g., the controversy over novena dramas as treated in the Priests for Justice chapter.

²⁰⁶ “Hombre,” by Napoleón. Translations are my own, from the Spanish (excerpted here): “Hombre de fachada triste,/ dale al tiempo buena cara,/...Si has de tener una rosa/ tienes que mirar la espina,/ Si no sabes del dolor,/ No sabrás de la alegría.// No le pidas al Señor,/ hombre que te dé una casa,/ agradecele mejor que tienes vida y trabajas./...No es más hombre él que parece/ ni él que grita más y espanta/ sino él que lleva en su voz/ la verdad de su palabra./ Ni él que tiene más mujeres,/ ni él que bebe más y aguanta,/ sino él que tiene una sola/ y una sed para calmarla.”

²⁰⁷ After providing statistics on domestic violence, Father Curran invited a woman to give her testimony about H.O.P.E. A blond Eastern European woman stood at the microphone with her young son (5 to 7 years old) nearby. She spoke of being abused, of her son witnessing it, and of “being in the process of a divorce.”

pervasive enough to merit attention at Sunday mass or they saw it as too controversial a social issue to bring into religious services. I would also suggest the prevalence of an additional barrier, i.e., that more conservative priests were wary of implying that the Church sanctioned divorce.

In supporting the H.O.P.E. (“Hay Opciones Para Ella”)²⁰⁸ program, the priests and professional counselors at St. Pius V believed that these women were engaged in a profoundly Catholic struggle, not a struggle opposed to the Church (though it has often been framed as such by proponents of machismo). And rather than balancing discourses on women’s rights with caveats about family unity and condemning divorce, the priests and counselors of St. Pius declared: “There are never excuses for physical, emotional, or sexual violence. It is a crime for your partner to hit you.”²⁰⁹ From the perspective of the priests, staff, and lay activists at St. Pius, this was an example of framing as traditional a stance that others saw as radical. Thus, such a stance was not only more traditional but more biblically grounded than the stances of their conservative counterparts; in this frame, to speak in a less forceful way about domestic violence would be considered “anti-Catholic” and perhaps “politically motivated,” for one also acted politically by doing nothing and thereby opposing change. Dahm explained that abuse was not a “cross to bear”:

Many Mexican women accept their inferior status as a fact of life. From childhood, many girls learn that a woman’s role is to serve men. Their mothers teach them how to give and give until they are nearly empty. Many women abused by their husbands were abused as children, and as a result threw themselves precipitously into marriage. If a marriage begins to fall apart, machismo declares the woman at fault....

... they feel they have no one to turn to. Some priests may even counsel them that because marriage is for life, they must accept their husband’s abuse---it is God’s will that they carry this cross. (Dahm 2004: 54)

²⁰⁸ In regards to the nearly complete focus on women, parish staff have explained that “It would be PC to say men and women” but that “nearly all the victims” seeking the counselors and priests were women and children.

²⁰⁹ My translation of the Spanish: “Nuestro programa apoya las victimas de violencia doméstica por medio de consejería, información, y abogacía, y promueve el desarrollo personal en un ambiente de fe y espiritualidad. ¿Sabe lo que es la violencia doméstica? La violencia doméstica incluye cualquier maltrato a la mujer, sea física, emocional o sexualmente. // Usted es víctima de violencia doméstica si usted está: •Constantemente insultada, sobajada, ridiculizada/ •Golpeada, empujada, aterrorizada/ •Abusada sexualmente/ •Amenazada de perder a sus hijos/ •Forzosamente aislada/ •Preocupada por su seguridad/ •Preocupada por el bienestar de sus hijos/ •Sin salida y sin opciones./ ... Es un crimen que su pareja le golpee.” Accessed Oct. 25, 2009 from <http://stpiusvparish.org/es/node/54>.

The focus on domestic violence and women's rights was thus regarded a subcategory of the Church's teachings on social justice, which were approached as a traditional (biblically supported) topic in activist parishes. And yet, those teachings have been placed "outside the frame" in other parishes to the point where they become virtually invisible; the Social Gospel has often been called "the best kept secret of the Catholic church" and "the Church's little secret" despite its prominence on the Vatican's catechism web pages²¹⁰ and in the parish information kits distributed by the Catholic Campaign for Immigrant Rights.²¹¹

With women's protection and empowerment thus framed as a religious, biblically sanctioned foundation, progressive and radical Catholic leaders encouraged women to move beyond emergency counseling toward developing themselves as leaders and examples for others. One of the means for this development was the planning and teaching of parish workshops, where slightly unorthodox methods were encouraged.

4.1 Once I Believed...

In parish "leadership and self-esteem" workshops, gendered frames were applied to activities and reflections. A discussion of spirituality was framed, for example, around ways in which the topic was linked to life circumstances including gender identity, histories of abuse, and one's "relation to God, to others, and to oneself" beginning with a reflection titled "Después Aprendí un Poco Más" ("Later, I Learned a Little More"---translated in excerpts below). The class formed a circle and took turns reading stanzas emphasizing transitions from naivety to knowledge as well as critical views of male dominance, domestic violence, Catholic guilt associated with the human body, and the concept of God as an angry and distant father:

²¹⁰ http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM, specifically
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/___P6N.HTM,
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/___P6O.HTM,
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/___P6P.HTM,
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/___P6Q.HTM

²¹¹ <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/parish-kit.shtml>

Once I believed that/ ...
 Because I'm a boy, I shouldn't cry
 If I lie, my tongue will turn black
 There isn't anything my dad doesn't know
 Later, I learned a little more.

Once I believed that
 There are ghosts that want to hurt me/ ...
 I shouldn't go to sleep until I've said my prayers
 Later, I learned a little more.// ...

Once I believed that
 I deserve the harsh words of my husband
 I am ignorant and I cannot defend myself
 Why dream if you are a woman.
 Later, I learned a little more.

Once I believed that
 God gets angry and punishes [people] all the time
 Everything is a sin, even my own body
 If I don't go to confession, I can't receive holy communion
 Later, I learned a little more.// ...

Once I believed that
 The Kingdom of God exists only in heaven
 We have to suffer now to obtain glory afterward
 Careful about sinning, because there is a purgatory
 Later, I learned a little more.²¹²

The workshop participants were asked to share with the class one or two of the reflections that they most enjoyed. The women, who were Mexican immigrants ranging in age from their twenties and thirties (in the majority) to one or two septuagenarians, commented that “before,” according to their experience, women “were in the house caring for children”; “doing everything to support the husband”; “didn't vote”; “did not participate in church” leadership; and were told “you don't have a reason to study”²¹³ or simply “didn't have the opportunity” to go to school.

The men related that in [older] times men “said ‘no’ and ‘no’” to their spouses as they had “the last word”; they “didn't help [around the house]” but instead “went out [away from the family] more”; and they were challenged by other men if they wished to do so, with remarks like “Why would you go in the kitchen?” Men “only brought home the money” while they “were strict...and struck [family members].” In

²¹² My translation from the Spanish.

²¹³ The original Spanish is a rather forceful quote, spoken almost as a curse: “No tienes por qué estudiar.”

contrast, the men related that “now...we [can] say ‘yes’...and talk more with our spouses, taking into account their opinions”; “adjust schedules [with their spouse] so they could share the responsibilities of childcare”²¹⁴; and “now, help more in the church, singing in the choir, or other things.”

Although such a lesson might reflect aspects of feminist ideology to an outsider, parishioners viewed this not as feminism (a term they seldom if ever used) but as an emphasis on human dignity and equality--- reflections of the respect and love of God, rather than the control of a Church hierarchy and dogmatic social regulations. This was, in part, a public-private distinction that was also reinforced in parish bulletins and homilies during mass; the framing of the story of Sodom and Gomorrah was a case in point.

Whereas Sodom and Gomorrah were evoked in most conservative Catholic settings as a preamble to lectures on sexual norms, at St. Pius the two biblical cities were called “wicked” not because of any discussion of sexuality, but because of specific biblical passages condemning their greed and injustice: “Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy” (Ezekiel 16:49). The parish bulletin expanded on the theme:

...Just as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah brought disaster upon themselves because of their wickedness, so our world is in the throes of destruction because of evil. We can blame technologies of destruction, corporate greed, the First World’s exploitation of the Third World, institutionalized racism and sexism, age old hostilities between nations and so forth, but the reality is that each of us participates in this evil whether by wasting precious resources, or by keeping silent in the face of injustice, or by polluting, or by simply not caring what happens in our neighborhoods.²¹⁵

²¹⁴ “Se arreglan los horarios para compartir responsabilidad por los niños.”

²¹⁵ St. Pius V English-language parish bulletin of July 25, 2010, with authorship of the passage attributed to “Sunday Bible Talk With Dr. Elizabeth-Anne Stewart. <http://www.sundaybibletalk.com> .” (Dr. Stewart was often invited to preach during English-language masses at St. Pius V, but owing to her own time commitments she did not preach at every such mass nor write the message in every English bulletin.)

What appeared to be a radical interpretation at first glance was defended as traditional and biblically supported. Thus framed, the foundational theme of social responsibility and environmental stewardship was further developed in St. Pius's Spanish-language bulletin, which returned again from ecological themes to the equality of men and women:

...God created human beings, and "he created them in his image and likeness." This means that God created us with intellect and free will, with the capacity to understand, love, make decisions and be responsible for them and their consequences. As images and likenesses of God, we are the caretakers and guardians of our world.

Tragically, for centuries we have poorly interpreted the words of God directed to Adam and Eve.... Our domination of the world is causing devastation to the planet. For example, the terrible oil spill now occurring in the Gulf of Mexico.²¹⁶

Immigrant parishes with an activist agenda thus framed their views as traditional though they might subvert and oppose what conservative Catholics regarded as traditional notions. By critiquing the abuses of power in domestic and public spheres and reframing those categories as contested and (re)constructed, the progressive priests were reclaiming a Catholicism in line with the early Christian Church.

4.2 Self-Estimation: Who Are You?

On the facade of one of the parish buildings a mural highlighted themes of community life, ranging from the perils of domestic violence to imprisonment by the border patrol, and also the service of a woman ladling pozole from a huge pot in the church basement. Outsiders sometimes missed the door set in the middle of the mural, but regular churchgoers were familiar with the building fronting the parish's cramped parking lot. Though it overflowed with cars on Sundays, on weeknights at 7 or 8 pm the lot

²¹⁶ St. Pius V Spanish-language parish bulletin of July 25, 2010. (My translation of the Spanish.) Note that many parishes published a single, bilingual bulletin with advertisements on the final page. In those years St. Pius V had a tradition of separate Spanish- and English-language bulletins, which sometimes covered the same material but often diverged in content. (A one-to-one comparison on one Sunday often indicated differences, but when several weeks of bulletins were compared, it was clear that there were few major differences in overall content between the two versions; this was quite distinct from the analyses I made of the English- and Spanish-language newspapers of the archdiocese---wherein English versions would omit major discussions each week on racism, ethnicity, and immigration. Each version of the St. Pius bulletin was smaller and shorter than other parish bulletins (thus less expensive to print), and, as a matter of policy determined by the Parish Council and the pastor, they seldom included paid advertisements.

could accommodate traffic for a selection of the parish groups ranging from Guadalupanos to Charismatics, the Parish Council, the Soup Kitchen staff, Sunday School (Catechism) teachers, domestic violence support groups, couples counseling, legal clinics, child care/babysitting staff (for parents in one of the other parish groups), the leaders and volunteer musicians in the choir and band, and the participants in social action and leadership workshops.²¹⁷

As the first people arrived by car, on foot, and (one or two) by bus they began to greet one another in the parking lot: Waves, smiles, then approaches for hugs, pats on the back, or handshakes and exclamations of surprise. After a boisterous greeting, one might confide quietly to a friend that things had not been going so well, and the quiet conclave would continue beside a Honda Civic or Ford truck out of general earshot. Once inside the building, personal connections were even more important; the norm involved going around a room or table, personally greeting every individual with a handshake, kiss on the cheek or hug, and a few words in Spanish (even among those who were bilingual). No one was admonished for failing to engage in rounds of greetings, but these slights were nonetheless noticed. When a person arrived late, rather than expecting such greetings to be skipped while others were speaking, it was acceptable to complete a round of greeting, and others seemed happy to accept the short interruption. The most approachable and effective group leaders usually made sure to perform these round-the-room series of greetings whether they were attending for the first time or the twentieth.

One group leader took responsibility for the agenda, the personal welcomes, and the telephone calls and texts that held the group together between meetings. Over the course of a single year (March 30, 2010 to March 30, 2011), Mariela sent more than 100 text messages as “broadcasts to all members” and made

²¹⁷ The staff and volunteers constituting the kitchen staff, band, choir, and other parish groups accounted for much of parish vitality. Even parishes that could afford to pay some salaries relied on the volunteerism of their employees and laity. Among the more energetic volunteers were band and choir members who spent more time practicing and preparing in church spaces than anyone. Music directors also tended to teach various subjects in parochial schools.

countless phone calls and emails, announcing or reminding members of meetings, confirming attendance, and gathering information about logistics.²¹⁸ She did not rely on electronics alone, of course, but was always one of the more enthusiastic greeters; she was also one of the first to arrive at parish functions and one of the last to leave.

Most participants helped setting up chairs, coffee, etc., before parish workshops officially began with a prayer. If a priest were present he usually led it. This kind of official commencement was not interpreted as diminishing the role of women leaders but as fortifying through the charisma and official sanction of the priest. In other words, this small-group interaction with the priest reminded all Catholics that the effort required to attend an evening workshop brought emotional and spiritual rewards. The status of the clerical office, the priest's role as spiritual guide as well as a person of near star-quality (because he appeared regularly before large crowds, and sometimes on the local news) all contributed a boost in group and self-esteem that was heightened when one was recognized individually by the priest.²¹⁹ This kind of individual recognition was not usually possible in Sunday mass, where for only a moment at communion parishioners could see the priest at arms' length, rather than from the distant pews. When deacons²²⁰ or other ministers helped, more parishioners flocked to the line served by the priest.

²¹⁸ In 2011 only a handful had Facebook accounts. Texting and social media, rare among these largely middle-aged activists before 2011, then exploded in usage as cell phone technology and payment plans became more affordable. Although there was a tech-acquisition lag for some, texting and data costs remained a barrier.

Personal and social media were important, but I caution against ascribing too much power to these when recalling such early mobilizations. For adult and youth activists, regardless of social media, texting, and cell phones, there was no substitute for face-to-face accountability. Electronic promises were easily broken. One day in 2010 a group of DREAM activists received more than 200 "I will attend" notifications on E-vite (an online invitation service) to rally at a congressman's office; at the actual event, however, only two dozen people were present, including a handful of adults (two of whom were social scientists videoing the event). A virtual "e-promise" was apparently worth one-tenth of a face-to-face promise.

²¹⁹ The thrill of meeting with a spiritual leader of near star-quality might be another factor working in favor of Protestant congregations, whose pastors tended to smaller numbers than did Catholic priests.

²²⁰ Some Catholics who took offense in other settings at being served by a deacon seemed to forget the priest shortage. It was notable at immigrant parishes that priests continued to perform baptisms personally ---sometimes with 10 to 15 babies in a single event. The popular demand for priests reinforced ties within the parish; yet the priest shortage may soon force deacons to cover such rites, even in activist parishes.

The Catholic Church has lagged in the training of leaders within Latino Catholic populations (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995: 245-247), but workshops at activist parishes like St. Pius have taken place for decades,²²¹ since long before Father Dahm and Father Curran's tenures. Under Father Dahm a theme of women's leadership and empowerment became the norm as he established the custom of preaching against machismo and initiated counseling programs aimed at reducing domestic violence. With the goal of strengthening community and family leadership, Dahm developed a series of courses guided by his pastoral experiences in the U.S. and Latin America, as well as by his readings of Paulo Freire and liberation theology. Also influential were the insights of staff and community organizers (some hired by the parish) and positive and negative examples of mentorship and leadership-formation from his own education (including seminary and a PhD in political science "which, if anything," he noted to me in the hallway once, "taught me how to think" in a critical, organized manner). From the time of his first parish workshops, Dahm wished to empower parish staff to plan and lead courses as well, although he always maintained a direct hand in their formation:

The parish staff...developed two courses, one on Christian social commitment and another on building personal relationships...by studying the life of Jesus and his commitment to justice...

Although the courses followed the basic methodology of Alinsky-style training, focusing on building power among people, there were important differences. Because of the importance of faith...the courses included a deeper reflection on...Jesus and

²²¹ It might be argued that St. Pius's programs and social activism were primarily "a Father Chuck effect" given the abundant evidence of change in the parish and in the larger community during his tenure there. The present research might even be read as confirmation of that effect, though he took pains to show humility and to credit the parish staff and community ("we" rather than "I") in his 2004 book. However impressive Father Dahm's work and legacy, however, his effectiveness was never a one-man show. The ethnographic data I have gathered show that he was not merely demonstrating humility when he shared the spotlight; moreover, St. Pius was a community center with fairly active Dominican priests before Dahm arrived. I thus argue that these St. Pius innovations were not merely "a Father Chuck effect"---not the result of one man's creation, notwithstanding Father Dahm's considerable creativity, effective leadership, and risk-taking progressive work. In other parishes, too---though not in the majority of parishes---these kinds of workshops have trained community leaders for decades. In 2010 Chicago Area Study (CAS) interviews in Lake County, it was noted as well that several directors of community organizations trained in workshops and volunteered initially at their local parishes. Leaders such as Dahm were vital but built their effectiveness on teamwork and the empowerment of others; if they were to be held up as "Big Man" versions of history, their lives' work would be effectively misrepresented.

the...church, and they targeted not only leaders but all CBC members.²²² They were taught in Spanish to predominantly monolingual Hispanics.... to involve people in their own formation, the courses emphasized the active participation of all. The courses followed the pedagogical approach developed in the 1950s in Latin America by Paul Freire.... Rather than listening to lectures, participants reflected on their experiences and responded to questions that challenged them to deepen their analysis and expand their vision. Dynamics, including dramas and games, kept participants active and interested (Dahm 2004: 264-265).

Courses/workshops resumed in 2009 after a hiatus of some years, a period in which lay activists and St. Pius priests were concentrating instead on family counseling, at-risk teens, gang violence, and the city's historic pro-immigrant rights mobilizations. Many such workshops intertwined the themes of self-esteem and leadership, though the term autoestima (self-esteem) was underplayed at first---sometimes to the point of being deleted from flyers and sign-up sheets for a course---for two reasons: first, there was a social stigma (not only in Latino communities) against seeking psychological help, or at least against acknowledging publicly that one was seeking such aid; and second, effective collaboration with, and leadership of, others could not be expected without attention to one's own qualities, past issues, and ongoing challenges. The first night usually began with a discussion of "our history, culture, and religion" from the pros and cons of Conquest (1492, etc.) to the present struggles of farmers and laborers under neoliberal capitalist markets. The discussion proceeded from general history to family history, including encouragement to think about "how your parents raised you...your childhood...your youth," etc., and how all of these factors together have contributed to self-esteem.²²³

²²² Christian Base Communities (comunidades cristianas de base; or comunidades eclesiales de base) were a neighborhood-scale program first designed to extend liberation theology in Latin America. CBCs were established in Pilsen early in Dahm's tenure. He called them "Christian communities, or small churches, often called 'a new way of being church.' ...the church in miniature. In 1975, Paul VI ...[recognized] them as a sign of hope for the Church. ...Pope John Paul II added his clear support in 1989..." (Dahm 2004: 86).

²²³ As a member of the social-action group I aided with numerous workshops and led readings or small-group discussions, but when asked to take a larger role teaching I demurred, requesting I be allowed to remain in the class as an ancillary figure. I was wary of my university classroom load already, but I also recognized that my parish friends were far better teachers than I, though few had secondary diplomas. I owe my development as a student-centered teacher to the example set by the leaders of these workshops.

