

**Faith Intelligence:
A Strategy for the New Evangelization in the Camino Movement**

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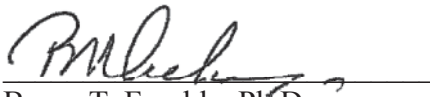
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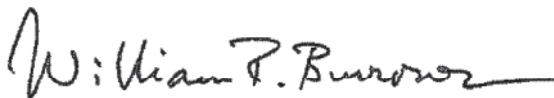
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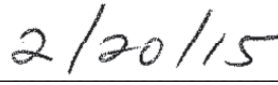
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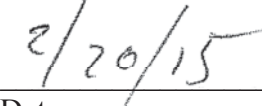
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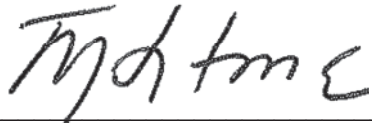
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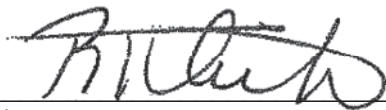
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Abstract

This dissertation presents the language and concept of faith intelligence as a new evangelization strategy for the Camino del Matrimonio movement in the Archdiocese of Miami. Building on the work of Howard Gardner, Andrew Newberg, Eugene d'Aquili and others, this dissertation argues that recent advances in neuroscience provide the necessary scientific evidence to include faith as a developable human intelligence. Moreover, this dissertation argues that presenting the concept of faith intelligence to the participants of the weekend retreat is an effective strategy for accomplishing the goals of the new evangelization in the Camino Movement.

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Dedication

In memoriam of my beautiful and loving daughter

María Caridad Artime (1978-2012).

Foreword

The initial diagnosis of the pathology of the middle ear suggested a benign glomus tumor (paraganglioma). The otolaryngologist ordered a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan of the head and neck which revealed that the skull-base tumor was very large. Surgery was not a treatment option for two reasons. First, the tumor was very vascular, which ruled out a partial resection for fear of severe hemorrhaging. Secondly, a significant portion of the tumor was surgically unreachable. For all those involved, medical doctors and family, there was a lot of uncertainty about how best to proceed.

A differential diagnosis was difficult to make since the vascularity of the tumor prevented a biopsy. My daughter Mari looked like a very healthy woman. A life-long non-smoker, perfectly fit spinning instructor with a degree in exercise physiology and well-disciplined eating habits, she did not fit the profile of a cancer patient with a poor prognosis. A benign glomus tumor was an optimistic medical opinion that seemed fitting to her overall appearance. Hence, when the results of an octreotide scan supported the paraganglioma hypothesis, radiation treatment seemed the most indicated course of action. And there was hope for full recovery.

Radiotherapy is a viable option for treating these types of tumors. In most cases the treatment is very effective with low levels of complications. The expected results were that after six weeks of radiation therapy the tumor would stop growing and perhaps even become reduced in size thus soon alleviating the symptoms she was experiencing (pain in the shoulder, neck, jaw and head, weakness in the right side of the face, some hearing loss, dizziness, and a limited range of motion in her right arm). Eventually, the

treated tumor would become calcified, and she would either recover completely or experience minor sequelae.

While scheduling radiotherapy, Mari began writing a blog to chronicle her journey.¹ In “Grace, Joy, and Healing” Mari says that her “blog has not only served as a creative outlet for me to share my inner most thoughts and feelings; it is a way to give back to all of those out there rooting for me (my cheerleaders and angels).”² Mari consistently saw the silver lining in even the most precarious and unfortunate circumstances. She saw her illness as an opportunity to grow and learn. She felt grateful and blessed for all the good that came out of it. A lesson from a mentor resonated with her during these, most difficult times of her life: “During the hardest of moments we can also live the fullest of lives.”³

After completing the radiation treatment she continued with her wedding plans but the first post-radiation test results came back with bad news. The tumor had grown down her neck alongside the jugular vein. This was totally unexpected. Glomus tumors grow very slowly. It is clear by this point that this is an atypical, aggressive tumor of an unknown type. Still, radiation therapy is the most indicated treatment under these circumstances. We were in a daze. The possibility of undergoing a second round of radiotherapy was never discussed during the initial treatment planning.

In fact, we had inquired about the possibility of treating the tumor with stereotactic radiosurgery first and then treating it with radiotherapy if that failed. The radiation oncologist explained that the same area cannot be treated twice with radiation.

¹ Maria Artime, “Grace, Joy, and Healing” (blog), July 31, 2011, <http://gracejoyandhealing.blogspot.com>. The blog was published posthumously. See Maria Artime, *Grace, Joy, and Healing* (San Francisco: Blurb, 2012).

² *Ibid.*, 3.

³ *Ibid.*, 4.

The specialists we consulted recommended traditional radiation therapy as the most adequate for her case. Hence, we were under the impression that radiation was a one-time-shot type of treatment. It never occurred to us that there could be a second round to treat an adjacent area.

In addition to the psychological impact of the news that the tumor had continued growing and that the accelerated rate of growth was indicative of malignancy, Mari had a hard time dealing with the side effects of the first round of radiation treatment to the neck area. Pain was very difficult to manage, it was hard for her to swallow because of the throat ulcers, and she had nausea after eating. The second round of radiotherapy compounded the side effects. She could not eat solid foods which resulted in drastic weight loss. She had to take high dosages of steroids to control inflammation. The steroids had adverse effects including mental confusion and possibly hyponatremia. She became immunocompromised.

The herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1) is the known cause of cold sores (fever blisters) and it is a very common viral infection.⁴ It can affect the mouth (herpes labialis), throat, face, eyes, and the central nervous system (not to be confused with genital herpes). Infection occurs through contact with contaminated saliva either through kissing or sharing drinks. Once infected, the virus remains latent in the neurons of the peripheral nervous system. The mechanism that induces reactivation of the virus is poorly understood. However, according to Mari's attending neurologists, the overall deterioration of her health either stimulated a latent infection or allowed a new infection to cross the blood-brain barrier and cause encephalitis.

⁴ Estimated seroprevalence of HSV-1 in the United States is 58% as of 2004. See Jennifer S. Smith, and Jamie Robinson, "Age-Specific Prevalence of Infection with Herpes Simplex Virus Types 2 and 1: A Global Review," *Journal of Infectious Diseases* 186 (2002): S3-S28.

Herpesviral encephalitis is rare even among immunocompromised cancer patients. It is also deadly in the vast majority of cases unless treated early. We had noticed some relatively minor cognitive irregularities for a few days that we ascribed to the tapering of the steroid dose. But her condition worsened. In less than seven hours after arriving at the hospital, Mari became completely unresponsive. An MRI revealed that the virus had caused extensive left temporal lobe edema. There was also swelling in the right temporal lobe and frontal lobes. The neurologists explained that the affected areas would endure permanent neurological damage.

Mari was hospitalized for two months. She was in neuro-ICU for almost a month and then another month in inpatient neurorehabilitation. The herpesviral encephalitis was such an imminent threat to her life that the fast-growing tumor took second stage. Mari was bedridden and fed through a nasogastric tube for weeks. When she was discharged from neurorehabilitation to go home she still could not walk on her own. The encephalitis initially caused acute aphasia but by the end of her stay in neuro-ICU she started speaking again. Soon thereafter she began to write, albeit mostly incoherently at first and in very large print. She remembered all of her family (name and face recognition) and most of her friends but she was suffering from anterograde amnesia. Possible damage to the hippocampus and/or medial temporal lobes interfered with the formation of new memories.

Short-term memory (associated with the pre-frontal lobe) was intact. Therefore, Mari could remember things for less than a minute and then she would forget them completely. This led to continual repetition of questions and statements. Her long term memory was mostly fine. Mari remembered many events of the past, but not all. She

required round-the-clock care. We moved her back home and the family took turns attending to her day and night. She continued to recover gradually from the encephalitis (physically and cognitively) but the tumor kept growing fast. Eventually, she was able to form a few new memories, but she never recovered fully of the anterograde amnesia. Ironically, before the encephalitis Mari had an extraordinary memory that played a decisive role in her academic success.

During the last year of her life, I was able to reduce my workweek to a couple of days and spend the rest of my time with her. We went to the gym together, shared meals, went to the doctors' appointments and therapies, watched television, and spent hours conversing. We both thought that she would eventually recover fully. We thought it was only a matter of time before she would return to her doctoral studies, get married, have kids, and live the wonderful life she dreamed. She repeated often that "this was only a small bump in the road." This naïve but firm expectation of full recovery liberated me at the time from the angst of realizing that my daughter was dying. Instead, I was able to focus on the phenomenon that inspires and informs the core of this dissertation: my daughter's faith intelligence.

Mari grew up in a religious environment. She went to Catholic school from kindergarten to high school. During her junior and senior year, she was a peer minister in school and a youth group leader in her parish. Faith was very important to her, but Mari was not a religious extrovert. On the outside, it was easy to perceive that Mari had a passion for business, traveling, and the chic social life. She was an intelligent conversationalist who was easy to befriend and fun to be around. But Mari was a thinker

through and through; and her relationship with God informed her thinking substantially. Thus, as Mari's personality matured through the years, so did her faith.

Mari's post-teenager process of personal development and maturity can be divided into three distinct stages. The first stage is characterized by her drive to define herself on her own terms. The climax of this stage is marked by her moving to Australia to open fine cutlery marketing company offices throughout a country that was practically unknown to her. Upon returning to the States, she rents an apartment in Miami Beach because she wants to be part of the "South Beach social life." During this stage, Mari is primarily self-centered. Spiritually, she is probably a little dry.

The second stage is a product of her participation in Landmark and the appropriation of its philosophy as a fundamental hermeneutical lens. The Landmark Forum is a personal development series of courses crafted out of applied existential philosophy. The core curriculum consists for the most part of a list of "distinctions" that serve as a guide to interpreting phenomena (life experiences) as they are in themselves without added meaning. During the Landmark class, different participants engage individually in a public dialogue with a leader who applies the "distinctions" to the students' concrete life experiences for the benefit of everyone in the class.

Mari becomes very invested in Landmark. She secretly aspires to become a forum leader thus she takes every opportunity to practice her Landmark skills. During this stage, Mari begins to "create the possibility" (using Landmark's lingo) of becoming a person for others. She also acquires a more profound sense of gratitude for her life and the people in her life. She studied exercise physiology earlier because she was into shaping her body. After the Landmark experience she starts studying psychology to help

others. She wants me to be part of her practice because she believes that pastoral care ought to be an integral part of clinical psychology. She wants to charge the patients that had insurance or could afford it, but she also wants to see pro bono the patients who could not afford her services. Her faith has matured significantly.

The third stage is the result of her illness and it is a stage characterized by faith, as her blog “Grace, Joy, and Healing” documents and demonstrates. Mari begins to reprioritize life. She writes in her blog: “One of the things that happens to you when you find out that something is going on with your health is that you gain a new perspective. Suddenly certain things you thought were crucial don't seem so important any more. It's quite a gift really. The important things shine brighter and you're able to focus on them and be present to the wonderful blessings in your life. The unimportant things (those that usually cause the most stress) become dull almost like background noise.”⁵

During this stage her feelings of gratitude blossomed. She writes: “When I'm asked about what I'm going through I always make sure to mention that there have also been many blessings that have come from this ordeal. Of course I would prefer that I had received these blessings through some other means, but this just happens to be the package that they were delivered in. So there is nothing to do but to be aware when one

⁵ Maria Artime, *Grace, Joy, and Healing*, 8. At the time Mari writes this she thinks that she has a benign glomus tumor that is not life threatening. Later, when the tumor has taken a toll, she writes: “Yesterday I was telling Ili how this whole experience has a way of putting life into such a different perspective. My whole life I've been so worried about my body; about being thin enough or beautiful enough – so much time wasted on silly preoccupations. I look at my emaciated self now and see pictures of the woman that I was just a couple of months ago. I remember her angst, her calorie counting, her gym sessions. I can tell her now that none of it matters. All of those preoccupations were for nothing. She can be set free to preoccupy herself with things that matter so much more. It is all about the relationships with others – the love we put out into the world. It comes back ten-fold. I'm incredibly aware of the compassion and love that surrounds me. It gets me through this time and keeps me fighting the fight. It is beyond moving! (Ibid., 49).

of them is presented, and then graciously accept.”⁶ She has also become keenly other-oriented. For example, she says “for quite some time, I have been what I call sensitive to the human condition. I am in tune and empathetic to others feelings and I try to be responsible for the role I play in affecting others’ emotions.”⁷

In this third stage, Mari’s relationship with God reaches maturity. Love of God and love of neighbor have merged. She says: “I walk with God. I have come to know God in a new way thanks to my illness. I feel an incredible loving embrace from my maker with me at all times.”⁸ She is very aware of the profound change in her relationship with God. She writes: “I certainly don’t have God to blame for any of this ... if anything, God is the ally, the friend who holds your hand through your trials and tribulations. For me, he has served as a source of abundant comfort that I am not alone in this and because of these experiences we have developed a relationship that is beyond what I ever even thought possible.”⁹

After the encephalitis, Mari became a religious extrovert. She began referring to God as her BFF.¹⁰ Most conversations quickly gravitated to God, her prayers of gratitude, her appreciation of God’s creation, and God’s love. She engaged in these conversations with everyone including physicians, nurses, other patients in the waiting room, and perfect strangers anywhere. One time we were consulting an endocrinologist who was not part of her regular team of physicians and I told Mari that it was inappropriate to talk

⁶ Ibid., 11. The feeling of gratitude permeates her blog, even during the most stressful and frustrating times. She says that the tumor has filled her life with “overwhelming gratitude” (Ibid., 36).

⁷ Ibid., 17. See also her entry explaining how she would gladly give up the “magic room” to someone who will be experiencing it for the first time (Ibid., 21); and her entry about compassion as one of the lessons that the tumor is teaching her (Ibid., 33).

⁸ Ibid., 47.

⁹ Ibid., 40.

¹⁰ Acronym for “best friends forever,” an informal way to refer to a girl’s best friend. See H. W., comp., *F.O.E. (Freedom of Expression): Text Message Acronym Dictionary* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris, 2008), 35, s.v. “best friends forever.”

about God when the physicians were asking her questions about her health. She explained calmly and lovingly that it was important to talk about God at every opportunity.

The interesting thing is that she was able to connect with people and engage in deeply personal conversations with them about faith. For instance, the opening line of her conversation with the endocrinologist was: “Dr. (she said his name which she read from his coat), do you pray?” I was embarrassed. He answered “yes.” She went on to list the things she was grateful to God for; and they talked about God and faith for a long time – like best friends chatting about a movie they both liked. It was clear that her intent was not to persuade him of anything. She was just sharing her joy ... and so was he. I witnessed this type of exchange many times over and with many different people.