The priest then spoke of the extremes of low and high self-esteem, the low being “sad, angry, negative, not content...” and the high being “too high---sabelotodo y entiendolopoco---me first.”²²⁴ The answer to the equation---the balance between the two---was not just to seek “a good level” for ourselves but to help others achieve a balance as well: “When we are in the community, when we are working, it is good to recognize our own self-esteem and that of others, and to help them [with theirs].”

After participants were asked to supply further examples of “moments of low esteem,” the question was posed, “Where does this low self-esteem come from?” The answers covered infancy and adolescence, parents and peers. One participant admitted, “Sometimes a little lack of love or consideration makes me feel like, ‘Why don’t they love me?’”²²⁵

Many of the workshop participants and facilitators’ families separated for years as a result of the closed U.S.-Mexico border and immigration enforcement. For many, structural violence was seen as a facet of their struggle. Few discussed these matters in other contexts, even among friends in confidence, but in leadership and self-esteem workshops the reassuring combination of parish hall, dedicated lay volunteers, and the parish priest established a trusting environment where they shared memories of: an alcoholic father, an abused mother, domestic stress, or gang recruiting taking place in front of their apartment window.

Near the beginning of the course, one-page questionnaires asked: “WHO ARE YOU?/ Name 3 of your Qualities:/ Name 3 of your Weaknesses:/ Where did these notions about yourself come from?/ When do

²²⁴ Sabelotodo = “know-it-all” and entiendolopoco = “understand-[it]-little,” as in “a know-it-all who understands little” or “a know-it-all who shows little wisdom or deeper understanding.”

²²⁵ April 20, 2009, workshop notes.

you feel good?/ When do you feel bad?” A more detailed questionnaire followed, for which one woman offered the following responses:²²⁶

What are some notable parts or aspects of your spirituality?

- in your relationship with God ...
God is life and peace in my relationship with him.
- in your relationship with yourself ...
I see myself more or less [ok] but I am sometimes not content with my physical appearance.
- in your relationship with other people you know ...
I try to be open with people. Especially listening and trying not to judge.
- in your relationship with society and the entire world ...
It makes me feel like I have a goal of seeking/finding justice for my community. Perhaps because I don't live in this community which is very Latina/o. Where I live I feel like I'm a minority.

These questions were considered part of a holistic view of self and of one's developing capacity for leadership. It might be tempting to focus on the final question, as it extended readily into the realm of social justice; yet, what is of interest here is that “society and the entire world” were included as questions of spirituality. Spirituality in an activist parish was not inward-looking, and activism in such an organization was also not merely a social concern.

A young man active as an usher and as one of the Guadalupanos, offered an overview to which others nodded in assent. He alluded to the lack of early support from one's parents and highlighted the ways in which migration lowers self-esteem. Being apart from one's own parents as an adult makes one acutely

²²⁶ My translation from the Spanish (which follows, with her handwritten responses in italics): “¿Cuáles son unas partes o puntos sobresalientes de tu espiritualidad? /en tu relación con Dios (por ejemplo, ¿Quién es Dios para ti y cómo te relaciones con Dios?)/ *Dios es vida y paz en mi relación con él.*/ en tu relación contigo mismo (por ejemplo, ¿Cómo te ves, bien o mal? ¿En qué aspecto? ¿Por qué? ¿Te quieres? ¿Por qué?/ *Me veo mas o menos pero no estoy en veces contenta con mi aspecto fisico.*/ en tu relación con otras personas conocidas (por ejemplo, ¿Qué te motiva y te guía en relacionarte con otras personas? ¿Cómo te comunicas con otras personas, colaboras, perdonas, invitas, apoyas? / *Trato de ser abierta con la gente. Especialmente escuchar y trato de no juzgar.*/ en tu relación con la sociedad y el mundo entero (por ejemplo, ¿Qué te hace sentir parte del mundo social, sea la política, la comunidad, el pueblo, etc.? ¿Qué te hace sentir no parte de ello? / *Me hace sentir que tengo una meta para encontrar justicia para la comunidad. Sera porque no vivo en esta comunidad que es muy latina. Donde you vivo me siento que yo soy la minoria.*”

aware of the emotional support that they could have provided, when confronting “beginning at rock bottom” in the United States “like orphans”:

When I look for counsel, I remember that I am a project in motion....When we arrived in this country, we were beginning at rock bottom [with no self-esteem]. We have to build a new attitude for ourselves [and our own children]....We didn't have that support from our parents...like orphans here...[we were] lacking that foundational support from our parents.²²⁷

Potential paths forward were considered at the end of one class session, e.g., “How can someone raise their self-esteem?” The responses ranged from the temporary, such as entertainment seeking, to fostering greater communications and connections with others. A group leader then turned the class's attention toward making a personal “List of Values,” and we volunteered several examples in a discussion of ways to “set aside” the negative while taking all of “the good” and placing them “in a suitcase” of mental and emotional sources of strength, to carry with us and “value ourselves for what we are...as a foundation.”²²⁸

Such workshops are valuable in their own right, and they are also a way to keep activists engaged in parish life during lulls in marches, vigils, and mobilizations---replacing movement creativity and excitement with the patient community-building that must be the “long-game.” Activists could burn out

²²⁷ Workshop notes of April 20, 2009. My translation of the Spanish: “...buscar aconsejería...soy un proyecto en camino...Cuando llegamos a este país, llegados como en el punto zero [de autoestima]. Tenemos que construir una nueva actitud...No teníamos ese apoyo de nuestros padres...el base fundamental de nuestros padres...”

²²⁸ The themes of this workshop were reinforced in Spanish-language mass and the bulletin of July 5, 2009. My translation follows, in excerpts: “An African proverb says ‘It takes a village to raise a child.’ Nonetheless, the father and the mother are the most responsible... [but] The village, meaning, the family and neighbors, the community, the school, the parish, the city should help them with this work./ It's a difficult job, and doubly difficult for fathers and mothers who are immigrants. The experience that they had in their own upbringing and in maturation was in a different culture. In order to direct their daughters and sons along a good path now they have to adapt themselves to the circumstances of a new place, but without losing the positive religious, moral, and cultural values of their [original] culture./...[Meanwhile] youths naturally tend to be independent and rebellious....They think that their parents are too stuck in the past..../For their part, youths should...take their advice seriously and speak openly with them. Through this dialogue, sons and daughters...can serve as a bridge over the chasm between the two cultures and they can help their fathers and mothers understand and adapt to the good customs of this country..../ May the sons and daughters not reject their fathers and mothers; and may the fathers and mothers not distance themselves from their children. With a lot of love and patience...with dialogue and firm and loving discipline....”

from the demands of such a movement, especially with few major victories. Without management of the emotional and moral dynamics of activists over the long term, peoples' convictions would not be rejuvenated and committed to "the pleasures of protest" (Nepstad 2004: 24). These workshops functioned to rejuvenate and recommit key parish leaders and activists.

4.3 Social Action 'in the River'

Parish leaders found that the borders between the categories of social justice, on the one hand, and social services, on the other, were often difficult for people to comprehend. As a teaching aid they used illustrations such as "the school of small fish chasing the large fish" (a cartoon showing unity is strength) and parables such as "the children in the river." This parable told how a group of people approaching a riverbank were shocked to see a number of children being rushed along by the floodwaters, in immediate danger of drowning.²²⁹ Some people, panicking, jumped in or threw ropes into the torrent, struggling to save the kids. But more children kept appearing in the rushing waters. After a while, somebody paused and suggested looking upstream for the cause of the disaster. While some continued to struggle in the water, others ran upstream where at last they came upon a bus that had crashed into the side of a bridge. The bus was still filled with children who had not yet been swept up by the raging waters. Having found the root cause, the good Samaritans stabilized the bus and saved the remaining children.

²²⁹ If used in another parish this might have been intended, rather overtly, as a pro-life parable, and it is possible that some participants saw such a connection or implication. However, after having seen this story taught on at least three different occasions (in different classes/workshops), I do not believe this the primary or even secondary intention at St. Pius V. Even if the story were intended to be interpreted as such a parable, at St. Pius the "up the river" part of the story would refer to the need to alleviate social ills, the need to contextualize unwanted pregnancies---as mired in poverty or inequality, the unequal status of women, domestic abuse, sexual intercourse without respect for a partner, or without medical understandings of how pregnancies begin---rather than a call for protesting abortion clinics. A parish leader once stressed to me that rather than dedicating resources to the pro-life movement, St. Pius was concerned with the overarching social problems that ultimately make abortions more prevalent. St. Pius V is also, he noted, concerned with providing for children after birth (with basic needs and a better world). As a parish that dedicates enormous resources to domestic violence and women's empowerment, any attempt to exert Church control (direct or otherwise) over women's bodies might be labeled anathema.

When workshop participants heard this story for the first time, they were not immediately told how to interpret it (a temptation that was hard to resist, as the meaning seemed so obvious to some). Instead, the people were asked for their explanations, and as a result more shades of meaning emerged, including the need for charity along with prevention, the “need to avoid losing all of our energy” on each crisis before us, that we must “take a breath” or “step back” to see bigger problems, that structural violence is at work, and that “people must look up river” for the root causes of problems rather than being distracted.²³⁰

Nepstad’s conceptualization of framing is valuable here, as conservative Catholics have tended to frame this kind of story as inspirational in their political struggle against abortion, whereas radical and progressive Catholics have tended to frame the story in broader terms, whether or not they regarded themselves to be anti-abortion activists. The river babies might also remind us, I argue, that some parishes exhibited little if any reproduction-linked activism, not because there was no concern over abortion but because larger social, psychological, spiritual, and economic issues were seen as being root causes of this and other issues of concern.

Charity and social action---both aspects of social ministry---were linked in this story, a point further reinforced as workshop organizers handed out a sheet contrasting charity and justice in a sketch of two human feet---“The Two Feet of Social Ministry” which move together. As an ethnographer of the homeless has argued, the “teaching of a person to fish” may imply “some kind of personal defect or deficit” while masking larger questions: “Why are some people who know how to fish still hungry? Who is keeping them from the fish?...Give a fish, teach to fish, whatever...sooner or later, someone has to ask: who owns the ocean?” (Adkins 2010:15).

²³⁰ i.e., being distracted by the continual “state of emergency,” or shock, that has become the “new normal.”

The self-development seminars, leadership workshops, and semi-autonomous committees of these progressive parishes were not designed for short-term relief or survival; they were about changing the conditions of survival. Nonreligious and religious activists alike might call this consciousness raising and awareness of structural violence, yet they added that this was fundamentally a process of conversion²³¹---a religious yet decidedly non-apocalyptic means of “bringing the Kingdom of God to Earth.”²³²

By framing structural concerns as biblically sanctioned questions of conversion, the Church’s female activists might minimize confrontations with the hierarchy. Yet the avoidance, whether it was performed consciously or not, allowed for a diversity of Catholic immigrant-rights activists to work together while also forging networks with Church and non-Church actors, including women’s rights groups. Some Latino Catholics were privately pro-choice while they knew that many of their friends were (less privately) pro-life. Meanwhile, some had seen a need to embrace mixed views. Though such a field of contradiction might seem hypocritical to some observers, those raised as U.S. Catholics have negotiated such private-public divides their entire lives.

4.4 Organizers as Rivals and ‘Expert Students’

Parish leadership-formation workshops were only a portion of the training being offered by community organizers in the area. Some participants previously or simultaneously received training through *Mujer Avanzando*, *Mujeres Latinas en Acción*, and entities associated with The Resurrection Project (TRP);²³³

²³¹ Conversion is discussed in detail in the chapter on the Priests for Justice for Immigrants (PJI). It was a term that appeared often in the communications of the PJI and the Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants. The term referred more often to conversion within the church by the faithful, i.e., people who already considered themselves Christians and Catholics, but who reached a deeper faith by embracing social justice through Church teachings.

²³² Catholic priests in these settings used this phrase in several seminars, conversations, and homilies.

²³³ Although most of TRP’s monetary and human resources were dedicated to affordable housing, family finances, and brick-and-mortar goals, the organization’s 2009 annual report highlighted workshops in association with *Mujer Avanzando* and “community partners Instituto del Progreso Latino and *Mujeres Latinas en Acción*,” and “the leadership formation program at St. Pius V” as components of its work toward community empowerment.

however, these coalitions sometimes brought ideological and territorial rivalries. Turf battles emerged mainly when there was a perception that people from outside a community were behaving presumptuously, with insensitivity, or otherwise “stepping on toes.” Between 2005 and 2011 activists informed me of various tensions between parish-based groups and community organizers who were said to have behaved condescendingly, without proper appreciation for those who had opened the gates for them. I experienced this tension personally when St. Pius V was hosting a bus captains’ meeting for ICIRR and other agencies: shortly after I entered the basement (“my home turf”) an outside organizer placed himself in my path and presumed “to make me wait” for direction. I did not. I would have deferred to him at another parish, but not in a place where he was the guest.

Community organizers also sometimes missed or avoided opportunities to participate in parish-based workshops. Some organizers said they were too busy to attend an evening course regularly, yet others might have been uneasy inside a church. Some opted out of parish-based workshops because they believed they were already accepted in the community owing to a Hispanic birthright or previous residence in the neighborhood.

One organizer with a not-for-profit in the area was a young Mexican American who had been raised on the southwest side of the city. He wished to frame himself as a teacher and leader, feeling that he had significant experience with activists in other areas of the country. Every time I crossed paths with him--- whether following a mass or on 18th Street or Ashland Avenue---he seemed a sophisticated, confident college graduate, nattily dressed, always professional and respectful. He was bilingual and spoke with an elevated vocabulary in both languages; however, his views on territoriality and community relations were not shared by the parish priest or community members.

On various occasions Father Dahm invited this organizer to attend workshops on “leadership and self-esteem” at the parish, but the invitations were refused. Instead, the young man suggested that rather than

join “as a student,” he “would be happy to teach a class” because he had “already learned a lot about leadership.” The priest decided not to press the issue though it bothered him for a long time afterward, and he surmised that the young man was too proud of his credentials, and thus not ready to place himself on an equal footing with community members---the only legitimate place from which to help lead the community. As the priest mentioned more than once during our interviews, “He just doesn’t get it”; the young man had mistakenly seen technical expertise as “the real value of the courses”---as if leadership were an academic skill that could be studied once, and mastered---rather than seeing these workshops as welcoming settings through which one could develop a network of contacts, then a group of friends and a place in the community.

In contrast, two other bilingual community organizers---a young Mexican American man and a young white woman---accepted the priest’s invitations and began to see gradual, sustained differences in their connections with Pilsen neighbors. My friends began to recognize them on the street, at mass, and in actions led by other community organizations. By dedicating time to our group of workshop participants over a period of several weeks, they developed a sense of mutual respect and camaraderie and thus, greater potential for collaboration and communication. They also learned that personal electronics and social media had not erased the need for this face time. Communication, as Saul Alinsky wrote in the 1970s, was about cultural connections and empathetic interactions; thus his admonition: “It does not matter what you know about anything if you cannot communicate to your people. In that event you are not even a failure. You’re just not there” (Alinsky 1989: 81).

4.5 Gendering the Real Work

A woman “does the real work in the parish,” according to the popular refrain, “until a man comes along to take the spotlight.” This was also sometimes expressed as women “working for men’s glory,” or “a woman comes up with an idea but once it catches on, a man steps forward to take the credit.” Though

these were not meant as blanket accusations, such remarks resurfaced on the margins of immigrant-rights events and at other parish actions.

On July 28, 2010, a large mass and vigil was hosted by Most Blessed Sacrament parish, incorporating creative use of space, biblical scriptures, and symbolic imagery---all of which had required work behind the scenes, from the outlining of events and suggestions for themes (planning activities in which several PJI members had participated) to the compiling and printing of materials, their distribution to parishes throughout the archdiocese, and the setting up of stations and displays at the host church (work done before most priests arrived). Shortly after my group's arrival I approached two women employed in different ministries of the archdiocese. Both laughed as one remarked, "That's the way it always is!" regarding the way several women "had done the work to get all of this" set up, only to step aside quietly as "all of these white-robed priests" took center stage---so that the (female) photographer from the Catholic New World could dutifully frame shot after shot of them. Jokes of this sort hinted that feminism might exist in some form within the Church, and that the old patriarchal norms might not live much longer without resistance in public or at least private spheres.

The lack of adequate public acknowledgment, particularly by parish leaders failing to laud the debts owed to the leadership and entrepreneurship of women---i.e., not merely lauding their "service and sacrifice"---becomes more than a series of nominal lapses when the evidence is multiplied by a factor of tens of thousands of hours, which women spend on behalf of any given parish. I write "tens of thousands of hours" without exaggeration; e.g., in his bulletin of Nov. 14, 2010, Father Mike Shanahan of Our Lady of Lourdes parish announced:

You may remember that we added up all the hours of ministry and service that are given to the parish on an average annual basis. We estimated that there are almost 46,000 hours given annually for the success of the Parish Mission. ...Our goal is not to "be busy" in the parish. Our goal is to [be] busy with the right things. Thank you for your generosity of time, talent and treasure that makes this possible.

Father Shanahan's purpose here was both to thank the more active parish volunteers and to encourage further donations of "time, talent and treasure" on the parts of others. He added this acknowledgment to the personal expressions of gratitude that he had already shown to volunteers and committee members at dozens of parish events and meetings. Perhaps he was especially hoping to encourage more participation among male parishioners by leaving out the gender divisions inherent in this estimate of time, talent, and treasure; yet a quick glance at the names on the coordinating committee, or on any of the other ministries and services within the parish, showed that most of the 46,000 hours resulted from women volunteers.

The Hispanic Council at this north-side Chicago parish included a few men but was dominated by women who joined the council because of their previous leadership in the parish's ministries and organizations, both as paid staff and as volunteers.²³⁴ One such woman was active in the Guadalupano (Marian) Group, another was a Catechist, one was a leader in the Immigrant-to-Immigrant Ministry (Pastoral Migratoria) at the parish, one a councilor for domestic violence and family dynamics, and another was one of the parish secretaries. Most were deeply religious and regular attendees at Sunday or Saturday mass, but apart from group prayers at the beginning and ending of meetings they spoke seldom of spiritual matters whereas they conferred often about service work and planning. Their volunteerism seemed to require increasing levels of acknowledgment, moreover, as it conflicted with narratives privileging consumerism: they informed me that they went counter to the cultural current followed by friends and family, who, when they weren't working, all preferred shopping or entertainment over service.

In the pews on any given Sunday women were more numerous than men, a disparity long noticed by priests counting the attendees at mass (as they sometimes did in rare breaks while others led

²³⁴ Many of the women active in Chicago parishes, and particularly those with leadership roles, gained confidence as leaders outside the Church but responded to calls for service within. While the importing of women leaders seemed the norm in less activist and less progressive parishes (where few internal training programs or activist-oriented workshops existed), talented women have also been imported to more progressive parishes. Their "time and talent" was considered of great value if it assisted the community.

announcements and songs). The reasons for the numerical disparities were difficult to decipher. Catholic congregations saw the centrality of women in their ministries just as Protestant congregations did, and the visibility of women as leaders might encourage further female participation while perhaps dampening this among males. Moreover, a complex of socio-cultural discourses reinforced the notion that women were more religious than men (Trzebiatowska and Bruce 2012), yet Catholic attendance among women could also be influenced by a heightened desire to support notions of community and social service. In immigrant parishes it is important to note, moreover, that the male to female ratio was not always so lopsided. In Chicago the proportion varied from 2:1 women to men to roughly equal, 1:1 ratios, and the division among children at mass and in catechism was roughly equal, at least until the teen years. Perhaps parishes known for their activism were altering the gender balance by making mass (and the Church generally) feel more relevant to the here-and-now, by showing that they were willing to challenge some power structures. It is also possible that immigrant parishes saw slightly increased male attendance as a consequence of women's actions at home---e.g., by those insisting on a partner's participation---or as a residual effect of older migration patterns when male migrants still greatly outnumbered females. Another explanation is that immigrant parishes might have been doing more to engage male and female adherents, alike, with cultural offerings such as energized performances of Mexican music and songs that were evocative of home.