For a while I thought that those Mari engaged in conversation about faith were just being polite and following along because they could tell there was something wrong with her. But I later realized that Mari was a conversationalist. She was doing the same thing that she had always done, except that the neurological damage had brought faith to the forefront and added a sense of urgency to sharing it at all times. The fact that neurological damage could do this awakened in me an ardent interest for the relationship between the brain and faith.

A multitude of questions filled my mind which not only reframed my interest in the new evangelization, but most importantly, offered very appealing possibilities for the question of how to evangelize today. Mari modeled the power of boldly sharing with others her experience of faith using natural conversation. The particular circumstances of her condition created an environment in which not only was it appropriate to talk about

God and faith, but the topic was overwhelmingly welcomed. She easily engaged people because her approach was genuinely natural. There was no hidden agenda. She would just start a normal conversation on the topic that completely arrested her attention at the time: her relationship with God. The experience taught me that the conversation about God and faith requires a natural context, using contemporary language that is relevant to the people of today.

Mari also provided a clue for a possible “natural context and contemporary language” for evangelization today. Before the encephalitis, Mari wrote that “anytime that science and faith get together, they have my attention.”¹¹ Here Mari senses the crux of the matter. Like many of us today, she was looking for answers to religious questions in a world informed by science. It became evident to me that bringing together faith and science may create the right context for a good conversation about faith. Precisely, one of the core components of the new evangelization is the search for new manners of presenting the message of the gospel so that it is relevant to contemporary society.

My wife had introduced me to Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences at the time that his work was gaining momentum among educators. I was persuaded by his ideas and I thought (as many others have) that spirituality was a possible candidate for an intelligence. The problem is that Gardner’s criteria for inclusion of a human faculty in his list of intelligences consists of neuro-psychological tests that at the time seemed to me were fundamentally unrelated to spirituality. However, Mari’s encephalitis, the resulting brain damage, and her ensuing expressions of faith made the brain-faith correlation palpable for me.

¹¹ Maria Artime, *Grace, Joy, and Healing*, 20.

If there are neurological correlates to our faith experience as Mari's condition suggested then the possibility of including human religious capacity and propensity in the list of intelligences was worth exploring. The effort would at least provide a "natural context and contemporary language" for a conversation about God and faith. Soon after starting my research I came across the work of neurologist Andrew Newberg and his team. Taking advantage of the recent advances in neuroimaging, Newberg's work includes investigating brain functional activity during certain religious experiences (such as prayer, meditation, and rituals). The neurophysiology of these religious experiences are sufficient to address Gardner's inclusion criteria for an intelligence; hence the idea of faith intelligence.

While the engaging language of "faith intelligence" proved to be helpful right away, in order to have this conversation in the context of the new evangelization and with a Roman Catholic audience it is imperative to preserve the integrity of the Christian message as articulated in scripture and tradition. The "new" part of the "new evangelization" refers to method and language, not to the essential content of the message. Therefore, an important component of this investigation is to discover how to articulate the concept and language of "faith intelligence" in a way that it expresses the unchanging faith of church. Fortunately, it turns out that while the neurological correlates are a new scientific discovery, and the theory of multiple intelligences is a new construct, faith intelligence is deeply rooted in Catholic tradition.

Finally, I needed a sampling source for my qualitative research. There is a well-established movement in the Archdiocese of Miami dedicated to marriage preparation. It

is called Camino del Matrimonio (Spanish for “the way of marriage”).¹² They offer a two-day weekend experience where a team of approximately fifteen married couples work with about fifty participant couples who are in the process of getting married in the Catholic Church. The movement’s expressed goal is to evangelize. At the same time, most participants in the program are baptized Catholics who do not participate habitually in the life of the church, a primary target group of the new evangelization. Moved and inspired by my experience with my daughter Mari, I investigated the movement and the possibility of the language and concept of “faith intelligence” as a strategy for the new evangelization.

¹² Camino del Matrimonio (Camino) is the largest movement in the Catholic Archdiocese of Miami in terms of the number of people served. Founded in 1973, *Camino* is part of the marriage preparation program offered by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life. Throughout the year, *Camino* conducts two-day weekend experiences once or twice a month. Most weekend experiences are in Spanish. *Camino* describes itself as an evangelization movement. See <http://www.caminodelmatrimonio.org>.

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Chapter One

A PRACTICAL THEOLOGY OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

Today's vast and rapid cultural changes demand that we constantly seek ways of expressing unchanging truths in a language which brings out their abiding newness.

—Pope Francis¹³

The discourse about faith in the Camino movement of the Archdiocese of Miami clashes with the participants' contemporary worldview.¹⁴ This discordant discourse, instead of contributing effectively to the evangelization objective of the program, reinforces in the participants the prevalent faith displacement that characterizes modern times.¹⁵ The result is that the opportunity to evangelize effectively in this privileged and unique moment is lost.¹⁶ Additionally, considering that Camino is in most cases the first exposure of the participant couples to this type of faith experience, the reinforcement of faith displacement at this time may have long-term detrimental consequences for their future faith development.

¹³ Francis (pope), *Evangelii Gaudium* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2013), 41 (hereafter cited as *Evangelii Gaudium*).

¹⁴ “Worldview” is the English translation of *Weltanschauung*, a German compound word composed of *Welt* (world) and *Anschauung* (perception or view), a technical term widely used in philosophy (Emmanuel Kant), psychology (Sigmund Freud), anthropology (Clifford Geertz), practical theology (Gerben Hitink) and other disciplines. This dissertation uses Clifford Geertz definition of worldview as the peoples’ “picture of the way things, in sheer actuality are, their concept of nature, of self, of society. It contains their most comprehensive ideas of order” (Clifford Geertz, “Ethos, World-View and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols,” *The Antioch Review* (17, no. 4, (Winter, 1957), 421-422).

¹⁵ In his encyclical *Spe Salvi*, Benedict XVI explains that the relationship between science and praxis of modern times causes faith to be “displaced onto another level—that of purely private and other-worldly affairs—and at the same time it becomes somehow irrelevant for the world” (Benedict XVI (pope), *Spe Salvi* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007), 17 (hereafter cited as *Spe Salvi*)).

¹⁶ It is a privileged moment of what the church calls “pre-evangelization” or “first proclamation” to baptized Catholics in order to arouse interest in faith developing (a *kerygmatic* invitation). See Paul VI (pope), *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1975), 51-52 (hereafter cited as *Evangelii Nuntiandi*), 51-52; General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, Ordinary General Assembly, XIII. *The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith: Lineamenta* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011), 19 (hereafter cited as *Lineamenta*).

The challenge of presenting a cogent understanding of the faith in Camino is one and the same as that of the call to a “new evangelization” in the Catholic Church: to find adept signs for communicating the gospel message in today’s world.¹⁷ This challenge offers an opportunity to use the methods of practical theology to investigate the competence of new signs for carrying out the mission of the church in the twenty-first century. Specifically, this work investigates the possibilities of the language and concept of “faith intelligence”¹⁸ as an adept symbol for evangelizing in the Camino movement.¹⁹

Howard Gardner introduced the theory of multiple intelligences in 1983.²⁰ Using eight psycho-neurological criteria, Gardner initially identified seven intelligences: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.²¹ Ten years later, under the influence of Ernst Mayr, Gardner added naturalistic intelligence to the list.²² During that same time, he also considered including spiritual intelligence, but concluded that it did not qualify under the criteria he had

¹⁷ Benedict XVI (pope), *Fides per Doctrinam* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2013) (herein after cited as *Fides per Doctrinam*). See also *Lineamenta*, 44.

¹⁸ “Faith Intelligence” is a translation of the Patristic concept “*intellectus fidei*” that explains the relationship between understanding as an intellectual faculty and the experience of faith. In a strict sense, it is the undertaking of presenting the “content of the Christian mystery in a rational and scientific way.” Catholic Church. International Theological Commission, *Theology Today: Perspectives, Principles and Criteria* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 18. See also John Paul II (pope), *Fides et Ratio* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998), 5, 42, and 66 (hereafter cited as *Fides et Ratio*); John Paul II (pope), *Redemptor Hominis* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1979), 19 (hereinafter cited as *Redemptor Hominis*); and *Fides per Doctrinam*.

¹⁹ This dissertation follows the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce. A symbol is a type of sign. See Charles S. Peirce, “On a New List of Categories,” in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 1, eds. Nathan Houser and Christian J. Kloesel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 7-8.

²⁰ Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

²¹ *Ibid.*, 77-292.

²² During one of Gardner’s lectures, Mayr made the simple observation that Charles Darwin could not be explained using the initial set of intelligences. See Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 18.

established. Instead, he hesitantly added existential intelligence, which he considers a facet of spirituality, as a “promising candidate” but not a “full-blown” intelligence.²³

Gardner cites two reasons for rejecting spirituality as a human intelligence. First, he argues that “an intelligence should not be confounded with an individual’s phenomenological experience.”²⁴ In this argument, he reduces spiritual experiences to “a set of visceral reactions,”²⁵ which would inaccurately limit religious experiences to the limbic system of the brain.²⁶ Second, he objects to the subjective inseparability of spirituality to belief in God, religion and belonging to a religious tradition. Gardner is concerned that “those of a scientific bent” would not take him seriously, especially in the academy.²⁷

Yet, the theory of multiple intelligences offers a very suitable contemporary model for describing human interactions in and with the world. If Gardner’s model has merit as a scientific theory then the truths it discloses must also be true for theology.²⁸ Practical theology can effectively address Gardner’s concerns about spirituality by offering more precise theological definitions and insights. Using the word “faith” rather than “spirituality” is one example, as discussed later on in chapter four.

Neurologist Andrew Newberg has done extensive scientific research on religion and the brain. Newberg’s research indirectly attends to the eight selection criteria in

²³ Gardner often talks about his list of “eight and half” intelligences referring to the inconclusive status of existential intelligence. Howard Gardner, “Multiple Intelligences: The First 25 Years” (presentation, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA, January 26, 2010). See also Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons* (New York, Basic Books, 2006), 20-21.

²⁴ Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*, 20-21

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Spiritual experiences and thinking are complex neurological processes that involve many parts of the brain beyond the limbic system. See Andrew Newberg and Mark Waldman, *How God Changes your Brain* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2009), 49-52. Pope John Paul II is critical of “scientism” that dismisses religious values as “mere products of the emotions.” See *Fides et Ratio*, 88.

²⁷ Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*, 20-21.

²⁸ “Truth cannot contradict truth.” Leo XIII (pope), *Providentissimus Deus* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1893), 23. See also *Fides et Ratio*, 34.

Gardner's model and beyond. Based on these scientific findings, and using clear and distinct definitions, faith meets the criteria for inclusion as a human intelligence in Gardner's model. This work incorporates both scientific and theological foundations to sustain such claim, and investigates the effectiveness of using this contemporary language for evangelization in the Camino movement. This includes identifying strategies for including the topic in the weekend curriculum.

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. This first chapter explains the concept of the new evangelization which is the overarching context of this work of practical theology. This chapter pays attention to the problem of faith displacement as the core challenge of the new evangelization. After an analysis of the historical causes of faith displacement, the chapter describes how the language and concept of faith intelligence are viable solutions for addressing this problem in Camino.

Chapter two describes the method of practical theology used to investigate the Camino movement. It includes a description of the movement in general and the weekend experience in particular. It also provides a description of the specific process that the researcher followed for investigating the movement. Chapter three presents a thick description of Camino that pays particular attention to the religious signs that are currently used to evangelize during the weekend experience. Chapter four develops the concept of faith intelligence and how it meets the criteria for inclusion in Gardner's model. Finally, Chapter five presents guidelines for incorporating the language and concept of faith intelligence in the curriculum of the weekend experience.

The New Evangelization

In its organizational purpose statement, Camino asserts that it is an apostolic movement of the Catholic Church, and as such it is an evangelization movement.²⁹ The statement acknowledges that the nature of apostolic work is to evangelize. In fact, the primary and most fundamental task and mission of the church is the proclamation of Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God to all peoples.³⁰ Rooted in an explicit mandate from the gospel³¹ and from “the profound demands of God's life within us”³² evangelization is the universal duty of the church. Therefore, as a church movement, the central purpose of Camino is to evangelize, in this case, in the specific context of preparing couples to “live the Sacrament of Marriage.”³³

The call to evangelize, including the evangelization that since the pontificate of John Paul II is widely characterized as “new,”³⁴ is now, and has been from its inception,

²⁹ Camino del Matrimonio, *Manual de Coordinadores y Bases* (Miami, FL: Camino del Matrimonio, 2012), http://www.caminodelmatrimonio.org/images/stories/Downloads/MANUAL_DE_COORDINACION_2012.pdf, accessed March 2, 2013, 3 (hereafter cited as *Camino's Manual*).

³⁰ This concept is repeated often in the documents of the Catholic Church. See, for example, Vatican II Council, “Lumen Gentium, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” in *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Vatican Collection Series, vol. 1, ed. Austin Flannery, 350-426 (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1988), 16-17 (hereafter cited as *Lumen Gentium*); Vatican II Council, “Ad Gentes, Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church,” in *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Vatican Collection Series, vol. 1., ed. Austin Flannery, 813-856 (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1988), 10 (hereafter cited as *Ad Gentes*); *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 14; Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2001), 40 (hereafter cited as *Novo Millennio Ineunte*); John Paul II (pope), *Redemptoris Missio* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1990), 86 (hereafter cited as *Redemptoris Missio*); *Evangelii Gaudium*, 15; and Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano y del Caribe, *Concluding Document: Aparecida* (Bogota: CELAM, 2007), 548 (hereafter cited as *Aparecida*).

³¹ Matthew 28:16-20, Mark 16:15-16, Luke 24: 44-53, John 20:21-23. All biblical references in this dissertation are taken from The New American Bible (NAB) published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2002.

³² *Redemptoris Missio*, 11.

³³ *Camino's Manual*, 3.

³⁴ While the term “new evangelization” had been sporadically used before, it was not until March 9, 1983 that Pope John Paul II, in his opening speech to the XIX Ordinary Assembly of the Episcopate of Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAM) in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, began speaking properly of a New Evangelization, which he characterized as new “in its ardor, methods, and expression.” The speech is

the very *raison d'être* of the church. The church exists to evangelize.³⁵ It is its deepest nature and its identity.³⁶ Everything that the Church does must be rightfully oriented towards this end;³⁷ and all of its energies must be committed to this task.³⁸ The scriptural sign of Pentecost depicts the birth of the church as the Spirit induced act of proclaiming the *kerygma*³⁹ to all nations of the world.⁴⁰ Receiving the Spirit (God's life within) is intrinsically connected with the outward act of sharing with others what has been received.