If we viewed women's leadership and participation from the perspective of mujerista theology, as does Isasi-Díaz (2004: 63), we might hold that their religiosity was "an essential part of popular culture and...central to the lived-experience of the people...one of the most creative and original parts of our heritage and our culture" that provided "fuerzas para la lucha, strength for the struggle." And yet the strength of popular piety among Latina/o Catholic activists did not equate to constant discourses on biblical themes and scriptural citations. On social media sites like Facebook, for example, they only occasionally posted biblical quotes or scriptural references, yet they would often share messages promoting social justice from the viewpoints of other spiritual traditions, such as Rabindranath Tagore's

“While sleeping I dreamed that life was happiness...I awoke and saw that life was service...I served and understood that service was happiness.”²³⁵

4.6 Pan American / International Festival

One of the biggest events each year at Our Lady of Lourdes parish on the north side of Chicago was the Pan American Festival (Festival Panamericana) of food. It was seen as the embodiment of the identity of this parish as “a United Nations,” in the words of its pastor, Michael Shanahan, an outspoken and nationally visible PJI member. The annual calendar of this parish had to accommodate so many “nations,” in fact, that the pastor sometimes wondered how time could be put aside for other activities. Different ethnic and national groups celebrated the Divino Niño (the Christ Child), San Lorenzo, Hermano Pedro José de Betancourt (Brother Peter Joseph of Betancourt), Our Lady of Los Angeles, Our Lady of Chiquinquirá (a Colombian devotion), the Virgin of Guadalupe, Santo Cristo de Esquipulas, and Simbang Gabi (a Filipino Christmas celebration).

The Pan American Festival became a unique chance to show union and solidarity among potentially competing interests---interests that did, in fact, vie for space and place in other parishes with sometimes acrimonious results. As the pastor explained to a Catholic reporter (who was inquiring at the time about another project), “It’s important to integrate traditional celebrations with parish life, and we’d like to see each culture recognized by the rest of the parishioners” (Nicado 2010).

²³⁵ This quote was shared on Facebook, Sept. 18, 2012, on the Timeline of a Chicago lay leader known for parish group formation, immigration reform, leadership workshops, and local service. She had often contacted parish groups via text and phone but made only occasional Facebook posts. This quote was significant to her private and parish life; beside it she added: “Serving others not only brings you Happiness...It gives you a great feeling of being alive” and “In service we show our [true] greatness.” (My translation.) In the original Spanish, her comments read: “Servir a los demás no solo te da Alegría...Te da un gran sentido de vivir” and “Es sirviendo como demostramos nuestra grandeza..”; the Tagore quote in Spanish reads: “Yo dormía y soñé/ que la vida/ era alegría.../ Me desperté y vi/ que la vida/ era servicio.../ Serví y comprendí/ que el servicio/ era alegría....”

Although women played key roles in the planning, organization, maintenance, and clean-up of the food festival (as they did in events at other Chicago parishes), they might not have been simply---in these activist parishes, at least---reproducing male hegemonic power structures. For instance, they did not allow men to sit idly while they performed all necessary preparation and serving tasks. On a few occasions, women would insist that the men among them sit in order to be served, but these were exceptions, not the rule. Men were welcomed into the planning and execution of these events, and indeed they were expected to work at all manner of tasks---in preparation, food serving, cleaning, etc.---alongside the women. A sexual division of labor occasionally emerged for the arduous lifting and hauling tasks, but in most sweat-inducing work men and women worked together. Although the women outnumbered the men (as they did in most parish-related functions), they were not symbolically inferior, in marked contrast to the divisions that Flores (2008: 214-215) observed in a “Los Pastores” festival in San Antonio, Texas, where “Los Pastores appears to reproduce the political and gender ‘traps’ raised by progressive and critical scholars of religion” and old power relationships were upheld. Instead, women at this parish did not merely serve; they earned their leadership positions.

4.7 Cross Pollination

People who became active in one capacity within a parish were also being prepared indirectly for other aspects of life in the parish, community, or social movement. One young woman, Mariela,²³⁶ sought out the parish church within days of arriving from Mexico with her husband and daughters. She felt a sense of welcome and comfort in the Spanish-language masses and parish community events. Meanwhile, the priests showed such a deep respect for Mexican culture and a determination in matters of social justice that they earned the respect of Mariela’s husband, a physically imposing day-laborer. After the two entered the parish’s program of couples counseling they saw improvements in their marriage, and they both began to volunteer in parish ministries, including social-justice advocacy.

²³⁶ All personal names are pseudonyms except for certain priests and high-profile community leaders.

Another who joined the social-action group was a withdrawn young woman who barely spoke in meetings for several months. Eventually she became a lead instructor in workshops and a volunteer with other parish groups as well---a leader who developed the self-confidence to involve herself wherever she felt there was a need. A group of women who initially volunteered in the parish kitchen and then assisted with ministries also became entrepreneurs, starting their own catering business. Meanwhile, at a nearby parish a young undocumented woman graduated from college only to find her job prospects dim, but she was able to utilize aspects of her education by volunteering first as a catechist, then a group mentor and a social-justice activist in the larger community. Although she informed me that she had all but lost hope in immigration reform---and with it the prospects of a professional position suiting her abilities---she gained a sense of pride and satisfaction through Church activism. Latina women and other leaders who entered into one aspect of church volunteerism continued to be primed to assist others, becoming newly involved in service and activism.²³⁷ This is the kind of momentum that Alinsky saw arising even from NIMBY actions: “Remember: once you organize people around something as commonly agreed upon as pollution, then an organized people is on the move. From there it’s a short and natural step to political pollution, to Pentagon pollution” (Alinsky 1989 [1971]: xxiii).²³⁸

Women whose personal lives, educations, and job histories have not afforded them the opportunity to excel in leadership outside of the Church nevertheless underwent a gradual accumulation of experience in service work, cooperative event planning, logistics and other operations, group dynamics (e.g., through participating in or teaching workshops), and critical reflections wherein Catholicism became a framework for action rather than an escape from society. Not all women in these arenas took on dynamic leadership

²³⁷ This progression of activist engagement has also been seen in other immigrant populations in the Church. For example, one of the city’s leading Irish American immigrant advocates in 2010 was 88-year-old Maureen O’Looney, who migrated in 1953 and became an entrepreneur whose Shamrock Imports store gave her opportunity to help new arrivals (with housing, job placement, and advice); she helped found the Chicago Irish Immigrant Support (CIIS) in 1998 with the aid of Irish bishops and Cardinal George (Smith 2010b).

²³⁸ Alinsky also quoted from Alexis de Tocqueville (on the need for many small liberties) and warned not of political ideology or socioeconomic position but of disempowerment: “hidden and malignant inertia...the death of a [person]’s faith in himself and in his power to direct his future” (1989: xxvi).

roles outside of the Church, but many found increased experience, skills, responsibility, and self-esteem (empowerment) in group memberships and workshops in an activist parish.

Many recently immigrated Latino men have claimed to leave abusive behaviors behind, with their parents' generation, or to have worked to move beyond them. Dahm and other pastors have in turn spoken of a spectrum of behaviors in Latino/a households, some of them troubling and others signaling hope for lasting change. They have identified hegemonic "ranchero masculinity" as a type apart from contemporary Mexican men---those who are comfortable being "ni macho ni mandilón (neither macho nor apron-wearing)" (Smith 2004: 95-96). Meanwhile, women have not waited for changes to occur elsewhere. Many have chosen non-Church-sanctioned partnerships allowing for the easier eviction of men from the household, while others have actively sought companionate marriages---i.e., marriages emphasizing a sharing of responsibilities and respect rather than male-dominated "marriages of respect" (Hirsch 2003). Parish leaders, priests, and bishops who recognized these realities were not so quick to preach against such family structures nor to claim that "true Catholicism" demanded women's sacrifices. Moreover, in stating that Latina women have benefited from women's liberation (2004: 55), Dahm presaged Putnam and Campbell's assessment (2010: 234) of "the profound transformation in women's rights during the [late 1900s]," as once radical feminist concerns have become more accepted in the mainstream---i.e., society has become at least marginally more inclusive.

4.8 Women as Preachers and Ministers

Although the Church operated as a male-dominated hierarchy led by the pope, cardinals, and bishops---with women barred from the priesthood---and although from a distance the larger Church and its individual parishes appeared to be the provinces of male leaders, Catholic women were volunteer preachers and ministers, as well as professional, full-time staff. Women served as communion ministers during mass, and by administering blessings and crosses to foreheads on Ash Wednesday, and as ministers responsible for various courses and social services. They have also earned equivalent status as

choir directors, catechists, ushers, assistants of various kinds during mass, and as readers of announcements.

At some parishes lay women stood as preachers---not ordained by the Church hierarchy, but as a type of assistant to the priest presiding over the mass. At other parishes lacking a priest they served as non-ordained pastors for months or years at a time (Wallace 1993; Hoge 1987). Moreover, I would expand the definition of preacher to include women who wrote portions of parish bulletins, diocesan publications, and scripts for social-justice vigils.

Dolores Tapia, the Director of Parish Family Counseling at St. Pius V, took on the function of preacher when she wrote for both the Spanish- and English-language versions of the bulletin of March 8, 2009, which the parish was celebrating as International Women's Day. Under the title "Second Sunday of Lent: Tear down the walls of machismo!" Tapia said "all women, from the most famous and renowned to the most humble sister, wife and mother" should be honored that day. She recalled Jesus's companions (his mother Mary, Mary Magdalene, another Mary, and Martha) and listed among "the strong women of our own time" Mother Teresa, Rigoberta Menchu ("a victim of extreme violence in Guatemala against herself, her family and her people"), Dorothy Day, and Dorothy Stang ("religious of the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame...murdered for defending the rights and the land of the indigenous people of Anapu in the Amazon"). In delineating the parish's philosophy on gender equality, she eschewed caveats about obedience or subordinate "complementarity" such as are given in conservative parishes:

In the past, in our male-dominated society, women have been suppressed and silenced. But, little by little, we are becoming aware of the great force for transformation which we bear within us, even though our words and works are not valued as they should be. We are discovering that our role in society, in the Church and in the world of politics is ever more meaningful, and that we can build a new and different society.

We, the women, desire and believe in the equality of men and women, in the mutual companionship in creating the home...in which each person contributes according to his or her particular characteristics and talents to build a more human world according to God's will and desires.

Today's woman asks for respect, equality and love. We pray for our sisters who have died in violent circumstances at the hands of their companions, for the women who work in the factories...farms...immigrant women struggling to survive, those working for oppressive and abusive bosses, and for the women who have died fighting the battle for social and political justice and change.

...Let us remember that the God of all life, who sent God's own Son into the world...willed that the women were to be the most faithful companions of Jesus in his mission of the salvation of humankind.²³⁹

As a preacher Elizabeth-Anne Stewart, Ph.D., became a regular feature at English-language masses on Sunday afternoons, while also authoring several of the front-page messages in the English-language bulletins under the byline "SUNDAY BIBLE TALK with Dr. Elizabeth-Anne Stewart."²⁴⁰ Citing Jesus's "Parable of the Guests at the Wedding" as inspiration, she penned a message on humility, socioeconomic abuse, and colonialism on August 29, 2010:

...we imagine we are entitled to more than our fair share of the Earth's bounty, using, abusing and wasting the resources at our disposal.... We build ourselves up while pushing down, demonstrating neither care nor compassion nor respect for anyone but ourselves. And sadly, what we do on an individual basis, countries do and have done on an international basis...colonizing another, doing so under the banner of God or civilization, or of robbing poorer countries of their resources while supposedly providing military or economic aid.

While women's rights were functionally highlighted through Dr. Stewart's participation in the English-language mass, they were verbally underscored that day in the Spanish-language version of the bulletin, which was written by one of the parish priests. While providing a reminder of the Christian duty to rebel against prevailing customs ("the customs and attitudes of the culture in which we live") and to follow the example of Jesus, the priest urged an end to domination and exploitation in various forms:

Being a follower of Christ demands that we often have to act against the customs and attitudes of the culture in which we live. ...pride, aggression... domination and exploitation...the egotistical quest of one's own interests.

...Jesus always treated every person with the respect merited by human beings, created in the image of God and adopted as his own daughters and sons, without

²³⁹ St. Pius V bulletin of March 8, 2009, section written by Dolores Tapia. Tapia was a college educated, experienced professional who did not learn leadership skills solely from St. Pius. She was in daily contact with women in St. Pius programs and was aware of the struggles faced in their private, public, and workplace lives.

²⁴⁰ Her byline often included the URL: <http://www.sundaybibletalk.com>

regard to their race, sex, or social status. Jesus always showed a preferential love for the people who were poor, cast off, and marginalized by society. ...and [to end] discrimination against women, including public sinners. In his treatment of women, Jesus showed his opposition to the machismo that was so common and ingrained in the culture of his time.

Since then 20 centuries have passed, and still machismo continues to flow strongly among us. It is absurd that in democratic and Christian countries, and even in Christian churches, the idea persists that the man is superior to the woman, and that the woman should submit herself to the domination of the man.²⁴¹

In this context, Church leaders have been calling some traditional Latin American values sinful and have named as their goal the transformation of such conditions. Fathers Dahm and Curran demanded a broader vision and responsibility that rested on male shoulders: “Machismo is a form of exploitation and slavery” that caused “discord and suffering in families, separations, and divorces and, frequently, domestic violence.”²⁴² They explained that their philosophy and theology were intended to address the root causes of social and spiritual ills (chronic and pervasive sins) rather than merely condemning the consequences of those deeper sins. They argued that erroneous and outdated readings of the Bible were used to justify women’s subordination:

...This error is based, in part, on the erroneous and fundamentalist interpretation of the authors of the letters of the Ephesians and of 1 Timothy of the New Testament.

²⁴¹ August 29, 2010 bulletin. My translation from the Spanish: “Ser miembros de la Iglesia de Cristo requiere que vivamos según el espíritu de Cristo y no según el espíritu del mundo. Ser seguidor o seguidora de Cristo exige que muchas veces tengamos que actuar de modo contrario a las costumbres y las actitudes de la cultura en que vivimos. ...El espíritu del mundo aprueba y formenta el orgullo, la agresividad, la competencia, la dominación y explotación, el egoísmo y la búsqueda egoísta del propio interés.// Jesús, en cambio, por su ejemplo y sus palabras, nos enseña la fortaleza para hacer y exigir la justicia, el respeto mutuo, la colaboración y el diálogo, el amor y la paz. Jesús siempre trató a todas las personas con el respeto debido a seres humanos, creados a la imagen de Dios y adoptados como sus hijas e hijos, sin hacer caso de su raza, sexo o estado social. Jesús mostró siempre un amor preferencial por la gente pobre, rechazada y marginada de la sociedad.// En particular, Jesús trató de contrarrestar la discriminación contra la gente pobre, lisiada, leprosa, pecadora, y la discriminación contra las mujeres, incluso a las pecadoras públicas. En su trato con las mujeres, Jesús mostró su oposición al machismo tan común y arraigado en la cultura de su tiempo.// Han pasado ya 20 siglos, y todavía el machismo sigue fuerte y corriente entre nosotros. Es absurdo que en países democráticos y cristianos, y aun en las iglesias cristianas, persiste la idea de que el varón es superior a la mujer, y que la mujer debe someterse a la dominación del varón.//”

²⁴² From the Spanish: “El machismo es una forma de explotación y esclavitud. Es la causa de discordia y sufrimiento en las familias, de separaciones y divorcios y, frecuentemente de la violencia doméstica. En si es una forma de violencia psicológica.// Como seguidores de Cristo, tenemos que romper esta cadena de esclavitud dondequiera que se encuentre, en las familias, en el trabajo, en la política y en la Iglesia...”

For example, “Wives should submit to their husbands as to the Lord. The husband is the head of the wife like Christ is the head of the Church” (Eph. 5:22-23).

The authors of these letters lived in a very chauvinist environment.... Later, the same author writes about slaves: “Slaves, obey your masters... like those who obey Christ” (Eph. 6:5). Nobody today cites this text in order to justify slavery. Similarly, we should not cite the first text to try to justify machismo.

Machismo, like slavery, is a sin against justice. Machismo denies equality...and it fails to recognize the dignity of a woman as the image of God just as a man is.

Machismo causes suffering, above all else in marriages, but also in the world of work and business, in politics and even in the life of the Church.²⁴³

The laity at the parish also exhibited an inclusive view of gender relations. As one woman explained, “at St. Pius some people are divorced...[but] we accept all people, because sometimes after you’ve tried and sought counseling...it is not best for a couple to stay together” in a destructive relationship.²⁴⁴

Leaders in several parishes also reinforced these messages with Bible-study. For example, a “Women in the Bible” workshop approaching these questions from biblically grounded perspectives²⁴⁵ was hosted by St. Gall parish (under Father Gary Graf, a Jesuit) and attended by men and women catechists, ushers, deacons, and members of “social action” committees from various parishes.

²⁴³ August 29, 2010 bulletin. Translated from the Spanish: “Este error se basa, en parte, en la interpretación fundamentalista y errónea de algunas palabras de los autores de las cartas de los Efesios y de 1 Timoteo del Nuevo Testamento. Por ejemplo, ‘Que las esposas se sometan a sus maridos como al Señor. El marido es cabeza de su esposa como Cristo es cabeza de la Iglesia’ (Ef 5:22-23).// Los autores de estas cartas vivían en un ambiente muy machista.... Mas adelante, el mismo autor escribe acerca de los esclavos: “Esclavos, obedecen a sus patronos...como quien obedece a Cristo” (Ef 6:5). Nadie hoy día cita este texto para tratar de justificar la esclavitud. Asimismo, no debemos citar el primer texto para tratar de justificar el machismo.// El machismo, como la esclavitud, es pecado contra la justicia. El machismo niega la igualdad entre el varón y la mujer, y no reconoce la dignidad de la mujer como imagen de Dios igual que el varón.// El machismo causa mucho sufrimiento, sobre todo en los matrimonios, pero también en el mundo del trabajo y negocio, en la política y aún en la vida de la Iglesia.”

²⁴⁴ Interview with Lupita (a pseudonym), Oct. 11, 2009. All of the names of parish volunteers and activists are pseudonyms except for high-profile leaders whose names have appeared often in the news media.

²⁴⁵ The inclusive atmosphere of the workshop encouraged one participant to ask whether women might become Catholic priests in the near future. One of the presenters responded that owing to pressures from the Vatican they “can’t comment...but change is coming”---in the long term, at least---given that the issue has garnered increased interest in a Church that used to refuse to allow any related discussion.

Women in these parishes appeared more likely to see empowerment as a naturalized extension of their experiences, i.e., as an inclusivist rather than as a radical project. Expectations of gender equality in the parish diminished the boundary enforcement they might still encounter at home, or helped them “break through the walls” of abuse (a phrase priests used on occasion). Several parishes still maintained a central project of liberation theology, Christian Base Communities, which have been instrumental in offering women leadership roles and experience (Dahm 2004: 99). The priest shortage has been seen as a blessing in disguise, meanwhile, by forcing parishes to bring women to the fore, including religious sisters, paid staff, and volunteers at all levels (Dolan et al 1989; Hoge 1987; Schoenherr et al 1990; Wallace 1993).

4.9 Women Religious Facing the Vatican

As was the case for male religious and priests, some women’s religious orders were more likely to attract and encourage activism in social justice. For example, the supporters of the 8th Day Center for Justice²⁴⁶ included orders that were more inclined toward social justice, including the Claretians, Sisters of Providence, Sisters of Mercy, and more than three dozen other groups.

It was not coincidental that the Sisters of Mercy had also been highly influential, visible, and vocal in the movement for immigration reform. Because Sisters of Mercy such as Chicago’s Sr. Joanne Persch and Sr. Pat Murphy were at the fore of major immigrant-rights actions, including the long struggle to grant religious volunteers access to immigrants in detention facilities, I would argue that they have had an unparalleled influence on Chicago-area priests and lay leaders. The respect and admiration that they garnered allowed old barriers to be broken, including the traditional condescension that many priests have displayed toward religious sisters and brothers. Elena Segura, the director of the Chicago archdiocese’s office on immigration, noted how remarkable and unusual it was that the Priests for Justice for

²⁴⁶ Accessed July 26, 2010, from <http://www.8thdaycenter.org/aboutus/members.html>

Immigrants (PJI) group collaborated so closely and respectfully with the sisters---indicative of levels of respect and trust that have often been lacking in the larger institution.

These orders felt threatened in 2010 when the Vatican announced a “visitation” (inspection) of women religious. The plan became one of the leading topics of discussion before and after masses and parish meetings. More progressive elements of the Church reacted with anger while conservative Catholics took it as an opportunity to restate their positions. As an example of the latter, in the March 14-27, 2010 issue of the periodical Catholic New World, the regular “Cardinal’s Column” of the Archbishop of Chicago was issued as a defense of the “Apostolic Visitation of Women Religious.” The cardinal initiated his apologetic by recognizing signs of concern and frustration from priests who spoke in solidarity with their religious sisters: “At the most recent meeting of the Presbyterial Council of the archdiocese, several priests raised the question of how they might support women religious, with whom priests here have ministered since the beginnings of the archdiocese” (George 2010b).

Nepstad’s (2004) insights on framing are useful in this instance, because what the bishop rephrased as a “question of...support” was an acknowledgment of the growing reactions of indignation over this targeted Vatican inspection. Rather than further exploring the causes of indignation, however, the cardinal’s frame was a defense of established power structures: “Every rule of religious life makes consecrated women and men accountable, by reason of the vow of obedience.... The pope...has the right of visitation” (George 2010b).

The cardinal couched his arguments for obedience and acquiescence in an ostensibly evenhanded history--a frame that appeals to authority and tradition. He sidestepped political implications, calling this a visit rather than an unusual inspection. He downplayed the sense of spreading outrage. The only anger he expressed was aimed first at religious orders, which “are not private clubs, able to redefine themselves at will,” and then at lawyers:

...what is causing resistance to it? ...suspicion of church authority as such remains a problem for some. Positive resistance to church authority as such remains a problem for some. Positive resistance to church authority has been encouraged, it seems, by one or the other canon lawyer. A lawyer betrays his own calling when he uses the law to destroy the legitimate governance of the church. Finally, there are people in all walks of life who will resist as an affront or an imposition any change that is not self-initiated. Effectively, such an attitude makes conversion impossible.

...Support for women religious this Lent needs to be grounded in ardent prayer for them and for the success of this apostolic visitation (George 2010b).

The archbishop thus cast suspicion on lawyers who “betray [their] calling” and on any who doubt or resist Church authority, framing their views as “a problem for some.” He also staked a claim to conversion as (re)defined from a conservative Catholic worldview, via obedience to the hierarchy. This framing of conversion was at odds with that of many parish leaders, and the nuns responded with personal statements and online notices published by their orders. The frame that they erected painted the conservative inquiry as polarizing and dividing the Church, in contrast to their own social-justice and charitable work, which they highlighted as unifying and strengthening Catholicism (e.g., see Leadership Conference of Women Religious 2012).

Between 2010 and 2012, pins and bumper stickers reading “I Stand With the Sisters” began to appear on many progressive Catholics’ cars, and their struggle gained attention in the national media. Most reporters framed this a spirited underdog story while failing to link it to the larger context of segmentation in the Church, even where concerns for social justice were otherwise highlighted (e.g., Goodstein 2012). The sisters’ resilience was admired by many Catholic laywomen, and not only in progressive circles.

Laywomen saw the sisters’ actions as a kindred set of struggles against a hierarchy dominated by conservative males, and some felt a nationalistic (pro-U.S.) affinity for the sisters in opposition to an Old World system, despite general respect for the papacy. They also continued to frame their interpretations of the Church in a way that may be difficult for non-Catholics to fathom, namely, as a realm of possibility for women rather than an institution of total limitation. This attitude follows from the examples of women’s leadership examined previously in this chapter, at the level of individual parishes and dioceses,

but it also reflects views of larger, structural limitations. In short, many of these women saw arrayed against them more restrictions in the home and in U.S. society than in the Church.

4.10 Gendering Speech, Work, and Silence

Although some immigrants found regular and lucrative work, the vast majority struggled through harsh and uncertain labor conditions. The work lives of one group of parish activists included, among the women, two hospice providers (whose daily tasks included cleaning bedpans, lifting bodies, and binding bedsores), two factory line workers (one of whom was recently laid off during the economic downturn), a baker's (sub)assistant paid below minimum wage, a housewife worried for her children on a gang-claimed street, a grandmother (a retired nurse, now with worries over her own health and the care of her extended family), a graduate student who was recently an office secretary, and a doctor's receptionist---the latter normally an estimable job, except for the racist remarks she had endured recently from one of her elderly white patients. Among the men were a day laborer, construction worker (and a day laborer in the off-season), a unionized landscaper, a business entrepreneur/inventor, a social worker, a custodian (recently a day laborer and part-time painter for the parish, though in Mexico he was a heating/cooling technician), and a factory-line supervisor who postponed his retirement to support his family.

With the exception of networking for new jobs, immigrant parishioners did not often speak of the details of their daily work. This reticence might be strategic in public and in mixed company (out of fear of ICE raids or other reprisals)²⁴⁷ but the general rule of work-related silence also inhered among small groups of close friends, whether owing to temporary escapism, or a desire to avoid burdening others, or modesty and shame. Smith (2006: 97-101) described deep-seated vergüenza (shame) among male Mexican

²⁴⁷ A Catholic news report on a May 2008 vigil at Holy Family Church provided some perspective on the defensive value of silence, for Polish and other immigrants: "Anna Jakubek, an organizer with the Northwest Neighborhood Federation, spoke in Polish and English about the difficulty she had finding undocumented Poles who would share their stories. 'We do not share our fears openly,' she said. 'If we speak openly, we fear we will be exposing ourselves and our families to the unknown' " (Martin 2008b).

workers who had to wear an apron or other servile trappings at work. Moreover, it is possible that women forced to live apart from their children felt a similar vergüenza by failing to achieve societal norms.

At one parish social-action meeting a conversation began, somewhat accidentally, concerning families with undocumented children or parents. “It’s been...five years...away from my kids,” Norma grimaced to stop tears and, succeeding for the moment, turned and moved a few steps toward the south corner of the room. Her husband stepped to her and, hand on her shoulder, leaned in both to comfort her and to hide the hint of a tear that was in his eye. Briefly they both turned their backs to the group. A few seconds passed before they moved back into the circle of chairs. They did not want a spotlight on their problems, feeling little desire to distract others from planning for an upcoming presentation on labor rights.

It was the first time, and one of the only times, that I had seen open acknowledgment of suffering in the group. And yet it was generally known that the people assembled had fairly difficult lives in terms of family separations, workplace struggles, being unemployed at a critical time, and physical ailments. But their stoicism heightened the importance of the parish’s seminars and groups; these were opportunities to meet with priests or deacons and to seek counseling for cohabiting couples, as well as people needing a divorce or separation.²⁴⁸ Confession, usually called “the sacrament of reconciliation,” was also regularly scheduled, and, like couples counseling, it offered a chance to unburden oneself in private.

One of the main rationales for social-justice preaching, immigrant-rights vigils and activism in the parish, and toward creating a related culture in the parish community, was that the Church must connect with the hopes and suffering of its people. In contrast, I observed Spanish-language mass at a nearby parish that

²⁴⁸ Among the evidence for this inclusiveness were (1) a “Lazos de Familia/ Family Bridges” flyer from one activist parish advertising couples counseling in the rectory: “Este programa es para todas las parejas, no importa si estan cansadas o solo estan viviendo juntos” (“This program is for all couples, whether you are married or only living together”); (2) an activist’s comment about being encouraged (by a priest in his parish) to consider divorce in the case of a “hopeless marriage”; and (3) lay activists have stated that “everyone is welcome” and that even married couples may not have been “married in the church.”

was also nearly 100 percent Latino, only to hear the priest twice reference the death of a police officer in California while failing to say anything about Chicago's immigrants, issues with police and gang violence, or other news directly affecting the people before him. He empathized with a distant tragedy while missing the distress before him in his immigrant parishioners' lives. This mass seemed to encapsulate the divide between conservative and progressive Catholics.

4.11 Playing, Praying, and Family Actions

Many of the women and men taking on volunteerism and leadership within immigrant parishes not only wished to serve the community while expanding their spiritual lives but also wished, in part, to provide their families with better access to services, including counseling, youth groups, after-school programs, the chance to apply for future parish-based (staff) work, and the greater likelihood of valuable networking contacts that could lead to jobs elsewhere or, at least, letters of recommendation from other parish leaders. Families stressed by the immigration system, as in cases where citizen children had undocumented parents or only some of the children held papers, already saw their unions as vulnerable. Their precarious existence was attested by the Chicago families in this study along with research on families in New York City (Yoshikawa 2011). Families' fears were justifiable: each year over 100,000 children were apprehended by U.S. immigration authorities, and tens of thousands were deported to Mexico (Uehling 2008); moreover, a sizable percentage of adults deported were mothers and fathers leaving family behind.

Many feared that children who took on more public roles in immigrant-rights activism would heighten their already precarious legal situations, but bilingual children in many families already served in semi-public, exposed capacities as interpreters for parents and in-laws forced to talk with local bureaucrats or police. For some, it seemed a small and relatively safe move to place a child in front of a microphone in the Loop or at a Church-sponsored rally.

Family was often placed in the frame of conservative Protestants and Catholics, particularly those active in pro-life campaigns, yet it was central to the frames of progressive and radical Catholics as well. The many and varied transnational configurations that families were forced into by immigration laws---with one or another member deported or forced to remain apart owing to the dangers of crossing---have necessitated a reconfiguring of the bonds of love (Hirsch 2003), and it is possible that these stresses might cause Latinos to be more willing to accept more inclusive definitions of family as well as alternative frames of gender and sexuality, beyond the tolerance that has been advocated in recent years by U.S. bishops (who have yet opposed gay marriage).²⁴⁹ Although many members of LGBT communities have moved or stayed away from the Catholic Church, some continued to attend despite misgivings²⁵⁰---including a handful of parishioners with whom I have volunteered at more inclusive immigrant parishes.

The word family came into frequent use among the members of parish groups that developed networks of long-term relationships through shared histories, goals, and actions. (Their shared spirituality was also a factor though it was backgrounded, except during mass and group prayers.) These parish “family” groups pushed the traditional concept of the Latino extended-family beyond the non-sanguineal aunts and uncles (family friends) who attended each others’ weddings, quinceañeras, baptisms, and compadrazgo (godparenting).

The expanded sizes of such “parish families” were not envisioned as convenient networks of social or professional links but as growing friendships. They were reinforced by participation in job-seeking networks; by encounters in the street (by chance or design); by public processions, marches, and festivals; and by innumerable social functions from the pequeña convivencia (“little get-together”) that might entail a few moments for dinner or drinks, or the larger convivencia in the form of a barbecue in a city park or a

²⁴⁹ These appeared in Cardinal George’s monthly columns in Católico and Catholic New World.

²⁵⁰ A recommended 33-minute Chicago-area documentary broaching LGBT acceptance is Tal Como Somos: The Latino GBT Community (2007; Juneteenth Productions and Films Media Group). One scene follows a gay Latino to prayers at his parish church---a visit with a conspicuous video camera and crew that could not have been arranged easily without the approval of the pastor of that (unidentified) parish.

party incorporating hours of drinking, eating, joking, and dancing---in a church basement, a bungalow near Midway Airport, or an upstairs apartment off Ashland Avenue.

4.12 Guadalupe and Marianismo

Marian devotions were among the most visible links between religion and female gender, whether expressed as the Virgin of Guadalupe or as other Marian apparitions such as “la Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre in Cuba, la Virgen de Montserrat or la Virgen del Carmen in Puerto Rico” (Badillo 2006: xv), as the apparition at Lourdes, France, in 1858, or as the apparition of 1917 at Fátima, Portugal. Saint Mary affirmed an atmosphere of tenderness, love, and hope: “For Mexicans, she reveals the feminine face of God” as well as an embrace of their mestizo heritage (Dahm 2004: 287).

During novena (nine-day) celebrations for Guadalupe every December, southwest-side parishes displayed an abundance of streamers and other decorations. Such was the case at St. Pius V and at the namesake Our Lady of Tepeyac in Little Village (La Villita), the neighborhood adjacent to Pilsen. In parishes with more of an immigrant mix (Mexican along with Colombian, Dominican, Filipino, Haitian, and miscellaneous African and South American) Guadalupan groups existed but were less able to install such grandiose trappings in December, out of competition for space with other immigrant groups. During a press conference at St. Pius V, the pastor of a north-side parish joked, “My [non-Mexican] parishioners would string me up if I allowed this kind of decoration...to take over the church.”

At St. Pius V as in several other immigrant parishes, a favorite song marked the novena. The precise lyrics varied but all celebrated Mexicans as a cultural and ethno-racial group; the Spanish (from a novena at St. Pius) is given below, followed by my translation:

Desde el cielo una hermosa mañana (2x)
la Guadalupana, la Guadalupana, la Guadalupana, bajo al Tepeyac.
Suplicante juntaba sus manos (2x)
y eran Mexicanos, (3x)
su porte y su faz.

Su llegada llenó de alegría (2x)
de luz y armonía, (3x)
todo el Anahuac

Junto al monte pasaba Juan Diego (3x)
y acercóse luego, y acercóse luego, y acercóse luego al oír cantar.

“Juan Dieguito” la Virgen le dijo oír cantar.
“Juan Dieguito” la Virgen le dijo
este cerro elijo, este cerro elijo, este cerro elijo, para hacer mi altar.

Y en la tilma entre rosas pintadas (2x)
su imagen amada, su imagen amada, su imagen amada se dignó dejar.

Desde entonces para el mexicano (2x)
ser guadalupano (3x)
es algo esencial (2x).²⁵¹

(My nearly word-for-word translation of the song follows.)

From the heavens one beautiful morning (2x)
the woman of Guadalupe, of Guadalupe, of Guadalupe came down to Tepeyac.
Hands were held together in prayer (2x)
and they were Mexicans, (3x)
in visage and stature.

Her arrival filled with joy (2x)
with light and harmony, (3x)
all [the area of] Anahuac

Near the hill walked Juan Diego (3x)
and then he approached, he approached, he approached when he heard singing.

“Dear Juan Diego” the Virgin said, hearing singing.
“Dear Juan Diego” the Virgin said
I choose this hill, I choose this hill, I choose this hill, for the building of my altar.

And on the cloak among roses painted (2x)
her beloved image, her beloved image, her beloved image she graced upon it.

Since that time for the Mexican (2x)
being [a person] of Guadalupe (3x)
is something essential (2x).

²⁵¹ Lyrics for song #7, St. Pius V music sheet, Oct. 11, 2009. The lyrics of Nov. 9, 2008, were nearly identical.

These lyrics were not attributed to any composer, but a similar version has been attributed to the Jesuit priest Saturnino Junquera (Flores y Escalante and Dueñas 2004: 144-145).

For the parishioners in the church hall or sanctuary, the song was a delight. The repetition of lines and phrases, usually in triads (e.g., “y eran mexicanos, y eran mexicanos, y eran mexicanos su porte y su faz”) drove the tempo in a manner more energizing than most hymns heard in Catholic churches but at a level of enthusiasm that was often heard in Spanish-language masses. The line “y eran mexicanos” (“And they were Mexicans”) aroused a crescendo of sound and energy from the crowd. The song was a celebration of God, the Church as an inclusive and evolving body---where popular faith could alter the direction of the larger Roman institution---and the most affirming aspects of Mexican personal and group identity. As the last stanza underscored, “Since that time for the Mexican/ Being [a person] of Guadalupe is something essential,” or “Being Guadalupano is something essential.”

The apparition story bolstered faith in miracles, including a resurrection of Mexico’s ancient power (Wolf 1965: 229). Mary thus awakened political activism and a shared sense of identity, for women in particular (Rodríguez 1999). As a religious and national “Mexican master symbol,” she provided a “cultural idiom of behavior and ideal representations” only 10 years after the conquest (Wolf 1965: 227). The theologian and priest Virgilio (Virgil) Elizondo called her “the foundation of Mexican identity and Mexican Catholicism” in part because Juan Diego, the primary witness to her apparition on Tepeyac hill, “is the prototype of the new human being of the Americas” (2008: xi-10). Novenas with dancing children, music, bright decorations, and dramatizations of various types were also attempts to define Guadalupe, to express her as Catholic truth (Elizondo 2008: 75) which “exists in the relational, the interconnected, the beautiful, and the melodic” (Elizondo 2008: 116; see also Flores y Escalante 2004: 53; Stevens 1994; and León 2004: 59-90).

The Virgin of Guadalupe has been called La Morena (the dark-skinned one) or La Morenita (the beloved [“little”] dark-skinned one) in reference to her appearance to the mestizos and indigenous populations of Mexico. And yet, many of the paintings and images of La Morenita have taken on light-skinned hues, presumably to serve the interests of the Eurocentric upper classes. Although the apparition’s validity was later accepted by the Church hierarchy, the use of her icon as a nationalistic symbol still generates unease among some non-Latinos.²⁵² Her tilma-and-roses image has been used by rebels fighting for independence from Spain in the 1800s, by Emiliano Zapata’s troops in 1910 (Wolf 1965: 226), by the Cristeros in the 1920s, by César Chavez during labor-rights marches and boycotts (Lloyd-Moffett 2008), and by immigrant-rights mobilizers in 2006-2015, to name just a few examples. Even Mexican immigrants who left the Catholic Church tended to maintain Guadalupan devotions; in many Latino Protestant churches images of Guadalupe²⁵³ were displayed despite the protests of Anglophone Protestants.

4.13 The New Versus the Traditional Guadalupe

Many parishes relied on a volunteer group of devotees called Guadalupanos²⁵⁴ to organize these festivities, usually in a traditional manner. But in December 2005, as part of St. Pius’s Guadalupe novena, teenagers were invited by an associate pastor to help build a platform at the edge of the altar, which was

²⁵² Cannell (2006: 10) attributed much of the academic bias against Marian devotions to Marina Warner’s (1976) claim that “women in Catholic countries...were oppressed through the church’s romance with the figure of Mary” as well as its emphasis on female subservience to patriarchal authority; however, it is clear that women’s experience of Mary is historically and regionally variable (Walker-Bynum 1987); that the appeal of Mary for some may lie in a differently constructed notion of her mediatory powers (Bloch 1994); and that women may see Mary as modeled on their experiences of maternal love and grief (Cannell 1991, 1999).