All baptized Christians share the duty and responsibility to participate actively in the evangelization mission of the church.⁴¹ The sacraments of initiation, particularly baptism and confirmation, celebrate the vocation and commitment to a lifelong journey of discipleship and missionary activity.⁴² As Pope Francis points out, through baptism Christians are transformed into “missionary disciples.”⁴³ Through their sacramental marriage, the participants of Camino, like all Christian families, are called to become a missionary domestic church where “all the members evangelize and are evangelized.”⁴⁴ A key part of Camino’s work is to make the couples that participate in the program

available at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/1983/march/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19830309_assemblea-celam_sp.html, accessed March 5, 2014.

³⁵ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 14.

³⁶ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 14. See also *Evangelii Gaudium*, 14, *Redemptoris Missio*, 49.

³⁷ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 14.

³⁸ *Redemptoris Missio*, 3.

³⁹ *Kerygma* refers to the core proclamation of the Christ-event and the kingdom of God. See *Redemptoris Missio*, 16; Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005), 25 (hereafter cited as *Deus Caritas Est*); *Fides et Ratio*, 24.

⁴⁰ Acts 2: 1-41.

⁴¹ *Lumen Gentium*, 31; Pope John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998), 2 (hereafter cited as *Christifideles Laici*).

⁴² *Evangelii Gaudium*, 119.

⁴³ *Evangelii Gaudium*, 120. See also *Aparecida*, 10.

⁴⁴ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 71. See also John Paul II (pope), *Familiaris Consortio* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1981), 54, 49 (hereafter cited as *Familiaris Consortio*), and *Lumen Gentium*, 11.

conscious of this mission and to renew and revive in them their baptismal commitment to be effective missionary disciples through their marriage.⁴⁵

The church's call to evangelize is loud and clear and the facilitators that work in Camino hear it and heed it. They are committed to evangelization. What is not clear is *how*. As Pope Paul VI points out, the question of "how to evangelize" is "permanently relevant."⁴⁶ There is widespread awareness among the movement leaders that presenting the faith content in a way that is meaningful to the participants is the greatest challenge of the weekend experience. They trust that the Holy Spirit is at work, nevertheless, there is concern that the message may not be getting through. For example, during a summary feedback exercise that is done at the beginning of the second day of the weekend experience, the participants do a creative representation of all the talks from the day before. They use drama, poetry, music, and drawings to summarize the key points of the talks as they remember them. The purpose of the exercise is to give the facilitators an indication of how well the participants understand the main ideas of the material that has been presented thus far. Most of the time, the participants do fairly well summarizing the content related to the psychology of marriage, but demonstrate difficulty expressing the faith content and frequently exclude all references to it in their feedback.

Also, in the evaluations of the weekend experience, the prevailing tendency is that the participants focus more on the concepts related to building healthy marital relationships and mostly ignore or deemphasize the aspects related to faith. In other words, while they consistently express their appreciation of the value of the facilitators'

⁴⁵ See *Instrumentum Laboris*, 118.

⁴⁶ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 40.

testimony (which is explicitly informed by faith), the participants' feedback in general does not mimic the faith context and content of the curriculum.

These indicators suggest that the religious message has poor reception; not in the sense that the participants object to it, but rather that it seems irrelevant to them. The fact that in general they seem to be paying attention during the presentations is indicative that they are interested at some level. At the same time, the lack of references to the religious content in their feedback suggests they did not find that these ideas had any direct bearing or import to their daily lives. While the marital advice, independently of whether they take it or not, is treated as pertinent, the religious content is mostly ignored. The question is: Why?

The Problem of Displacement

Finding the specific causes of this disconnect in Camino requires a more detailed semiotic analysis which is done later in chapter three. At this time, for the purpose of placing this work in the context of the new evangelization, it is sufficient to examine some general causes.⁴⁷ The most prominent cause of the disconnect is that the religious signs (language, gestures, and objects) being used are perceived as anachronistic. As Pope Benedict XVI lamented in a homily in Munich, “what is said about God strikes us as pre-scientific, no longer suited to our age.”⁴⁸ The traditional ways of presenting the

⁴⁷ In the Apostolic Letter *Ubicumque et Semper* which establishes the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, Pope Benedict XVI explains that the new evangelization is directed particularly to certain groups identified by Pope Paul VI in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*: 1) for those who have been baptized but who live quite outside Christian life, 2) for simple people who have a certain faith but an imperfect knowledge of the foundations of that faith, 3) for intellectuals who feel the need to know Jesus Christ in a light different from the instruction they received as children. Pope Benedict XVI, *Ubicumque et Semper* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2010). The strong correlation between these groups and the participants in Camino, makes Camino, de facto, a movement of the new evangelization.

⁴⁸ Benedict XVI (pope), "Homily of the Holy Father," Outdoor site of the Neue Messe, Munich, on September 10, 2006, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/homilies/2006/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20060910_neue-messe-munich_en.html, accessed January 20, 2012.

message has become ineffective for a significant segment of the world's population, including most of the couples preparing for sacramental marriage in Camino.

In *Gaudium et Spes*, the conciliar fathers speak of the permanent duty of the church of “scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel” in order to carry out its mission in a “language intelligible to each generation.”⁴⁹ In their assessment of the contemporary world at the time, the council fathers describe the present era as a “new stage in history” characterized by “profound and rapid changes” brought about by a “scientific spirit” that produces “a new kind of impact on the cultural sphere and on modes of thought.”⁵⁰ While recognizing the favorable consequences of the scientific revolution on the human intellect and the ensuing technological advances it makes possible, there is concern that scientific progress has had a detrimental “impact on religion.”⁵¹ The council fathers during Vatican II are particularly concerned about the “denial of God” and the abandonment of religious practice as “requirements of scientific progress.”⁵²

The post-Vatican II documents of the church correlate “the present-day phenomenon of secularism”⁵³ with the dominant scientific worldview⁵⁴ that has produced what Pope John Paul II describes as the “crisis of meaning” that leads to “an ever deepening introversion” where humanity is increasingly “locked within the confines of its

⁴⁹Vatican II Council, “Gaudium et Spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,” in *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Vatican Collection Series, vol. 1, ed. A. Flannery, 903-1001 (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1988), 4, (hereafter cited as *Gaudium et Spes*).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 4-5. See also *Fides et Ratio*, 6 and John Paul II (pope), *Centesimus Annus* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1991), 4, (hereafter cited as *Centesimus Annus*).

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Christifideles Laici*, 4.