²⁵³ I have noted this in a Lutheran church in Lake County---where Anglophone congregants had frequently complained to their pastor about the “Catholic statues” that the Spanish-speaking Lutherans used in their services---and in Methodist churches in Chicago. When the Chicago Tribune Magazine published a cover article (August 5, 2007) on Elvira Arellano’s year-long sanctuary (as “perhaps the most famous undocumented immigrant in America”) at Adalberto United Methodist Church in Chicago, the cover photograph showed her in a black T-shirt (“Who Would Jesus Deport?”) and a large, painted wooden crucifix on the wall behind her.

²⁵⁴ A Guadalupano (Guadalupan, or Guadalupe) group could become a vibrant social and money-raising force, with networking efforts and creative endeavors extending to other parish groups.

painted gray and brown and decorated like the U.S.-Mexico border deserts, with xerophyte plants and old, castoff shoes, shirts, and a 2-liter Coca Cola bottle (used as a water bottle in the desert). One of the teenage girls dressed in flowing robes as the Virgin and climbed onto the makeshift platform to link the story of Guadalupe with immigrant stories.

Afterward, parishioners widely acclaimed these decorations and dramatizations, partly because of the astounding similarity of the teenage girl's costume to popular images of the Virgin (see Elizondo 2008 [1997]). Reaction became more mixed a day later, however, when these same youth responded to another request from the priest to act out "modern dramas" as "a continuation of the story of the Virgin" by dealing with examples of domestic violence, gang recruitment, drug abuse, and defiance of parental authority---all dramatized at the central altar during mass. The real-life dramas in the novenas had "at-risk" teens as leads: a girl yelling at her father; another breaking curfew; hints of further rebellion and risky life choices. The teens felt that the dramas registered as authentic, empowering them and connecting them to the spiritual life of their parish.

The dramas by the teens seemed well received with applause and congratulations to the actors, yet tensions were displayed afterward. One elderly woman approached me afterward, pulled on my arm, and with a stern tone asked me to deliver "a message for Padre Brendan or Padre Carlos." She had "a very serious complaint"; the drama was "not proper, not appropriate...for a novena." They were "not truly Catholic," she added with a finality, as if citing an indisputable fact. The priest, she insisted, "should stop allowing them."

Less than an hour later I relayed the message to Father Brendan Curran, who had heard from this woman already in the recent past. He noted, in contrast, that other notable women in the parish appreciated the dramas, including the domestic violence counselors, catechists, and members of the Guadalupano

committee. A ritualized space thus became the center of a shift in discourse combined with barely disguised social and political subject matter.

The argument between the elderly woman's traditional preference and the new dramatic forms was not merely a case of shifted frames of reference---she, seeing on the temple as a holy, restful site of spiritual calm, and others, seeing the temple as this and also a place of progressive confrontation, a restive center of religious power where the kingdom of God was not only promised to the world but was brought into action. At stake for these two formidable agents of parish life was a psychological terrain that was virtually identical, overlain with symbolic memory. In both of our Chicago dramas, the quasi-numinous (teen as Maria) and the quasi-obscene (teen as teen), anxieties about the physical and spiritual world(s) were at play.

4.14 Gender Regimes in Machismo and Marianismo

In a theory of gender regimes Connell (1987: 120) argued that ideologies worked within institutions to construct various kinds of femininity and masculinity, including hegemonic masculinity and subordinate, "emphasized femininity." In the most common forms of Latino institutions---including family, church, school, and various community configurations---these constructions played out as machismo, a complex of cultural roles and expectations emphasizing male leadership, and marianismo, a self-denying femininity deriving from Marian ideals of motherhood (De Genova 2005: 41; De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003: 128-130).

Machismo was often called a sin (e.g., Dahm 2004: 52-53), yet many Latinos valued positive aspects of this gender complex, namely the associations with family: the strong man or father as provider and protector and the concomitant sexual attraction afforded this identity. The anthropologist Lynn Stephen (2000: 35, 274-283) related marianismo to Catholic "motherist" imagery and repression as "an idealized woman who is an obedient, self-sacrificing mother." However, not all Catholic imaginings of the Virgin

Mary reinforced marianismo as a powerless regime. Activists such as the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina have shown that Marian imagery could be used to political advantage. As seen through the frame of liberation theology, Mary inspired action. Elina Vuola (2009: 225-229) thus warned against essentialist interpretations:

[P]roblematic uses of the marianismo term...never explain how women's idealization (as mothers), their subordination and supposed desexualization follow from the religious veneration of the Virgin Mary.

The Mary of liberation theology might suffer but she also inspired struggle. The many local devotions and iterations of the Marian cult, as supported by both the Church and popular piety, suggested a complexity and a symbolic valence not explained by a penchant for suffering. Progressive Catholics framed their views on women's rights and liberation theology as traditional and grounded in biblical evidence, analogous to the ways conservative Catholics framed their own views as traditional and grounded. Though these more inclusive Catholics believed they were working "toward the Kingdom of God" they did so by subverting what conservatives regarded traditional norms of gender, religion, and politics.

This chapter has described how women have contributed to Latino activism through the Church, and sometimes in opposition to it. It has also described ways in which segments of the U.S. Church have become more intertwined with discourses and behaviors focusing on Latin American traditions---i.e., how Latin American traditions have influenced and transformed activism and Church practice, and also how Church teaching has sought to transform some Latin American traditions, notably machismo. In parishes led by more progressive pastors, especially St. Pius V, machismo has been consistently labeled a sin as it was regarded a root cause of various forms of oppression; to provide biblical foundations for this gendered aspect of their social-justice framework, progressive Catholics have drawn on exegesis to argue that Jesus's mission in the world included women's empowerment.

The chapter has examined gendered approaches to activism and leadership formation within parishes that have become centers for immigration reform. It has discussed how women in the Catholic Church occupy key positions as staff members and as unpaid volunteers who have organized their fellow community members to join street mobilizations and participate in workshops, vigils, and actions of nonviolent resistance. No longer merely content to serve the Church behind the scenes, these movement activists have been simultaneously parish and diocesan leaders with increasingly public stakes in the discourses of parish life. Activist priests have encouraged the recruitment and growth of these leaders, and they, in turn, have begun to empower the larger community.

Not everyone has shown support for these efforts. Resistance has appeared in various guises, even in an activist parish, but when resistance was encountered it could be overcome by workshop leaders, ministers, and priests in the light of prophetic action. As Elizabeth-Anne Stewart wrote in the English-language bulletin of St. Pius V parish on July 5, 2009:

Prophets are seldom popular. They utter truths which others cannot face and expose lies, hypocrisy and manipulative distortions. Passionate with conviction, they will not be silenced, in spite of threats or punishment. ...Such is the lot of the prophet---and such is the baptismal calling of all Christians, whether we live up to it or not!

Leadership training was not offered in activist parishes merely as a vehicle for personal success, such as learning how to be more assertive in the workplace. Nor was it meant to focus only on physical world at the expense of the spiritual. And it was not intended to foster leaders whose efforts begin and end on their own blocks or with their own alderman. The leadership training emphasized in activist parishes was a pathway for functional citizenship---i.e., social development that incorporated community-building and the Church's concerns for social justice, including actions in the movement for immigration reform. Additionally, it was seen as a pathway for personal, psychological, and spiritual growth, because self-esteem, along with spiritual and religious themes, were sprinkled into seminars and workshops.

New leaders were intended to influence democratic processes and thereby strengthen the public realm which, as Richard L. Wood has specified, “includes far more than government. Indeed, the most crucial dynamics for long-term political change arguably do not lie within government at all, but in the formation of political will and aggregation of interests among both the general citizenry and leaders of nongovernmental institutions in society” (2002: 126). If public dialogue and societal consensus-building were viewed as the means toward a stronger democracy, we might recognize that “marginalized, oppressed, or subaltern groups face an uphill struggle if they wish to redeem their theoretically guaranteed right to participate. Thus, leaders and organizers [speak] of having to ‘fight to get any kind of place at the table where those decisions are made, to get our voices heard in that conversation,’” and thus, “alongside the dialogical model of the public realm we must place a conflictive model,” in recognition that these two models operated in tandem, not in theoretical opposition but as complementary dimensions within “a healthy democracy” (2002: 127).

5. CONCLUSION

[W]hatever God may or may not be---living, dead, or merely ailing---religion is a social institution, worship a social activity, and faith a social force. (Geertz 1968: 19)

This study has contributed to the anthropology of social movements and the anthropology of religion by synthesizing parish-based ethnography with participant observation in the immigrant rights movement, beginning in Chicago's St. Pius V parish in 2005, followed by primary fieldwork from 2006 to 2011, and follow-up interviews and analysis through 2015. The ethnographic data have revealed networks of connections among parishes and among Catholic and non-Catholic organizers as well, in support of the movement for immigration reform. This thesis has developed around a series of mutually reinforcing questions, beginning in chapter two with: "What happens when novel types of activism emerge within an institution that in many ways is deeply conservative?" and "What types of discourses arise that are both progressive and Catholic?" Chapter three examined the history and influence of the Priests for Justice for Immigrants (PJI) with an analysis centering on another pair of questions: "How does clerical activism on behalf of immigrants transform practices in the Catholic Church?" and "How do progressive Catholics make claims to authenticity in the face of conservative resistance?" The fourth chapter discussed ways in which women have contributed to Latino activism within the Church, both in support of and in opposition to the dictates of the Vatican-led hierarchy.

The theoretical underpinnings for these research questions derive from Roger Lancaster's (1988, 1992) work on popular piety, gender regimes, and liberation theology in revolutionary Nicaragua; from Sharon Nepstad's (2004) cultural-agency approach to movement frames in the Sanctuary Movement, or Central American Solidarity Movement of the 1980s and 1990s; and from Duncan Earle and Jeanne Simonelli's (2005) ethnographic analyses of the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas, which involved Catholic participants with links to liberation theology. Also influential in the design and analysis of this project have been

Marc Edelman's (1999, 2009) theorizations of Central American and transnational social movements; the writings of Gustavo Gutierrez on liberation theology; and the mestizo theology of Virgilio Elizondo; the depth and scope of the ethnographic analysis provided in the present work is unique, nonetheless, in its focus on the U.S. Catholic Church in local, parish-based groups articulating with and helping to shape a national social movement.

5.1 Activism within the Institution

With local parish activists as its ethnographic focus, the second chapter examines the ways novel types of activism have emerged recently within the Catholic Church. In this line of inquiry the term novel is utilized for six related reasons: (1) many of these actions were new to the activists themselves (though not necessarily new to history)--i.e., the laity had not, for the most part, previously participated in such modes of protest; (2) combinations of music, symbols, and actions with the material of previous movements, and of Catholic symbolism, might yield innovative forms (e.g., the Lenten cell-phone campaign's being described as fulfilling "part of the traditional practice of almsgiving on behalf of the poor during this holy season"); (3) some actions were novel in their sheer size or reach (e.g., the largest peaceful marches in Chicago history in 2006); (4) new forms or broader availability and reliability of electronic communications (cell, text, IM, websites, etc.); (5) the ethno-racial makeup was novel, in that most of the PJI were "white and Anglo" yet they were leading predominantly Latino lay activists (an unusual situation given the in-group memberships that prevail in most iterations of identity politics, wherein African Americans lead African American groups, Latinos lead Latino groups, etc.); and/or (6) levels of ecumenical inclusivity were novel in the experiences of many congregants, including the welcoming of atheists and agnostics.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁵ Gender dynamics are not listed as novel forms, although gender equality and barriers to female clergy are often discussed by the PJI. Many Catholic ministers (of communion, catechism, etc.) are women, and many nuns are among the most outspoken of activists, but this is not news for the U.S. Church.

As parish-based activists have developed and encouraged such novel approaches they have sought inspiration from both inside and outside of the Church; they have thus planted the seeds for additionally creative types of protest, with participation among Catholic immigrants and activists as well as ecumenical connections with other groups. While contributing to this field of innovative protest, the PJI have helped plan and organize mobilizations, workshops, letter- and postcard-writing campaigns, vigils, and civil disobedience. They have also created and promoted parish-linked resources for the undocumented such as the Pastoral Migratoria (Immigrant-to-Immigrant Ministry) and the St. Toribio Romo Migrant Center, both of which required years of planning, lobbying, and organizing by PJI leaders.

One of the findings of this research is that progressive priests aspire to and actively promote social justice at many scales: within their parishes, within the larger Church, and within U.S. society. They have worked toward these long-term goals by encouraging democratic practices among their laity, counseling and developing their self-confidence, promoting communications with elected officials, and linking Christian principles with practice. PJI parishes have engaged in efforts to encourage reform within the Church through greater transparency, through strengthening and broadening participation in parish governance, and by empowering women and undocumented laity as parish and civic leaders. Among these empowered groups are “Peace and Justice” organizations at parishes such as Our Lady of Lourdes, and “Unión, Fuerza, y Acción (UFA)” and “Social Action” groups at parishes such as St. Pius V. Many of these groups have grown and networked with one another and their respective parish councils as members active in one area are additionally attracted to another. In promoting greater participation in their parish councils, the PJI have encouraged local democratic practices by expanding membership beyond the matriarchs and patriarchs who were longstanding monetary contributors and volunteers. This is not to suggest that parishioners with monetary resources hold no sway in activist parishes, only that they must contend with a broader range of outspoken fellow laity.

These empowered laity sometimes support priests' ideas and sometimes refuse them or promote innovations of their own. Since the PJI aspire to be transformational leaders who rely on coaching and encouragement to motivate constituents, pushback of this sort is seen as necessary for fortifying participation, transparency, self-empowerment, and an individual's sense of responsibility for the community. These are not unique instances of quasi-democratized parish governance, but the PJI regard them as models of open participation which conservative priests might feel uncomfortable attempting.

Another of the principal findings arising from this work is the confirmation of a long-accepted insight: that innovation in one area encourages divergent, creative thinking and novel approaches in related areas. The fueling of divergent thinking in one aspect of a social movement breeds further divergence from old norms, i.e., further innovation. This is particularly the case at a handful of PJI-led parishes which have become known as vibrant movement centers for immigrant rights, as well as centers for social justice more generally. Based on the ethnographic research in PJI parishes it is my contention, moreover, that such movement centers grow and evolve when they are in a liminal position between stress and stability--in this case, between the instability of the undocumented immigrant, on the one hand, and, on the other, the stability represented by a community center/parish church's standing in the community, its institutional memory, and its pool of professional talent (priests and lay ministers who are embodiments of spiritual and organizational leadership), as well as its material and spatial resources (ranging from offices and meeting rooms to food pantries and soup kitchens).

Among the secondary insights linked with these findings is, nonetheless, the realization that under most configurations the vast majority of parishioners will not participate directly in these groups; limited participation is to be expected. This is the case even at the most dynamic of PJI parishes; instead, against the backdrop of thousands of parishioners, a small but highly visible network of energized and motivated laity and staff (with perhaps five to fifteen members) are responsible for most of the religious community's activist reputation, alongside their pastor and auxiliary ministers. Thus, the majority of

parishioners at St. Pius V and Our Lady of Lourdes parishes who attend mass do not participate in most parish groups or community-building activities, apart from those directly involving their children or money-raising events such as Kermes (street carnivals). Some parishioners will even voice disapproval at the activities of particular groups (e.g., anti-war or social action groups), even under PJI leadership. Although a complete investigation into this question was beyond the scope of this project, future research might investigate why some segments of parishioners wishing to participate actively either could not or would not, owing perhaps to life circumstances (e.g., undocumented workers fearing reprisals), and including inquiry into the motivations of parishioners who would donate significant sums to help pay for others' bus caravans to Washington while not joining the caravan themselves. Such future research could also investigate whether those who appeared to care little for direct social justice actions within PJI parishes subscribed, perhaps, to a more conservative form of Catholicism, or at least a more apolitical form while arguing that these were distractions from traditional rites. Additional research could help determine why parishioners join a PJI parish rather than a conservative one, why some leave, and what confluence of factors drive a small number to become social movers and innovators in parish groups.

Although the furtherance of democratic participation and community-building are major concerns of the PJI and lay leaders alike, progressive Catholics also hold the primary reason for a parish's existence is to serve as a space for the furtherance of the faith. And yet, in the worldview of progressive Catholics, aspects of community (being bound together by action, communication, and shared experiences, as well as shared spaces) and faith (being bound by rites, spiritually focused communication, and a sense of shared internal/cognitive experiences) are best expressed in tandem, and ultimately, only legitimately or authentically expressed when they are strongly linked--a praxis of action and belief that is at the center of PJI parishes. Yet some observers mistakenly interpret the PJI's concern for justice as political activity that exists in isolation from religion; thus, a comprehensive understanding of their parish actions requires an examination of the ways in which these priests and laity view progressivism as compatible if not vital to their understanding of an authentic Catholicism.

5.2 Progressive Catholicism

What types of discourses arise that are both progressive and Catholic? Among the key discourses of progressive Catholicism arising in this research are the following: movement frames defined mainly by concerns for social justice; ethno-racial inclusivity; ecumenical inclusivity (including contact with atheists and others “wishing to do good in the world”); the reinforcement of democratic processes and community building (the “long-term view of the PJI”); a hopeful vision of the “Kingdom of God” on Earth (via greater social justice and environmental care rather than an apocalyptic, destructive vision of the future); visions of the American Dream (linked with community rather than individualist objectives); and a reformist version of liberation (U.S. liberation theology) which embraces social action alongside spiritual contemplation with the aim of reforming society through nonviolent means.

With the particular U.S., reformist vision of liberation theology as a touchstone, another finding of this research is that liberation theology has been utilized by progressive Catholic leaders as a guiding set of principles despite the fact that many priests and lay leaders have eschewed mention of the term since the 1980s, preferring instead to speak of “social justice” and “Catholic Social Thought,” either through a belief that the latter are more easily understood by their parishioners or because (as I contend) the Vatican and the largely conservative hierarchy of the Church in the United States worked to limit the discussion of liberation theology---prior, that is, to Pope Francis’s reversal of the Vatican stances on liberation theology after 2013.²⁵⁶ Through these discourses and their concomitant parish-based actions, local leaders have helped construct a movement framework based upon what they have perceived as solid, progressive Catholic foundations, rather than feeling forced to react defensively to the frameworks established by conservative Catholics and anti-immigration activists.

²⁵⁶ As is discussed in further detail below and in the preceding chapters, the aspects of liberation theology they embrace are reformist rather than revolutionary in character, aimed at social justice within the existing capitalist system. Thus I label this reformist vision “U.S. liberation theology”; it should be noted, however, that this is distinct from radical Protestant visions often labeled “Black liberation theology.”

The section of the catechism called Catholic Social Doctrine, or the Social Gospel, has been called one of the “best-kept secrets” of the Church because of the lack of attention paid to it in conservative parishes and in parts of the conservative hierarchy.²⁵⁷ For the progressive Catholics occupying these pages, however, the Social Gospel is seen as being at the heart of their faith, whether it is more often termed social justice or an aspect of liberation theology. There are, of course, conservative Catholics who embrace some components of the Social Gospel, but in their framings of the gospel, good works (and a social aspect of spirituality) could be said to be accomplished through acts of charity. While progressive Catholics embrace and practice charity as well, they hold that they are driven beyond charity to approach root causes of inequity and suffering. Whether expressed as a theology of liberation, as social justice, or as an aspect of the Gospel, social action is central to the spiritual life of Catholic movement activists, including the PJI. Social components of spirituality are thus evoked by PJI members in mass, marches, classrooms, and vigils. These are, in turn, leveraged to reinforce the movement for immigrant rights, but when doing so the PJI and parish lay activists regard them as authentic expressions of Christianity, not a political veneer. An observer might be tempted to categorize these politico-religious rites and lifeways as syncretic forms of Catholicism, yet this would not be an accurate dispensation without also categorizing conservative Catholic practices as syncretic in their particular combinations of political or religious practices.