⁵⁴ Benedict XVI (pope), *Caritas in Veritate* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2009), 70 (hereafter cited as *Caritas in Veritate*); *Spe Salvi* 16-23. See also Gerben Heitink, *Practical Theology: History, Theory, Action Domains* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999). 40-41.

own immanence without reference of any kind to the transcendent.”⁵⁵ But, at the same time, this “secularist post-Enlightenment ideology”⁵⁶ does not extinguish the “human longing and the need for religion.”⁵⁷ In fact, as discussed in more detail in chapter four, human longing for the transcendent is rooted in the biology of the brain and consequently inherent to human nature.⁵⁸

The effect of these two opposing forces, secularism and the spiritual brain, for the most part, is not abandonment of belief in God but faith displacement. There is a “persistence of the sacred in contemporary society”⁵⁹ even among people who find it difficult to reconcile traditional ways of speaking about God with the present-day worldview. Pope Benedict XVI explains that it “is not that faith is simply denied; rather it is displaced onto another level—that of purely private and other-worldly affairs—and at the same time it becomes somehow irrelevant for the world.”⁶⁰ Faith displacement is a form of psychological compartmentalization, an unconscious intellectual defense when dealing with cognitive dissonance.⁶¹ Belief in God and religious practice, cognitively sustained by signs perceived as archaic, are confined to their own mental compartment. There they continue to exist in an isolated state that is functionally disconnected from the rest of life.

⁵⁵ *Fides et Ratio*, 81.

⁵⁶ Benedict XVI (pope), “Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Bishops of the Western Catholic Conference of Canada on their “Ad Limina” Visit,” Vatican City, on October 9, 2006, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2006/october/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20061009_western-canada_en.html, accessed March 8, 2014.

⁵⁷ *Christifideles Laici*, 4.

⁵⁸ Andrew Newberg, Eugene D’Aquili, and Vince Rause, *Why God Won’t Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2001), 140-141.

⁵⁹ Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without Belonging* (Cambridge, UK: Basil Blackwell, 1994), 94.

⁶⁰ *Spe Salvi*, 17.

⁶¹ Nancy McWilliams, *Psychoanalytic Diagnosis: Understanding Personality Structure in the Clinical Process* (New York: Guilford Press, 2011), 134-136.

In an interview with Marta,⁶² a dental surgeon, the topic of the myth of Adam and Eve came up in conversation. For Marta the biblical creation accounts are historical facts. When asked if men have one less rib than women she was surprised. She said that she has “never put too much thought into it” but that men and women today have the same number of ribs.⁶³ Compartmentalization allows the creation myth to coexist in her mind with conflicting scientific knowledge. Marta considers her knowledge of anatomy to be accurate and true and she also believes the biblical story as a factual historical account.

The coexistence of conflicting beliefs like these produces a disconnect between faith and life. Since scientific knowledge has greater epistemic value in contemporary scientific-minded societies, faith becomes a private matter significantly alienated from the praxis⁶⁴ of public daily life. The practice of faith is then restricted to sporadic participation in rites of passage (which is how the participant couples end up in Camino) or cursory prayer particularly during moments of suffering or difficulty. This distancing of the faith from public everyday experience devalues it and reduces it to marginal observances devoid of real significance.

⁶² Throughout this dissertation, unless first and last names are used, the real name of the person is not disclosed to protect the anonymity of the interviewee.

⁶³ Marta, interview by author, Miami, FL, November 18, 2012. Marta and all other first names without last names cited hereafter are aliases used to protect the identity of the informant.

⁶⁴ Praxis in the context of practical theology refers to “the actions of individuals and groups in society, within and outside the church, who are willing to be inspired in their private and public lives by the Christian tradition, and who want to focus on the salvation of humankind and the world” (Heitink, 151). Praxis is “active engagement with the world in light of the Gospel” (John Swinton, “What is Practical Theology?,” in *Religious Studies and Theology: An Introduction*, eds. Helen Bond, Seth Kunin and Francesca Aran Murphy (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 396).

Faith is about the constant transformative encounter with God in the praxis of daily life.⁶⁵ It is a way of being in the world with others. “Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.”⁶⁶ Expressed differently, engaging actively in this “experience of encounter” with God changes “neural functioning in specific parts of the brain.”⁶⁷ It transforms being in the world. In this regard, faith understood as an experience of encounter is not just one of many experiences that human beings have; it is a holistic ontological experience that transforms human “orientation to life.”⁶⁸

Consequently, the main purpose of evangelization is not to exact a particular code of moral conduct or promote specific patterns of religious behavior such as habitual church attendance, independently of the importance of these things. It is not a matter of knowing truths, memorizing formulas, or participating in rituals, which are all valuable and important, but not the essence of faith. In the words of John Paul II, the new evangelization "is not a matter of merely passing on doctrine but rather of a personal and profound meeting with the Savior."⁶⁹ The performance objective⁷⁰ of evangelization is metanoia:⁷¹ the transformation of the “totality of life” through an evolving process of

⁶⁵ See Francis (pope), *Lumen Fidei* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2013), 51 (hereafter cited as *Lumen Fidei*).

⁶⁶ *Deus Caritas Est*, 1.

⁶⁷ Andrew Newberg and Mark Waldman, *How God Changes Your Brain: Breakthrough Findings* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2010), 149.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 78; 54-55.

⁶⁹ *L'Osservatore Romano*, Eng. ed., Jan. 14, 1991, p. 2, see also *Ad Gentes*, 13.

⁷⁰ The Christian message is both informative and “performative.” In this context, “performance objective” is a reference to the message that “makes things happen and is life-changing” (*Spe Salvi*, 2). See also *Spe Salvi*, 10.

⁷¹ The Greek word *metanoia* is often translated to English in Christian texts as “a change of heart and mind, a conversion.” See Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church: Revised in Accordance with the Official Latin Text Promulgated by Pope John Paul II* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997), 1427-1429 (hereinafter cited as CCC). Yet, “conversion” does not fully express the meaning of *metanoia*.

radical neurological transformation that affects the brain as a whole. Metanoia is the result of the “personal and profound meeting with the Savior” that Pope John Paul II describes.

Metanoia is a lifelong process, but it must start at some point in life for everyone who takes the journey. Camino, as an evangelization movement, offers a starting point to this process which is precisely what makes the weekend experience a privileged moment of the new evangelization.⁷² Couples “who live quite outside Christian life”⁷³ come to the church because they want a Catholic wedding. While they may not be seeking spiritual growth and development, and Camino is imposed on them as a prerequisite for the wedding they want, their desire for a Catholic wedding is strong enough that they comply. In the end, the important thing is that, regardless of their initial motivation, most participants consistently engage fully in the weekend presentations. There the facilitators have the opportunity to instill in them the seed of metanoia, begin a process to correct faith displacement, and revive in them their baptismal commitment. This is the essence and core meaning of being an “evangelization movement” of the church.⁷⁴

The Fundamental Characteristics of the New Evangelization

“The term “new evangelization” calls for a new manner of proclaiming the Gospel, especially for those who live in the present-day situation which is affected by the

Conversion comes from the Latin *convertere* which means to turn around. In this sense, “conversion” (like repentance, remorse, reconsideration) is a corrective movement. But “none of these words exhaust the contents of the original meaning” of metanoia. See Pope Benedict XVI, *Credo for Today: What Christians Believe* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009), 143. *Metanoia*, on the other hand, comes from the Greek *meta* meaning “beyond,” “after” and from *nous* meaning “mental process,” “understanding,” “mind,” and “intelligence.” *Metanoia* is a forward movement of the mind that “affects one’s whole life and affects life wholly.” *Ibid.*

⁷² See *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 51.

⁷³ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 52. Pope Paul VI is talking about people who have been baptized but “whose lives do not reflect the demands of Baptism” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 15). See also *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 21; *Redemptoris Missio*, 33.

⁷⁴ See *Redemptoris Missio*, 49; *Instrumentum Laboris*, 96, 115-119.

growing trend of secularization, taking place to a great extent in countries with a Christian tradition.”⁷⁵ This “new manner of proclaiming the Gospel” concretely refers to three things that Pope John Paul II, describing what is “new” in the new evangelization, ingeniously summarizes with the words: “ardor, methods, and expression.”⁷⁶ These three words capture the essence of the new evangelization.

Pastoral Conversion

The new “ardor” for the missionary mandate is much more than increased enthusiasm or zeal for evangelization, as the word may initially suggest. The new ardor of the new evangelization requires a *pastoral conversion* to missionary discipleship.⁷⁷ The church must take “bold steps in revitalizing her spiritual and missionary vocation.”⁷⁸ “All ecclesial structures and all pastoral plans of dioceses, parishes, religious communities, movements, and any Church institution must be imbued with this firm missionary decision. No community should excuse itself from entering decidedly with all its might into the ongoing processes of missionary renewal and from giving up outdated structures that are no longer helpful for handing on the faith.”⁷⁹

A pastoral conversion for Camino (as for all movements and structures of the church) means putting mission first, as the top priority and its reason to exist. This

⁷⁵ The General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, *The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith: Instrumentum Laboris* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2012), 44 (hereafter cited as *Instrumentum Laboris*).

⁷⁶ John Paul II (pope), “Discurso del Santo Padre Juan Pablo II a la Asamblea del CELAM,” Speech given at the Assembly of the Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano (CELAM), Port-au-Prince, Haiti, March 9, 1983, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/es/speeches/1983/march/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19830309_asamblea-celam.html, accessed January 9, 2014, sec. III. See also *Instrumentum Laboris*, 45.

⁷⁷ *Evangelii Gaudium*, 27. See also Benedict XVI (pope), “Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI for the World Mission Sunday 2010,” Vatican City, on February 6, 2010, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/messages/missions/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20100206_world-mission-day-2010.html, accessed July 10, 2014.

⁷⁸ *Instrumentum Laboris*, 46.

⁷⁹ *Aparecida*, 365.

requires a reprioritization of its objectives as a movement. Camino describes its main objective as sacramental preparation.⁸⁰ It recognizes that it is an evangelization movement, but this is perceived as something inherent to all apostolic movements and not its primary and most fundamental purpose. Camino was founded for the specific purpose of curbing divorce. The religious content of the weekend experience is at the service of this foundational purpose. The primary question that presently drives the movement is “How can we help to make marriages last for a lifetime?”

A pastoral conversion means the primacy of evangelization. For Camino, it requires changing the underlying question to: “How can we help to spark the encounter with God at this moment of passage?” Mission is the priority. Sacramental preparation ought to be at the service of evangelization and not the other way around. The encounter with God takes precedence over promoting lasting marriages. The call to a pastoral conversion means to fully embrace the vocation to be totally mission-oriented. For Camino, heeding the church’s call to pastoral conversion marks a new stage in its history and, at the same time, a return to its roots as discussed later on in chapter three.

Additionally, a pastoral conversion is particularly fitting to Camino in the context of the new evangelization and the population that the movement serves. Reaching out to the participants and igniting in them a desire to revive and deepen their faith ought to be the top priority of the movement. Beyond a rewording of priorities in the manual, a pastoral conversion in Camino requires a theological revision of the weekend experience; a rethinking of how to evangelize today.

⁸⁰ *Camino’s Manual*, 3.

New Methods of Evangelizing

Finding new methods for evangelization is not just a “matter of researching an effective plan of communication,”⁸¹ such as using existing and emerging technologies to broadcast the message using the same tired signs.⁸² Nor is it a matter of “analytically concentrating on the hearers, for example, the young”⁸³ and using the media that they use to repeat the message encoded in the traditional way. It is not that effective communication plans or targeting certain groups are in themselves damaging or ineffectual strategies for evangelization. On the contrary, the church sees the new and emerging technologies as “a precious aid for spreading the Gospel” and “to expand the boundaries of evangelization.”⁸⁴ And young people “who have an almost spontaneous affinity for the new means of communication” are called to “take responsibility for the evangelization of this “digital continent”.”⁸⁵

But it would be an error to reduce the new methods of evangelization to the use of contemporary technologies without adapting the delivery of the message to contemporary culture.⁸⁶ Having a presence on Facebook, using PowerPoint presentations, tweeting bible verses, and developing apps with religious content for smartphones may all be very

⁸¹ *Lineamenta*, 2.

⁸² *Redemptoris Missio*, 37. For instance, popular religious films like Mark Burnett and Roma Downey’s *The Son of God* (20th Century Fox, released in February 2014) or Mel Gibson’s *The Passion of the Christ* (Icon Productions, February 2004) are not examples of the new evangelization. In their effort to be faithful to the scripture narratives, the filmmakers present a story that depicts an ancient world that is very distant from today’s world, hence they may seem unrelated and irrelevant. On the other hand, Andrew Webber and Tim Rice’s rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Decca/MCA/Decca Broadway, 1970) and Stephen Schwartz’s musical *Godspell* (Arista-4001, 1971) are good examples of past efforts that at their time were consistent with the use of the media for the new evangelization.

⁸³ *Lineamenta*, 2.

⁸⁴ John Paul II (pope), *Apostolic Letter, The Rapid Development* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005), 7. See also Vatican II Council, “Inter Mirifica, Pastoral Constitution on the Means of Social Communication,” in *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Vatican Collection Series, vol. 1, ed. Austin Flannery, 283-292 (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1988), 2.

⁸⁵ Benedict XVI (pope), *Message for the 43rd World Communication Day* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2009).

⁸⁶ *Redemptoris Missio*, 37c.

good ideas, but it is not what the new evangelization is about. In fact, “digitizing” the Gospel message without adopting contemporary signs highlights the outmodedness of the signs for an increasing number of people. Such methods are more likely to produce dissonance and the ensuing faith displacement than they are to spark an encounter with God. In other instances, they may be perceived as misguided fanaticism or proselytizing attempts. The cacophony of the old signs in the technologically advanced media of today is counterproductive.

The new methods for evangelization require a creative revamping of the way of proclaiming the unchanging message of salvation. This in itself is not new, but rather something the church is always called to do “because the methods of evangelizing vary according to the different circumstances of time, place and culture.”⁸⁷ The proclamation of the Gospel must become “incarnate” in the contemporary world. God enters human history by choosing a particular culture (the people of Israel) and ultimately by becoming a first-century Jew with all the cultural idiosyncrasies of his birthplace and epoch.⁸⁸ Jesus, as portrayed in the gospels, proclaims the message of the *basileia*⁸⁹ in the language and worldview of his contemporaries. His message is radical and transformative but it does not stand out as foreign. His *basileia* transcends the world, but Jesus himself is not perceived as someone from a different world or a different time. In other words, Jesus

⁸⁷ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 40.

⁸⁸ See John P. Meier, *The Roots of the Problem and the Person*, vol. 1 of *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (New York: Doubleday, 1991). See also Bernard J. Lee, *Jesus and the Metaphors of God: the Christs of the New Testament*, vol. 2 of *Conversations on the Road Not Taken* (New York: Paulist Press, 1993). See also Vatican II Council, “*Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation,” in *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Vatican Collection Series, vol. 1, ed. Austin Flannery, 750-765 (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1988), 14 (hereafter cited as *Dei Verbum*).