A prime example of this progressive Catholic framing was the “Procession for Arizona” in 2010, an event organized in response to Arizona’s anti-immigrant “SB 1070” legislation but with a private audience in mind. While the procession, and the mass accompanying it, implied a progressive political agenda in line with the movement for immigration reform, the event was intended as internal, i.e., for Catholic

²⁵⁷ It can be argued, moreover, that such doctrine should be seen as a subset of Catholic Social Thought, by which I mean a broader category accounting for a variety of theologians who self-identify as Catholic, and for aspects of popular piety that are not officially sanctioned.

immigrants and those active in the immigrant-rights movement, and not as a media-harnessing event. The vigil thus claimed a symbolic space at the heart of the social movement---similar to the way parish “retreats” become spiritually and socially rejuvenating departures from the norm. The procession featured several outdoor “stations” at which Catholic Social Doctrine and liberation theology were intermixed with reflections on slavery in ancient Egypt, Israel, and Babylon, as well as imagery and testimonials from the U.S.-Mexico desert today. The explicit foundations in biblical passages and in recent migration stories were intended to register as both intimate and deeply spiritual, illustrating the praxis---action and reflection---of those bound up in a progressive Catholic version of Wallace’s (1956a) mazeway.

In terms of biblical foundations for social activism, a secondary finding of this research is that progressive Catholics look to Old Testament prophets as well as modern martyrs for inspiration and models for challenging secular and Church-based power structures. Within the core PJI parishes, there is a marked focus on the Old Testament’s “prophetic voices and actions” in terms of resisting injustice, ingrained interests, and the established power structures within the Catholic Church. The oppression of immigrants, especially undocumented immigrants, are repeatedly linked in these progressive Catholic discourses with biblical invocations to “welcome the stranger,” act the part of the Samaritan, and provide aid to the metaphorical or literal “widow and orphan.” Scriptural reflections on slavery, ostracism, and injustice---as well as desert imagery itself---become religious touchstones for immigrants and immigrant rights. Prophetic voices of this sort emerge frequently in homilies, bulletins, prayers, and office communications; they are also evoked in posters of Archbishop Romero, in paintings and weavings depicting tragedies in developing countries, and in portraits of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr, of Pope John XXIII (the generator of Vatican II), or of Pope Francis.

Liberation theology has appeared to be key to meaning-making in these contexts, though in contrast to the liberation theologians associated with extremism in Latin America (an association that Gustavo Gutierrez has refuted), the theology expressed within the U.S. is associated with social and political reform rather

than revolution. The ethnographic data in this project indicate that core PJI leaders have promoted social-justice activism in order to push state and federal governments in the direction of more progressive reforms. The PJI and lay activists who are the subjects of this study have often spoken of their tendency to support organized labor (unions) and laws calling for higher wages, as well as government programs ensuring workers' safety, better schools and taxation systems supporting those schools, a graduated income tax (with the wealthy paying more of a share), the elimination of tax loopholes for large corporations, the prosecution of companies violating environmental laws, and limits to the offshoring of jobs in the manufacturing sector. Health-care reform has also been desired in the form of additional clinics for the poor as well as a national single-payer system despite well publicized opposition from conservative Catholics. Stronger unemployment insurance and workers' compensation programs have been noted as well. And although many of them have also volunteered with charities (e.g., the soup kitchen), they have not favored the notion of using faith-based charities as a substitute for what they regarded the state's historic responsibilities in this regard.

The chief contribution to new anthropological knowledge in chapter two centers on liberation theology. In the 1970s liberation theology crossed over from Latin America to the United States though it was limited to select parishes led by radical or progressive clerics, but it was largely marginalized in the 1980s during the papacy of John Paul II. As Lancaster (1988) has argued, liberation theology nonetheless persisted in Latin America, particularly in revolutionary Nicaragua, where his ethnographical analysis focused on the so-called "Popular Church" operating in binary opposition to the formal Catholic Church, whose Nicaraguan hierarchy appeared to oppose the revolutionary regime.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁸ I argue in my introductory chapter that although Lancaster's thesis provides useful theoretical underpinnings for my work, particularly in his linkages between the revolutionary government and religious belief, Lancaster did not approach liberation theology with the present work's level of ethnographic detail, as he failed to explain precisely what the "Popular Church" was, who attended it, how masses were officiated, and where. His explanation of the reason for its existence (the why) focused on what the Popular Church wasn't, i.e., the formal Catholic Church. Moreover, rather than turn his lens primarily to priests and Catholic activists, he focused on a few key informants' families, most of whom were Protestant evangelicals, not Catholics.

The ethnographic evidence gathered in this project demonstrates that a version of liberation theology has not only survived in the U.S. context but has thrived, albeit while being veiled under other names such as social justice. I am thus not claiming that this theology has only recently arrived. One of the findings emerging from this project is the recognition that liberation theology has become a firm component of the U.S. religious landscape.²⁵⁹ Liberation theology thrives among some segments of the U.S. Catholic Church because it has found expression as a reformist, not revolutionary, theology. Thus, U.S. liberation theology thrives in its acceptance of many aspects of the current capitalist system, within which, nonetheless, its proponents believe in the need for a reinforced social safety net and stronger support for marginalized and oppressed populations, as well as political and economic reforms that, they believe, might prevent democracy from slipping into oligarchy. The revolutionary roots of liberation theology that still find purchase in parts of Latin America (e.g., in Chiapas) have not, as of the present, thrived in North America because of the distinctive U.S. cultural context, i.e., a setting in which democracy still appears in the eyes of progressive Catholics to be within the reach and influence of average citizens, unlike the more stratified sociopolitical systems of Latin America. In a manner analogous to the way U.S. Catholicism forms a component of mainstream U.S. culture, in both its progressive and conservative aspects, so too has the reformist branch of liberation theology molded itself to these northern environs.

²⁵⁹ This work has presented ample evidence on which to base such a claim. In addition, it is worth noting that the PJI and progressive Catholics speak of the need for social justice while using all of the criteria that the theologian Nancy Bedford (1999) once listed as central to “the first phase of liberation theology” in its historical development: “the centrality of the category ‘the poor’ for biblical interpretation; the awareness of structural, not just individual, evil; the use of the social sciences as dialogue partner for theological discourse; and the need to apply a hermeneutic of suspicion to theology itself”---the latter point referring to the realization among North American and European theologians that “they, too, were producing contextual theology from a perspective” grounded in their particular socioeconomic and temporal conditions. Discussions of social justice among the PJI make frequent reference to Catholic Social Teaching, under the banner of which the USCCB includes topics such as the primacy and dignity of people over institutions, the respect for people as “sacred but also social” beings, the desire to privilege the needs of the poor and marginalized (which the USCCB calls the “Option for the Poor and Vulnerable” on its website), the dignity of work, support for workers’ rights to organize, the need to act as stewards for the environment, and the need to promote peace and solidarity in “one human family.”

A secondary finding is that the remnants of Latin American liberation theology in this country are not evidence of a loss of interest in praxis or justice, rather an indication of a change in form and emphasis. Christian base communities (comunidades de base) are a case in point, as some scholars are tempted to argue that their disappearance or contraction in many communities since the 1980s is evidence that liberation theology has become moribund in U.S. urban landscapes. Such an argument would miss the evidence of U.S. liberation theology as indicated in the pages of the present work, in addition to the ongoing influence of the older form.²⁶⁰ As Hondagneu-Sotelo et al. (2007: 134) suggest, “commentators may be ready to proclaim that Liberation Theology, if measured by the diminishing number of comunidades de base, is dead,” yet the practices and ideals of the theology “seem to live on through individuals, their activism, and institutions such as the Scalabrini Order dedicated to immigrants and social justice.”

In the eyes of liberationists, theological underpinnings are of little interest or use unless they are tied to specific actions, while actions without religious (moral) sanction might appear to be aimless; thus, our discussion turns to the creation of the PJI as an organization, the leadership of its members in the local (parochial) and regional (diocesan) terrain of the Church, and their efforts to transform the immigrant rights movement.

5.3 Clerical Activism and Church Practices

How does clerical activism on behalf of immigrants transform practices in the Catholic Church? The data suggest that core PJI leaders have engaged in activism in their parishes and in the broader social movement while simultaneously promoting innovations related to social justice, civic and community

²⁶⁰ I acknowledge that these findings could place me at odds with historians and theologians who have seen liberation theology as incompatible with capitalism because of its utilization of Marxian critiques. Lamb (1985) argued, for example, that liberationism was “in dialectical contradiction to conservatism and liberalism”---a view that would disallow rapprochement with U.S. capitalism. And yet, Lamb might approve of the social justice projects of the PJI, as he called for the recognition of liberation theologies (in the plural) of feminism, egalitarianism, racial and ethnic justice, ecology, and pacifism versus “necrophilic militarism” (Lamb 1985).

responsibility, and practices that are more inclusive and culturally sensitive to the needs of immigrants from Latin America. Among these practices are Spanish-language masses, Spanish-language confession and counseling, mariachis and/or marimba players in mass, and presentaciones de niños.²⁶¹

While these and other Latin American traditions are now present in the U.S. Church, the U.S. Church is also trying to change Latin American immigrants. A principal finding of this research project is that the PJI are attempting to transform cultural traditions through democratic empowerment and an emphasis on civic responsibility. Thus, in a topic that chapter two introduces, and both chapters three and four continue in more depth (relevant to the PJI as an organization, and parish workshops led by women, respectively), the PJI's efforts toward reinforcing democratic participation are seen most clearly in parish workshops dedicated to self-esteem and leadership, as well as in parish council meetings where women and men are encouraged to challenge or openly contradict their priests (and one another), and in the laity's active participation in social-action campaigns ranging from voter registration drives to immigration-themed protests in Washington, DC.

It should be remembered that for PJI leaders, immigrant rights are regarded a subcategory of social justice, whether the latter is envisioned as liberation theology or in less spiritually connected terms as a fully participatory democracy. It could be argued that social justice itself is a cultural novelty for some, but not all, Latin American immigrants. Despite the prevalence of labor unions and mobilizations in some migrants' earlier biographies, others had not participated in any movements for social justice nor did they have much hope for social mobility in sending countries. The practices of the PJI also indicate an emphasis on popular participation at the expense of patron-client relationships or, at a larger scale, at the

²⁶¹ Whereas many of their practices are novel, others are conserved from previous generations, including opportunities to serve in ministries (catechists, ushers, greeters, communion ministers) or social charities (soup kitchens, food pantries, etc.), personal encouragements (e.g., greetings from a priest, a touch on the shoulder, etc.), the sharing of generic foods (e.g., donuts and danishes, in many other parishes), and the Durkheimian "effervescence" accompanying all large, spiritually imbued gatherings.

expense of Great Man versions of leadership or cults of personality---although many PJI priests have indeed developed charismatic styles of interaction as part of their training and their creative risk-taking (entrepreneurialism).²⁶²

PJI activists knew, according to this analysis, they could not lead only on the basis of their priestly authority, nor on charisma and personal abilities. Parishioners wishing to break new ground, expand an activity, or change a major event looked to the priest for either an official go-ahead or a veto. But even in the quietest of parishes people were ready for delegated authority, and many council members wished to go beyond a merely advisory capacity in their duties. At times outspoken parishioners have even met priests with challenges from the outset---leading to either a welcoming of such dialogue (embracing a democratic style) or a desire to turn against it in a less democratic fashion. Activist priests who arrived in a new parish wishing to establish dynamic councils were often obliged to contend with older parishioners eager to defend “the way we’ve always done it,” though this reaction, too, was democratic to some extent. They dedicated themselves not to immigration reform alone but to parish life as a civic project, engaging undocumented and documented parishioners alike in actions and reflections on community building and civic responsibility, as well as spiritual development.

In addition to such democratic processes, progressive parishes have reached beyond Catholic borders by fostering ecumenicalism as well as respect for the non-religious (atheists and agnostics)---though this void of religion, or the tolerance of it, is considered too much of a reach for many new Latin American arrivals. The PJI have also attempted to break down cultural walls in their attempts to alter cultural norms, including male domination; one of the findings of this research is that the PJI utilize their positions of privilege within this male-dominated hierarchy not only to empower women as local leaders, but also to question and undermine the very foundations of patriarchy within the Church at large. They have done so

²⁶² Since PJI innovations could be called risk-taking behaviors on behalf of the Church, I have argued that they are akin, in part, to the entrepreneurial efforts of Protestant evangelical preachers.

by reminding parishioners during mass, and during workshops and parish retreats, that many priests and laity would favor the ordination of female priests; however, such a major reform did not seem to be on the horizon under the early years (2013-2016) of Francis's papacy.²⁶³ (These aspects of gender relations and Church influence, as well as democratic emphases, are further discussed in the section below on "Women and Other Reformers.")

For those priests wishing to engage with and encourage the cultural traditions of their parishioners, additional effort and time are required by the priest himself as well as parish staff and volunteers. Moreover, far more time and effort are required to engage in social justice organizing on behalf of one's parishioners---and such questions were raised recently by other social scientists engaged in faith-based activism: When Hondagneu-Sotelo, Genelle Gaudinez, and Hector Lara studied activist-themed posadas at the border between San Diego and Tijuana, they observed participation by a Scalabrinian priest (a Brazilian who led a nearby Casa del Migrante shelter) but noted the absence among organizers of "Catholic priests who lead congregations" and posited that "providing sacraments in large parishes may leave them little time for extracurricular activities" or, perhaps, that "the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church precludes their involvement" in such social justice organizing (Hondagneu-Sotelo et al. 2007: 128).

The present research suggests an answer to Hondagneu-Sotelo's question, despite the physical distance between Chicago and the U.S.-Mexico border. First, priests who lead congregations do, indeed, find themselves overscheduled, not only with sacral duties but also with other duties and initiatives of interest to themselves and their lay activists; yet they can and will find time for social justice organizing if they

²⁶³ If this were envisioned as cultural editing of what is politically acceptable in Latin American traditions, then the origin of the editor would appear to be in the legal system and mores of the United States (i.e., the matrix of most PJI leaders), rather than Church doctrine or liberation theology, although the PJI have developed discourses tying Church doctrine and aspects of liberation theology to these progressive views on gender equality and women's empowerment.

feel a sufficient calling, a conversion of their “minds and hearts.” But in regards to Hondagneu-Sotelo’s second question, I find that priests who lead congregations are not so highly constrained by the conservative hierarchy, i.e., that if they feel individually inspired, they possess sufficient autonomy to organize for social justice in their parish-based communities²⁶⁴---although as individual prelates they may also feel pressured (usually indirectly) by the ideologically marked discourses of their bishops. The preceding chapters have provided numerous examples of this sort of autonomy. Yet clerics feel daily pressure from material, fiscal, and temporal constraints in parish administration. Thus, activist priests are necessarily parsimonious with their time and energy, and furthermore, they have learned to embrace delegation and divisions of labor: if they become aware that a colleague (e.g., the Scalabrinian) is already representing Church activists at such an event, they are more likely to turn their attention elsewhere. Thus, the limited attendance of priests at an event does not necessarily denote lack of support. (Conversely, the participation of two or more otherwise-overtaxed priests at a single event denotes a high amount of interest and/or support for the participants---as I have witnessed at major movement actions and at a handful of events honoring individual activists.

An ancillary finding from this analysis is a confirmation of previous knowledge on leadership in organizations: i.e., further verification that displays of dedication to one’s constituents are repaid in kind, according to norms of reciprocity; transformational leaders initiate reciprocal exchanges of time, energy, and social capital with their constituents. The initial outlay of time and resources may seem daunting---and indeed some priests resist this involvement mainly because they cannot open up their already exhausting schedules---but there is payback in terms of social capital and in a perceived spiritual connection.

²⁶⁴ Hondagneu-Sotelo et al.’s data and analysis indicate that the hierarchy does, indeed, overly constrain the activism of its lay organizers and its engaged religious sisters (2007: 128-132), but their work does not incorporate participant observation among priests to a degree comparable with the present study.

Whether they are knocking on doors, praying together in a weekend retreat, or marching through Chicago's streets, progressive Catholics regard such shared experiences as steps toward their vision of a more spiritual and participatory world---a world more closely resembling the progressive Catholic's conceptualization of the Kingdom of God, as opposed to the apocalyptic vision of the Revelation of John favored by some conservative Catholics and many Protestant evangelicals. The opportunities for cross-pollination among such progressive parishioners further increase, as those who become involved in one parish activity are more likely to become networked with and mutually supportive of other parish activities, including ministries dedicated to social justice. In the view of many PJI leaders, these reciprocal, community-building, and self-esteem-building cycles of exchange and recognition are pastoral concerns that are sometimes forgotten by priests who have ascended the strata of the Church hierarchy.

When young seminarians met with Saul Alinsky in the 1970s, he advised them to "make your own personal decision about whether you want to be a bishop or a priest, and everything else will follow." (Alinsky 1989 [1971]: 13). Priests wishing to dedicate themselves to social justice and community-building felt that many of their more conservative superiors were "morally bankrupt" in that they turned their backs on the poor and oppressed, and Alinsky's advice helped them to come to terms with their central values. Decades later, some Chicago priests remembered this advice though they might have forgotten that Alinsky was its source. Thus, one of the secondary findings of this project is that Alinsky has had a lasting impact on Chicago's faith-based communities.

I argue for this recognition against the tendency among some social scientists and priests to oppose or minimize Alinsky's legacy, perhaps because they did not see a strong spiritual center in his tactics, or perhaps because they have become disillusioned with the ways in which Alinsky's recommendations (written initially for radicals) were adapted by right-wing organizers in the 2000s. Yet Alinsky was not without a broader vision, as he argued repeatedly that radicals must make connections with religious

leaders. Also, as further evidence of his long-term plan, Alinsky was primarily attempting to communicate with activists who believed in transforming the world into a more humane place, beginning with NIMBY organizers who might someday, in this vision, take on larger and more powerful adversaries in the interests of social justice. Yet Alinsky made no illusions about the need to work with the tools at one's disposal; in Rules for Radicals (1989 [1971]) he determined that "the politics of change" demanded a recognition of "the world as it is" not the world of the future---because this "is a world not of angels but of angles, where men speak of moral principles but act on power principles" (1989: 12-14). For the PJI and other religious leaders determined to live in the world while preparing for the next, one of the "power principles" in their arsenal is their clerical status; however, since the theological grounding of progressive Catholics has often been called into question by conservative Catholics, the PJI have attempted to demonstrate that the political realm is not a liability in the face of the religious realm but is, instead, a component of it---and vice versa.

5.4 Claims to Authenticity

Progressive Catholicism entails a confluence of belief and practice, not expressions of contemplative or internalized faith but a complex of nesting and networked motivations, values, commitments, and actions as referenced in Wallace's mazeway. One of the main contributions of the present research is the finding that progressive parish leaders demonstrate social and political views that are intimately linked to religious belief, not merely attachments to faith, and thus their advocacy for immigrant rights and immigration reform is seen, from their perspective, as a deeply held, true/authentic expression of Christianity. Although the concept of linkages between social and religious views is well established in the social science literature, the present research indicates that progressive Catholics involved in the immigrant rights movement promote their own kind of syncretism. Their union between the sociopolitical and the religious shows that faith-based worldviews can define progressives and other moderates rather than being an aspect of only fundamentalists or extremists. The latter point is, I argue, a major finding that has implications for faith-based activism in other religions as well.

It is common to speak of strong politico-religious linkages as a phenomenon of fundamentalists. Ultra-conservative Islam is often envisioned as a confluence of belief and practice, for instance, as are ultra-conservative expressions of Christianity and ultra-orthodox Judaism. But the present research suggests that such intertwined linkages are central to the worldviews and lifeways of progressives and many moderates, as well. This study may even provide reason to suggest that progressive faith-based organizers could become positioned as effective counterweights or controls to conservative and fundamentalist extremists, not only within Catholicism but in Islam, Judaism, and other religious communities. This notion would pertain to religious populations that have been interpreted previously as holding to strong hierarchical models of communication and control, and it would also pertain to religious adherents lacking strong hierarchical stratification. These linkages between politico-religious aspects of one's worldview should also, I argue, be envisioned as occupying a spectrum rather than being confined to one extreme or another of secularity or religiosity. With such a fluid spectrum in mind, one of the more apparent differences between fundamentalists and moderates is, I hold, the degree of conformity exhibited and expected among adherents.

Perhaps another way of expressing this type of difference between progressive Catholics and fundamentalists of any religion is the observation that religion was neither constantly nor consistently on my informants' minds.²⁶⁵ These Catholics led quite secular lives during the course of a given day, with no more overt markers of religion in their daily behaviors and discourses than would be exhibited by either mainstream U.S. Protestants or agnostics. In my estimation, they appeared to feel at home and part of both worlds---sacred and secular. Perhaps this ease of position is linked to the aforementioned observation that they did not yearn for the apocalyptic ending of the world in order to prepare for the next.

²⁶⁵ My informants, including the priests, brethren, and nuns engaged in the social movement, did not engage in constant boundary reinforcement and maintenance on spiritual matters. But when specific opportunities arose---e.g., to attend mass or to help rectify some perceived injustice---their "minds and hearts" engaged in a strong linkage of belief and practice, action and faith.

If we can label this experience a sort of dual spiritual citizenship, or a quotidian “freedom from religion,” we might gauge it as a way to set such progressive faithful apart from strict dogmatists, for whom religion and daily life appear to be almost compulsively interlinked. When engaging in actions on behalf of undocumented immigrants, nonetheless, they reflected on unifying their beliefs and duties “as a Catholic” and “as a Christian” with other competing diurnal concerns. Infused with a sense of moral outrage and inspired by a sense of religious duty, their admiration for Old Testament prophets (and for people they regarded as modern prophets like Martin Luther King, Jr.), and their almost electric sense of group solidarity (a Durkheimian effervescence, palpable among groups of mobilized activists), they reported feeling a profound sense of unity and purpose.

This feeling further undergirded their sense that the praxis of progressive Catholicism was not only an authentic form of Catholicism but perhaps the preferred form of Christianity. In other words, the combined sense of belonging and of divine sanction, empathy for others, and moral outrage on behalf of the oppressed produced in them a kind of evidence---“spiritual proof” in the authenticity of their version of Catholicism, as well as the desire to convert others into advocates for the same vision. The feeling could be fleeting, however, and it could be “put away” in order to engage again with quotidian demands.

As a secondary finding, I posit that the depth of the politico-religious linkage evidenced by the PJI and other progressive Catholics makes the movement for immigrant rights more effective than it might otherwise be, as activists find solace and inspiration in biblical exegesis. In the views of many immigrant rights activists, Jesus was a true radical for the cause of social justice; some have even described Jesus as a proto-socialist. Whatever terms are deployed, there is general consensus among these activists that the Bible, though being of divine sanction, is in part a political work---i.e., a collection of narratives and symbols concerning power, including the power of money. Perhaps the key to the union of religion and politics in the minds of most activists is their vision of the future---a view of humanity guided by

compassion rather than domination. Here, too, however, one's vision and degree of commitment to the cause are arrayed along a wide spectrum.

The progressive Catholics who have been the subjects of this study have demonstrated broad political-religious syncretism. And yet, as it is an overtly delineated political-religious blending of faith and action, it has been placed in opposition with conservative Catholic ideologies. While conservatives attempt to frame their own ideologies as apolitical, they claim a truer or more authentic Catholicism that stands apart from the progressives' purported "politicization of religion." If such conservative frameworks were to be acknowledged as "more traditional" or "more authentic" by progressive Catholics, the latter would find themselves continually on the defensive in theological and political arenas---and they might thus be converted ultimately to more conservative forms of Catholicism themselves. Yet the activist laity and priests in the immigrant rights movement do not compare themselves unfavorably to more conservative Catholics; on the contrary, they see their own approach as effectively superior in that it feels more tied to the Bible, closer to their conception of God, and closer to a plan for humanity and the world that would approximate God's kingdom.

By examining priestly activism as well as theology, thus connecting Catholic Social Gospel with spiritual concerns, this work has analyzed claims to authenticity as informed by liberation theology, which is often glossed as social justice. Priests who have been active in the immigrant rights movement have made numerous claims to an authentically Catholic identity, I argue, by combining theological foundations (biblical exegesis)²⁶⁶ with political activism, thus forming and reinforcing a framework of discourses

²⁶⁶ Among the examples of such biblical foundations are references to caring for strangers, seeing wealth as a barrier to heaven, reexaminations of women in the Bible (in a Saturday workshop hosted by a PJI leader, in statements in bulletins, and by preachers in mass), the parable of the Good Samaritan, and discourses on Sodom and Gomora. In addition, in homilies the PJI have pointed often to Jesus's comments on marginalized women, the need to reinterpret what they see as outmoded biblical foundations (e.g., slavery and polygamy), and the two contrasting creation stories in Genesis (one saying that Eve came from Adam's rib, the other that man and woman were created at the same time).

around what PJI see as a progressive Catholic worldview. Chicago's activist priests have provided immigrants with material and spiritual support, parish spaces, more inclusive governing bodies (multiethnic or Hispanic parish councils), and a parochial support system designed to encourage the "preferential option for the poor" as articulated in liberation theology. As the PJI and lay activists have attempted to steer the Church toward greater inclusivity, moreover, I argue that they have also promoted respect for expressions of popular piety that might have been dismissed or denigrated as syncretic forms.

An additional contribution of this project to the anthropology of religion is the elucidation of conceptual links between entrepreneurial risk-taking and progressive Catholicism, particularly in the finding that progressive Church leaders' entrepreneurialism contributes to their sense of Catholic authenticity. I have argued that the calculated risk-taking of the PJI on behalf of immigrants (in street mobilizations, non-violent resistance, etc.) might be categorized as cultural entrepreneurialism, which is analogous to Protestant evangelical ministers and others whose calling involves a challenging of the status quo. Whether termed as cultural entrepreneurs or as social entrepreneurs (terms that would not, admittedly, normally be applied to Catholic leaders by some observers), these priests foster creativity in many areas of their parishes, effectively transforming these community centers into seedbeds of creativity, in my analysis; they also encourage "double-loop learning" (the seeking and acting on feedback from colleagues and subordinates) within their parishes and the movement coalition. Moreover, they engender large amounts of social cross-pollination via participation by activists in more than one group or area simultaneously. Scholars might dispute whether these priests could be labeled as authentic social-cultural entrepreneurs, but the evidence demonstrates at a minimum that they believe in and act according to a spirit of entrepreneurialism.

I have held that the PJI have demonstrated entrepreneurialism in creative approaches to social activism, and in the risks they have taken on behalf of undocumented constituents. Such risk-taking recalls the narratives concerning "prophetic voices" and "prophetic actions" that they have utilized in homilies

referencing the Old Testament. The PJI feel that these narratives of the prophets are indicative, when coupled with their senses of moral outrage, of divine sanction on behalf of the oppressed. Prophetic voice and prophetic action can also be interpreted as aspects of “the preferential option for the poor”---a guiding concept in liberation theology. In this manner the PJI reinforce claims to an “authentic Catholicism” in their eyes and in the eyes of lay activists, by ensuring that their perspectives are biblically grounded, referencing a purportedly earlier and purer form of Christianity. When conservatives attempt to challenge their claims to authenticity via accusations regarding the “politicization of religion” they might ultimately strengthen the beliefs progressives hold regarding authentic, divinely sanctioned forms of Catholicism.

Pastoralism, in the form of service/accompaniment among one’s parish community as well as tending to spiritual needs, is also a tradition emphasized in progressive parishes. Although it is true that some PJI leaders are not known for making great sacrifices of time for pastoral concerns, the more activist core of the PJI are highly engaged in the daily life and social-justice concerns of their communities, to a far greater extent than their liturgical duties require. They work to make their parishes more inclusive, not only to immigrants from Latin America but even to atheists and agnostics---a determined level of ecumenism that would make many conservative Catholics uneasy. This inclusivity has lent itself to the movement for immigration reform and the annual “Knocking on Doors” neighborhood campaign, as well as other bridging efforts in the community. The level of complexity and the possibilities for success in these neighborhood campaigns pale in comparison, however, to the ongoing struggle for the acceptance of progressive Catholic frameworks in the electronic and broadcast media.

A more complete understanding of the ways in which conservative frameworks have been dominating U.S. media landscapes, including the claims to theological and moral normativity purveyed by conservative Catholics, is another of the key contributions of this research. Such conservative frames in the media are so pervasive that progressive Catholics often feel they are placed on the defensive when considering mainstream and Catholic news outlets, as well as in social media, where posts from

conservative Catholics tend to flood “comments” sections after news stories sympathetic to progressive viewpoints (e.g., on immigration reform, gender relations, or efforts to end homophobia). The pressure that many PJI and lay leaders feel to establish and maintain claims to authenticity are reflections, in part, of the barrage of conservative-framed messages they perceive in such media outlets. In an effort to test the accuracy of these perceptions of the media landscape, I tracked and analyzed news coverage on topics of religious interest over a period of several years, with special emphasis on Chicago’s two largest newspapers and on Catholic news media, including Our Sunday Visitor (OSV), Catholic New World, and Católico.

According to my analysis of these data, the landscape of “religious media” and religiously linked journalism in the United States appears to be dominated by conservative frameworks, including the rhetoric of conservative Catholics, whose views are often sought as “opposing commentary” (or “the other side”)²⁶⁷ on reportage of health care reform, reproductive freedoms, and immigration. On the latter point, progressive Catholics (and some conservatives) have been more successful, comparatively, in steering the predominant discourse toward a notion of immigration reform as “a Catholic issue” supported by the USCCB and the Vatican; thus, fewer opposing Catholic commentators are sought out for “the other side” of this particular story by professional journalists. (Though plentiful opposing viewpoints are indeed included in such news coverage, only a limited percentage of those oppositional voices are identified as specifically Catholic.) Yet, even in the context of such apparent hierarchical support for immigration reform, conservative Catholics have attempted to register their resistance to comprehensive immigration reform, both in Catholic and in mainstream news media. In addition, they have mounted powerful

²⁶⁷ Dionne (2004) contends that journalists are complicit in the privileging of conservative frameworks not necessarily because of a desire to highlight conservative voices over liberal and progressive ones, but because of the cumulative rhetorical power of conservative commentators, as “the very secularism that conservatives attack in the media oddly serves to identify religion with the right. If you believe that religion lives on the right, and you are booking a television program, then when you look for an authentic ‘religious voice’ you’re probably going to find a conservative one.” The problem, Dionne emphasizes, is that “automatically leaves out a very large segment of religious America.”

resistance behind the scenes, as in the case of the pro-life lobby who exerted pressure over “The Archbishop’s Speech that Almost Wasn’t” and who, prior to and after that event, contributed to the former archbishop’s return to relative silence on the issue of immigrant rights.

Although the PJI have felt confident in their own discourses of Christian authenticity, they have continued to face barriers in convincing others to accept their framework. Thus they have embarked on a series of evangelical projects within the Church, attempting to reach their fellow Christians’ “minds and hearts” to develop what they regard to be more authentic aspects of their own faith. At the same time, they aim to strengthen the immigration-reform movement by attempting the conversion²⁶⁸ of their fellow priests to the cause, as part of a larger project favoring social justice. Yet they have often felt frustrated in these efforts. They have been more likely to convert priests who already leaned toward inclusive or progressive ideologies. Yet some of these who shared a concern for social justice and who would have been allies nevertheless felt ill-equipped for another cause, given their already crushing workloads. A core group of PJI members has driven the issue forward with regular meetings and activities, yet within the ranks of the PJI were priests who, on average, have done little to support the cause apart from signing the original PJI petition and permitting a handful of announcements in parish bulletins. With the average age of priests rising and their numbers shrinking, the priest shortage could arguably be placing a strain on social-justice activism in the Church as well as on liturgical duties. This is one of the reasons parishes turn now, as much as at any time in Church history, to women for leadership and service, yet women in these parishes are not content to merely fill in where the men are absent.

5.5 Women and Other Reformers

The fourth chapter in this work describes how women in the Catholic Church have contributed to Latino activism, sometimes in support of the hierarchical guidance of the Church and sometimes in opposition to

²⁶⁸ The conversion of “the minds and hearts” of Catholics desired by the PJI is not a conversion between sects but a consciousness-raising through social justice from one level of Christianity to another.

it. I have discussed ways in which segments of the Church have engaged with Latin American traditions, by seeking to transform them or by being transformed, in turn, by Latin American visions and behaviors. Gender relations and domestic violence, focused on what PJI leaders have called “the sin of machismo,” form a foundational part of that discourse in Chicago’s progressive parishes; as such, machismo has been regarded as one of the root causes of oppression not only of women but of entire families, including the extended “family of St. Pius V” and other faith-based communities. In the shadow of this oppression, women lay leaders and progressive priests have collaborated in efforts to transform Church teachings and cultural frameworks, partly by providing abuse counseling and support services, and partly by preaching on the biblical foundations for gender equality. For this gendered pillar of their social-justice framework, progressive Catholics have argued that Jesus’s mission in the world included women’s empowerment, and that families based on mutual respect and companionate relationships represent a step toward “the Kingdom of God,” which they define as a theological and political union for the future of the world.

The development and encouragement of women leaders in progressive parishes reflects not only a reframing of the Church around concerns for women’s rights, as articulated alongside immigrant rights, but also a broader project favoring the development of civic responsibility and democratic governance. Social-action groups in Chicago’s immigrant parishes are typically formed and led by women; this research suggests that even in groups where men are able to rise to some level of prominence, it is Latina women who do the most effective work of team-building, training, and participatory leadership. Women’s interests in the movement range from preparing for street mobilizations to assisting with mass, as well as planning and teaching parish workshops under themes of “peace and justice,” “self-esteem and leadership,” and “Pastoral Migratoria” (immigrant-to-immigrant ministry). Since women have participated in the development and teaching of workshops as volunteers and as parish staff to a higher degree than men, these become a platform for addressing gender inequality in the parish community. Organizers who have brought a protest, workshop, or vigil to fruition have seen a sense of accomplishment, as small victories help provide or reinsert momentum to the movement.

Women have planned actions and managed complicated logistics. In the bus caravans to Washington, D.C., women volunteers have contributed money, time, talent, and resources toward gathering fellow riders, ensuring their safety, and attempting to lobby politicians in the nation's capital. They have engaged in similar organizing efforts in Chicago and its suburbs. In some parishes women are preachers who deliver portions of the weekly homily or write sections of the Sunday bulletin. Whereas women in other parishes may read biblical scripture or narratives chosen by the priest, these preachers are authors and contributors who plan and discuss themes of social justice and democracy, including feminism, rather than merely taking dictation. Moreover, as an oppressed population themselves, women may be more able to empathize with and act on behalf of other marginalized groups. Their presence in mass as ministers, advocates, and speakers serves to attract women to the parish who have grown weary of phallogocentric practices, including the Church hierarchy's ban on women clergy. Various "new and old" matriarchs are also influential in activist parishes as they negotiate parish power relationships and potential reforms with priests, sometimes as members of parish councils, and sometimes as individual staff, volunteers, or claimants.

As a devotional "cult of the Virgin Mary," marianismo is a Latino/a tradition that has found expression in Chicago's immigrant parishes, particularly during the Guadalupe celebrations in December; nonetheless, like other expressions of popular and institutionalized piety, these immigrant-infused Marian practices are open to (re)framing from either conservative or progressive perspectives. Under some conservative frames, marianismo is emphasized subordination in conjunction with machismo. In progressive PJI frames, however, Catholics embrace their vision of a more proactive Virgin of Guadalupe, and they use marianismo to work in opposition to machismo, which has been consistently labeled an abuse of power and "a sin" from the pulpits of the activist parishes included in this study. Although this form of marianismo does not necessarily equate to feminism, it allows for a range of personal and professional growth that simultaneously strengthens the parish as a civic community. As examined in the chapter

“Women and Other Parish Leaders,” when women lead workshops in these parishes they foster debate and expanded conceptualizations of issues involving the self-determination of women’s minds and bodies, but without directly referencing reproductive choice.

Progressive Catholics have framed their views on women’s rights as part of the larger social-justice (and liberationist) project. Following Lancaster (1988), who argued for the centrality of liberation theology in Nicaragua’s Popular Church, I argue that this framing is also ultimately traditional in that it is theologically based in biblical exegesis. This grounding in the Bible shows that progressive Catholic interpretations are framed in manners analogous to those of conservative Catholics, who have effectively framed their own views as traditional and grounded. The progressive and conservative frameworks tend to be oppositional, however; the vision of the Kingdom of God of progressive Catholics tends to be seen as an ideological and theological threat when viewed from the standpoint of conservatives. Among the cases illustrating this point are the numerous workshops on “women in the Bible” and gender inequality offered at PJI parishes, in contrast with the frequent admonitions against women’s empowerment (and warnings against divorce) that I have observed in mass in more conservative parishes. Other evidence for this progressive-conservative divide include, in activist parishes, open discussions of women’s future ordination (as challenges to the status quo), versus the quelling or marginalization of the topic in conservative parishes. Also worthy of consideration are the discourses between the PJI and the former archbishop, Cardinal George, in regards to immigrant rights as well as support for free speech among women religious, and the Vatican inquisition into the practices and theologies of the Sisters of Mercy and other women’s orders. Further examples are seen in the differences in framing arguments in English- and Spanish-language archdiocesan newspapers (Catholic New World and Católico, respectively).²⁶⁹

²⁶⁹ In the preceding chapters I briefly noted an analysis of periodicals as a component of my broader ethnographic research. In my field notes I tracked the coverage of immigration, racism, reproductive rights, and other topics in these English- and Spanish-language diocesan papers over several years and noted significant differences (chiefly omissions of items in the English versions). Moreover, even the titles of these periodicals hint at differences in ideological, ethnic, or historical frameworks, as the phrase “New World” can be evocative of Columbus and, by extension, Italian Americans in the Church.

Leadership training has been especially significant for Latina women, for whom workshops were not offered merely as vehicles for professional success but also in order to stop domestic violence and encourage social-justice activism as well as broader civic participation. Such parish workshops have also promoted psychological and spiritual growth, as a kind of adult catechesis (training in Catholic religion) but with simultaneous attention to self-esteem and interpersonal, family, and community relations.

Although this work does not claim to make an original contribution to the anthropology of gender, it does contribute further to the anthropologies of religion and social movements by providing an ethnographic lens on women leaders in Catholic parishes, notably women laity active in their communities' social action/social justice committees. One of this project's original contributions is the argument that women leaders are not only a large share of the people making up the Catholic Church (a point that is already well understood to extend beyond nuns and parochial schools) but that the Church actively recruits and develops women leaders. This recruitment and training is especially evident within progressive parishes in the immigrant rights movement, according to the ethnographic evidence gathered in this project.

Many of the women in these parishes developed a significant share of their self-confidence, practical skills, and aptitude for transformational (charismatic) leadership through a string of volunteer positions and/or paid staff jobs (from catechist volunteers to front-desk receptionists, group leaders, ministers, etc.), often after being hired by the pastor. Many others have been welcomed into parish leadership by initially joining workshops run largely by women for women (and some men).²⁷⁰

²⁷⁰ Women fill a majority of the spaces in the pews, although one of my secondary findings is that men in activist parishes are not as limited a minority as they appear to be in other, more conservative parishes. The implication is that more Latino men may prefer an activist, social-justice oriented setting than a staid, conservative setting for Sunday mass. (Note that I am speaking of a majority, not of an essential quality.) Future research might address whether they feel attracted to the political-religious linkage itself or to some other qualities, or whether the difference is a holdover from times when male immigration once significantly dwarfed female immigration. Another avenue for further research are the attitudes, motivations, and politico-religious linkages of Latina women who attend parish services with or without the active participation of males in their households.

Subsumed within these findings are the following secondary observations: (1) Although the Church is a male-dominated institution, it is utterly dependent on women's leadership and support at all levels from the local (parochial) to the regional (diocesan), and perhaps also at the national level (although this conjecture regarding national contributions is beyond the scope of the present research); (2) Whereas the U.S. Church sometimes appears desperate to recruit young men into the priesthood, young women might provide a far more talented and capable applicant pool, should the question of female ordination ever be considered as a reform at the highest levels of the Vatican hierarchy. (It is a perennial topic of discussion within many parishes, and some priests will go so far as to question the ban during mass.)

Another finding that has emerged from this research is that the PJI are involved in long-term projects aimed at strengthening civic relations. One of the intentions of the PJI has been to prepare new leaders to influence democratic processes locally, as well as nationally, thereby strengthening the public realm which, as Richard L. Wood has specified, involves encouraging "crucial dynamics for long-term political change...[among] both the general citizenry and leaders of nongovernmental institutions in society" (2002: 126). The long-term view noted here is critically important, because such leadership-training and self-esteem workshops provide a sense of accomplishment and purpose to organizers, particularly in times when their social movement has been met with setbacks---i.e., when larger political processes have slowed or reversed reforms of immigration laws. If public dialogue and consensus-building are the means toward a stronger democracy, then discourses that challenge established perspectives, both within and outside of parish walls, are to be encouraged---and the empowerment of present and future Latina leaders is one of the pathways toward that kind of community and civic strength. Along similar lines, the future direction of the Catholic Church will depend on the challenging and, often oppositional, discourses along with the myriad forms of activism and pastoral ministry that we have seen evolving, converting minds and hearts, and contending for power at level of the local parish.

5.6 Inclusivity, Segmentation, and Local Power

PJI inclusivity is intended to extend beyond religion and immigration status to encourage diverse teams among their ministers, staff members, and volunteers, including LGBT laity that have participated as volunteers in mass, street fairs, and fund-raising events. Similar secular-religious bridging has proved vital for social movements in the U.S. and in other countries, e.g., in Egypt's recent "Arab Spring," where secular and religious protesters shared spaces and coordinated tactics in Tahrir Square (Hirschkind 2012).²⁷¹

Leaders in these parishes push toward inclusivity in terms of multiculturalism, gender equity, ecumenicalism, intellectual liberalism, and democratic or at least civic participation. They view all of these ethics, moreover, as fundamentally Catholic. Migrants extend and contribute to their religious evolution through identification as biblical "strangers" as well as through transnational versions of Christianity linking both sending and receiving countries (Levitt 2007; Bava 2011). The resulting "migration-religion identity relationship" (Bava 2011) or new belongingness yields practical, visible results when religion provides a nexus for activists experiencing political and socioeconomic marginalization, through activism in the movement for immigration reform. At the same time, they experience belongingness in their increasing involvement in parish-community programs such as leadership and self-esteem workshops and immigrant-to-immigrant ministries.

The PJI attempt to act as a leading force for ecumenicalism in the Catholic Church as they and a small number of Protestant pastors, Jewish rabbis, and Muslim imams have made faith-based activists a central

²⁷¹ Hirschkind (2012: 49) explains that mobilization occurred "without the question 'secular or religious?' ever imposing itself...though Tahrir Square was transformed...into an arena of collective prayer for both Muslims and Christians..." The leftist and liberal protesters did not frame prayer and ritual "as a threat to the secular character of the political movement" though the left would usually have seen mass prayer "as icons of politicized religion and [a] danger to rational politics." Faith-based activists urged bridging, and they tolerated "the introduction of popular, non-Islamic musical forms...[and] irreverent, satirical poetry." While Islam provided a "frame of reference for Egyptian political thought" there was no "rush to divide the world up according to the categories of Islamic and Western or religious and secular" (2012: 51).

component of the broad immigrant rights coalition. They make frequent announcements about this ecumenicalism in their homilies, parish bulletins, and parish workshops; moreover, in these same venues they have made inclusive overtures to agnostics and atheists provided they wish “to do good in the world.” The PJI propensity for religious-secular bridging has not developed recently but is part of a historical tradition of discourses that reinforce Catholic Social Doctrine.

I have written that the PJI and their activist parishioners have steered the Catholic Church toward greater inclusivity; however, it remains to be seen whether they will continue to influence the Church in this direction, or whether the push-back from conservative Catholics will effectively counter their efforts. Even with the apparent support of Pope Francis, progressives face significant opposition from conservatives in the Vatican and at parish levels.²⁷² In all likelihood, the kinds of segmentation that are evident today in the U.S. Catholic Church will continue into the next two decades, rather than seeing one segment completely convert another to their worldview or way(s) of conceptualizing the world and the place of Catholicism in it.

Based on the ethnographic work in PJI parishes, I suggest there are, at a minimum, two churches within the U.S. Catholic Church, bifurcated along ideological lines: the conservative Church and the progressive Church, corresponding in part to the terms exclusionist and inclusivist where immigrants are concerned. The U.S. Church has remained divided on the issue of immigration rights, despite the remarks of USCCB spokespeople, recurrent statements in the mainstream media framing reform as a Church priority, and the voices of local activists hoping to show that the Church accompanies undocumented immigrants

²⁷² Since the words “liberation theology” were hardly uttered in most U.S. Catholic contexts in recent years, at least until 2013, and since the concept is usually glossed as social justice, I would argue that conservatives are not typically rejecting such frameworks out of fear of revolutionary or destructive associations with liberation theology (i.e., those attributed to some Latin American leftist rebels). Instead, I would hold that it is further evidence that conservative-progressive segmentation is so well-established in U.S. contexts, that the proclamations of a number of priests, bishops, or even popes would not erase the corresponding divisions within the U.S. Catholic Church, except in some exceptions. Thus the PJI project of converting minds and hearts to favor immigrant rights might indeed be a long-term struggle.

spiritually, philosophically, and materially. Although communiqués from at least three successive popes and the USCCB have urged a humane reform of U.S. immigration laws as well as stronger Church stances in favor of immigrant rights, there appears to be only a limited number of parishes involved in the question---with some doing nothing to encourage the barest dialog surrounding immigration. Many have not supported the cause and some have openly opposed a reform except for provisions calling for more enforcement and deportations.

Given this state of affairs, I hold that a major contribution of this research is a deeper understanding of the potential for local leaders to influence the eventual course of the Church, provided they are astute at networking and movement building. Another of the novel contributions of this research is a re-envisioning of the basic power structures that operate within the Catholic Church: Whereas the clergy and Vatican functionaries have long understood that complex local, diocesan, national, and international interests and networks operate within the Catholic Church, many non-specialist social scientists and the general public have tended to assume that top-down, Vatican control was the prevailing model. The present research acknowledges that the pope, and the Vatican more generally, can exert considerable influence on the direction of Church officials even at the parish level, but it is far more common to see parish leaders exercising considerable autonomy over their operations. Moreover, this research indicates that movements for reform within the Church ultimately originate at the local, parish level, and only gradually become accepted as issues of concern by the hierarchy.

PJI members have been able to engage in prophetic action and prophetic speech in part because of the autonomy afforded the pastor of any given parish in the Chicago Archdiocese, although a corollary also emerged (i.e., that associate priests or “associate vicars” subordinate to a pastor could be constrained by his ideological framework as well as his leadership effectiveness). Priests, or at least pastors, who were thus ideologically committed to immigrant rights and social justice could, I argue, dedicate significant time and effort to these concerns---provided they also dealt with fiscal and staffing constraints, etc.---and

this relative freedom to engage in social justice was especially the case, in my analysis, for Dominicans, Scalabrinians, Jesuits, and the members of some other religious orders. This analysis helps explain why so many PJI leaders were able to join the movement though they remained a minority of the total number of priests in Chicago. Moreover, this further broadens the argument in favor of seeing the Catholic Church as more of a confederation of local, parish leaders and bishops rather than as a strictly top-down hierarchy with all significant innovations emerging from the upper echelons. Instead, the ethnographic data support an argument in favor of seeing Catholic innovations, entrepreneurial efforts, and inclusiveness as emanating primarily upward, from pastoral connections.

5.7 Epilogue: Civil Rights, Immigrants, and Good Samaritans

Immigrant-rights discourses are framed around an analogous complex of texts, symbols, and historical events from the Civil Rights Movement. Though a half century separates the two social movements and though there is broad acknowledgment that the socio-historical situation of African Americans has differed substantially from that of undocumented immigrants, the movement draws on the Civil Rights Movement not only for moral inspiration and practical instruction on nonviolent resistance but also as an approach to mending ethno-racial divides in furtherance of all social justice concerns. As occurred in the Civil Rights Movement, the immigrant rights movement depends in large part on churches.²⁷³

In progressive parishes it is not uncommon to find portraits of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., amid images of the Basilica of Guadalupe, the U.S.-Mexico border, and the martyred Archbishop Oscar Romero. The first page of the Jan. 16, 2011, bulletin at St. Pius V proclaims:

We need more prophets like Martin Luther King, Jr. to denounce injustice and to change hearts and minds, so that in a non-violent way racism, discrimination and segregation will be banished from our society and all will enjoy equally the freedom and the rights due to all of God's children.

²⁷³ “As W.E.B. DuBois had recorded long before, black ministers were the natural leaders of Southern black communities, and that was never truer than in the civil rights campaigns” (Wills 2007: 468).

Presented at mass the day before MLK Day in 2011, the bulletin reproduces most of the “I Have a Dream” speech of August 28, 1963, along with a photo captioned “Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Prophet and Martyr for Social Justice and Peace,” and an accompanying quote from a Dominican (Father Michael Kyte) regarding a Gospel mandate to end racism and see Christ’s face not as White, Black, or Latino but as “the composite of all persons.”

Chicago parishes and Protestant churches generally commemorate Martin Luther King Day, but fewer consistently label him a prophet. Moreover, the identity of St. Pius V as a parish of predominantly Mexican and Mexican American congregants, with few African Americans in its pews and only a handful of African-descended Latin Americans among the staff and parishioners, would not seem to allow a special place for Dr. King, except for St. Pius’s established reputation for social justice and inclusivity. On the Sunday before Martin Luther King Day his portrait stands in a place of utmost honor, on a tripod immediately before the altar, as it might at a funeral mass. Such visibility is not a statement for the press²⁷⁴ but for the pews.

On Jan. 16, 2010, two days before Martin Luther King Day, St. Pius V’s UFA group attended a rally/vigil for social justice at the First Baptist Congregational Church, across Ashland Avenue from the point where Chicago’s largest immigration marches have initiated. In honor of an alliance between unions and immigrant rights advocates, the event was titled “Full Citizenship and Full Employment for Full Equality.” Occurring shortly after the devastating Haiti earthquake, this event was also intended to highlight connections between Americans of African and Afro-Caribbean origin and those from Caribbean and Latin American countries. The wooden amphitheater-style central hall of the church was built by abolitionists in 1851. As a pamphlet explained, “Social activism has characterized this

²⁷⁴ Most available mobile news crews would be positioned for man-on-the-street commentary and churchgoing crowds in distant African American neighborhoods like Hyde Park and South Lawndale. These same crews would be deployed to Pilsen during the annual Via Crucis (Stations of the Cross) event; the news and religious calendars are somewhat predictable in terms of geography, as Chicago remains (de facto) a highly segregated city.

congregation” ever since, and Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and Dr. Martin Luther King., Jr., have all been welcomed there.

The Reverend Jesse Jackson was one of the scheduled speakers that day, and his²⁷⁵ influence was notable in the hall, including the listing of his Operation Rainbow PUSH and Operation Rainbow PUSH-Latino Chapter as two of the co-sponsors, and music by the Operation Rainbow PUSH Choir. Also listed were the PJI, Familias Unidas, the Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants, The Resurrection Project, Casa Michoacán, the ICIRR, and several labor unions²⁷⁶, charities, and NGOs.

Jackson’s keynote address, highlighted in the program as the Purpose of the Day, stated that a pro-immigrant stance meant leveling the field: “We should play the game by one set of rules, not accept Cubans and send Haitians back...---Haitians loved us first,” by which he referred, in part, to Haiti’s successful slave revolt and independence from France in the 1790s. He linked the activism of MLK with

²⁷⁵ Jackson has been a controversial figure both in terms of his political and personal choices, leading many to view him with a mixture of distrust and cynicism despite his early work in the Civil Rights Movement. Some observers have questioned whether family-related scandals, vanity, allegations of financial impropriety, or accusations of antisemitism have overshadowed his legacy, including his two attempts to run for the U.S. presidency. For many social-justice organizers in Chicago, however, including the vast majority of immigrant-rights activists at the event described in this epilogue, Jackson's shortcomings do little to reduce his status as a kind of progressive icon. During the period of this research Jackson provided more of a spotlight on the immigrant rights movement than any other high-profile Civil Rights leader within or outside of Chicago, and his skills as an orator are still remarkable. Thus his participation merits inclusion in this work.

For examinations of the controversies, accomplishments, and questions associated with Jackson's participation in social movements, see Marshall Frady, Jesse: The Life and Pilgrimage of Jesse Jackson (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006); and Barbara A. Reynolds, Jesse Jackson, the Man, the Movement, the Myth (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975). In addition, Marable Manning, Black American Politics: From the Washington Marches to Jesse Jackson (London: Verso, 1985), includes an incisive chapter on the controversial reverend. The Chicago-based staff of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., provide a useful overview (<http://www.britannica.com/biography/Jesse-Jackson>), as do news articles available from the Chicago Sun Times (<http://chicago.suntimes.com/?s=Jesse+Jackson>) and the Chicago Tribune (searchable at <http://www.chicagotribune.com>).

²⁷⁶ Public-worker union members were handing out fliers announcing a Jan. 18 “March for Jobs and Public Services on Martin Luther King Day” to defend from layoffs CTA bus drivers and public school staff, Food Stamp caseworkers overloaded and underfunded, and workers paying taxes while Wall Street gets bailouts: “We say not on our backs! Fund public services, not the wars! Money for jobs, not for bankers! Tax the rich, not working people!”

that of César Chavez; linked “jobs, income, comprehensive immigration reform, and the war now” as economic and social concerns; argued that MLK would stand firmly today for immigration reform; and called for a unified coalition set on social justice: “Silence is betrayal...Let us march together.” Jackson’s oratory also graced the event’s printed program:

Today we join together as community members, congressmen and elected officials, labor leaders, faith leaders, and community organization leaders in honor of the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. ...Let 2010 be the year in which the nation lives up to the standard of justice for all that Dr. King established with the sacrifice of his life. Let it be the year where the voices of all people are heard, where freedom rings in every house for every child to hear.

In a speech interrupted by frequent Amens and applause, the loudest ovation came with his interpretation of the parable of the Good Samaritan. Most of those present were familiar with the story but not the reframing Jackson offered. The man, he said, who had been robbed and left by the roadside to die was ignored again and again by people of “his same race...and by...the same religion,” whereas a very different man, a stranger and foreigner in those parts---“an undocumented immigrant”---saw him there and stopped to help. Jackson underscored this point by doubling his volume and declaring, “The Good Samaritan was an undocumented immigrant!” The room erupted in approval.

This was not the first time I had been present at a speech where the Rev. Jackson made this connection; at two other pro-immigrant rights events he briefly retold the story of the Good Samaritan before making his more forceful declaration at the First Baptist Congregational Church. He was building, moreover, on a tradition established at other churches where the parable is read; in those instances the story has highlighted the excluded, marginalized, nearly invisible legal status of the Samaritan. In addition, progressive pastors and bishops have used the parable to encourage respect for immigrant rights and liberation theology. Papal messages have reinforced this notion: In a 1996 “World Migration Day” message, John Paul II argued that “the Church, like the Good Samaritan, feels it her duty to be close to the illegal immigrant and refugee, contemporary icon of the despoiled traveler, beaten and abandoned on

the side of the road to Jericho.” Most priests and bishops, for their part, relate the events of the parable to individual Christian lives, as in this example:

The parable of the Good Samaritan also is instructive about welcoming the stranger, even if that person is not like us, or does not have a certain standing in the community. In the Gospel of Luke, the lawyer asks Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus responds with the story of the Jewish traveler, beaten up and left by the side of the road, who is aided by a Samaritan. The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, who were despised foreigners. However, the Good Samaritan is the only one in the Lord’s parable to stop and assist the Jewish traveler. In assisting a fellow human being, cultural, national, and religious differences were not an issue to the Good Samaritan. Nor should they be to us.²⁷⁷

Note that in the above example, the implication is that a stranger becomes a neighbor through his actions on the roadside, or (in a broader interpretation) merely by association with the words of Jesus. Thus the biblical invocation to “love thy neighbor” does not depend on spatial proximity nor on cultural affinities.

In a western suburb of Chicago I observed a complementary retelling of the Good Samaritan on Sept. 20, 2009, by the father of liberation theology, the Dominican priest Gustavo Gutierrez, who was delivering a speech at Elmhurst College. Gutierrez used the parable to outline the chief concern of liberation theology--the need for “a preferential love for the poor,” for those without name or place in the established order:

Who is the most important person in this tale, the parable of the Good Samaritan? Probably we want to say ‘the Samaritan’ but this is wrong. The wounded man...the wounded man [is the] most important here. Because the wounded man is anonymous.

The others have social functions: the religious functions [of the priest], the persons attacking and robbing the wounded man, their function was to rob---as it was a function. And the wounded man, we don’t know [if] he was a Samaritan, [if] he was a Jew? [He] only was a person in need. Only this. Person in need. No more. And it is a challenge for a person...

Who is my neighbor?...In some way we can say we have no neighbors. We are making neighbors. The neighborhood...is a result of our action, our commitment...The wounded man became the neighbor of the Samaritan, because neighborhood is always reciprocal.

²⁷⁷ Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington, D.C., Nov. 3, 2009, “The Catholic Church and Immigration Reform,” a document included within the “Justice for Immigrants: We Are One Family Under God” section of the PJI “Between a Rock and a Tea Party” folder, Chicago, Oct. 5, 2010.

At the present moment we are not able to write histories of how the Catholic Church supported the immigrant rights movement in the same way that the Black Church (i.e., a constellation of various Protestant denominations and a few African American Catholic parishes in the South) supported Martin Luther King, Jr., and other leaders in the Civil Rights Movement. It is worth noting, however, that when King appealed in 1965 to religious leaders to support the marches in Selma, Alabama, “priests and nuns crowded the airplanes to join him” along with Protestant ministers and rabbis; the progressive Jesuit priest John LaFarge, at eighty-three years old, was one of those marchers” (Wills 2007: 467), as were his “Enlightened heirs” within the Catholic Church (2007: 469). Since the 1930s LaFarge had contended against conservative Jesuits in Rome to urge the Church to take stronger stances against racism, including anti-Semitism (Passelelcq and Suchecky 1997). Perhaps the role of the U.S. Catholic Church today can best be compared to the role of the Catholic Church during the Civil Rights Movement. At that time, the entire Church did not stand with Martin Luther King, Jr.; however, more radical and progressive elements of the Church did. Although it is doubtful that the entire U.S. Catholic Church will throw its weight behind the movement for immigration reform at the level of every archdiocese, diocese, and parish, that history is still being written, primarily by local organizers and activists who may yet achieve a change in institutional course.

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