⁸⁹ The translation of βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ (*Basileia tou Theou*) as “Kingdom of God” has certain monarchical connotations that may distort the original meaning in a modern context, thus the preferred use of *Basileia* throughout this dissertation. See Johannes A. van der Van, *Practical Theology: An Empirical Approach* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 69.

and his message are not perceived as archaic by those who heard him personally; not even by those who disapprove of him and his message in the gospel narratives.

Evangelization today must operate in the same manner: it must be transformative *from within* the prevalent worldview of the culture it “incarnates.” It must use contemporary metaphors appropriate to each specific culture to make the transcendent accessible to the people in each particular cultural setting.⁹⁰ Upgrading the metaphors is required to preserve the original content of the message.⁹¹ Otherwise, since the meanings of metaphors depend on human experience that is constantly changing, they may become distorted, confusing or meaningless.⁹² Therefore, fidelity to the message’s content requires updating and renewing the method and language for the transmission of faith.

In addition to “complete fidelity to the content of evangelization,”⁹³ the “unchanging truths”⁹⁴ of the Christian message, there is also one fundamental aspect of evangelization that remains constant throughout the ages: authentic witnessing. “The first means of evangelization is the witness of an authentically Christian life.”⁹⁵ The relational nature of faith demands credible witnesses as a condition for evangelization. Otherwise, method and language are reduced to marketing strategies that promote empty beliefs that fail to move people to a true relationship with God.

⁹⁰ This is something that the church has done “from the beginning of her history” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 44). See also *Instrumentum Laboris*, 129.

⁹¹ See Bernard J. Lee, *Jesus and the Metaphors of God: the Christs of the New Testament*, vol. 2 of *Conversations on the Road Not Taken* (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 20-22.

⁹² Pope Francis explains that “there are times when the faithful, in listening to completely orthodox language, take away something alien to the authentic Gospel of Jesus Christ, because that language is alien to their own way of speaking to and understanding one another” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 41); see also John Paul II (pope), *Ut Unum Sint* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995), 19.

⁹³ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 40.

⁹⁴ *Evangelii Gaudium*, 41.

⁹⁵ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 41. See also *Redemptoris Missio*, 7, 11.

This authentic witnessing is characterized by *parrhesia*,⁹⁶ joy,⁹⁷ and love.⁹⁸ Genuine *parrhesia* springs from authenticity. It is boldness rooted in real experience. *Parrhesia* has more to do with who the person is than with anything that is said or how it is said.⁹⁹ *Parrhesia* is not rhetoric; it is content. It is in itself a sign that produces meaning. It is not a matter of *daring* to speak with bravery or without inhibitions, but a “having to speak”¹⁰⁰ that which is known to be true and for sake of others. The transformative experience of Pentecost fills the apostles with *parrhesia* which impels them to communicate to others their experience of God so those who hear them may experience it too.¹⁰¹

Christian joy, the joy of authentic witnessing, is a frame of mind that results from experiencing love through a relationship with God.¹⁰² This joy transcends pain and suffering. It is founded on hope. Joy “always endures, even as a flicker of light born of our personal certainty that, when everything is said and done, we are infinitely loved.”¹⁰³ Joy is *joy in God* and in God’s promises through Christ. The paradox of the cross expresses the true meaning of Christian joy: “the Gospel, radiant with the glory of Christ’s cross, constantly invites us to rejoice.”¹⁰⁴ Consequently, authentic Christian witnessing consistently expresses the “joy of Christ”¹⁰⁵ even at times of great difficulty and sorrow. Finally, love is the most fundamental and defining characteristic of

⁹⁶ *Parrhesia* is a Greek figure of speech that can be translated as “speaking one’s mind with boldness” which requires being authentic. See *Redemptoris Missio*, 45.

⁹⁷ *Evangelii Gaudium*, 4-13; *Instrumentum Laboris*, 167; *Lineamenta*, 25.

⁹⁸ *Deus Caritas Est*, 31.

⁹⁹ *Lineamenta*, 16.

¹⁰⁰ See Acts 4:20.

¹⁰¹ See Acts 1:8; 2:17-18. See also *Redemptoris Missio*, 24; *Lineamenta*, 5, 7; *Evangelii Gaudium*, 24; *Aparecida*, 29.

¹⁰² *Redemptoris Missio*, 91; *Spe Salvi*, 14; *Aparecida*, 17.

¹⁰³ *Evangelii Gaudium*, 6.

¹⁰⁴ *Evangelii Gaudium*, 5.

¹⁰⁵ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 75. See also *Instrumentum Laboris*, 9, 17, 167-169; *Evangelii Gaudium*, 10. *Aparecida*, 14,

discipleship.¹⁰⁶ The relationship with God is intrinsically connected to loving others.¹⁰⁷

The practice of love, actively responding to the needs of others, particularly the neediest, is the most fundamental way of witnessing.¹⁰⁸

In Camino, witnessing is considered one of the most effective components of the weekend experience.¹⁰⁹ The witnessing of the facilitators begins by their “willingness to invest their weekend” in Camino.¹¹⁰ It would seem more practical to have either a reduced group of professional presenters during the weekend experience or to have a selection of couples from the existing pool of facilitators come in just for their presentations and then leave.¹¹¹ But the facilitators know from experience that the testimony of faith given by the presence of the approximately fifteen married couples during the entire weekend experience is a very powerful evangelization tool. As noted earlier, the participants consistently mention it in their feedback.

At the beginning of every weekend experience, the facilitating couples are asked to briefly introduce themselves. They usually begin by telling the participants how long they have been married and describing their families (they talk about their children, grandchildren, and sometimes even their pets). They mention their parish and their involvement in the church. They typically conclude by talking about the joy of serving in Camino. Most of the facilitators say things that make everyone laugh as they introduce themselves. This creates a relaxed atmosphere and works very well as an ice-breaker. As the couples introduce themselves and mention the number of years they have been

¹⁰⁶ John 13:35.

¹⁰⁷ Matthew 22: 34-40. See also *Deus Caritas Est*, 16-18.

¹⁰⁸ *Deus Caritas Est*, 31;

¹⁰⁹ *Camino's Manual*, 9-10. Also, in the outline for most of the presentations, personal witnessing is highlighted as the key component. See *Camino's Manual*, 58, 59, 63, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, and 77.

¹¹⁰ *Camino's Manual*, 3.

¹¹¹ That is the method that was used in Engaged Encounters of the Archdiocese of Miami (marriage preparation program in English) for many years.

married (typically over thirty years) a certain feeling of awe becomes evident in the facial expressions of the participants. They immediately realize that the weekend of Camino is conducted by a group of committed Christians who have been married for a while and are happy to be sharing the weekend experience with them. This sets the tone for the rest of the experience.

Expression: The Search for New Signs

In the symbol-rich depiction of Pentecost in the Acts of the Apostles, those who hear the proclamation of the disciples are initially astounded not because of the content of the message or the eloquence of its delivery but “because each one heard them speaking in his own language.”¹¹² Most likely Luke intends to convey the universality of the mission of the nascent church, but the symbol also speaks of hearing the message in the language that is closest to the hearer’s conception of the world. The message of the Galileans makes sense in the *worldview* of the different cultures of the time. The translation of the message is not just a matter of using the phonology and grammar of other languages, but, most importantly, communicating it in the specific cultural context of the different peoples.¹¹³

For example, the initial translation of the message is not only a translation from Aramaic to Greek to Latin, but a translation from a Jewish worldview to a Hellenistic worldview to a Roman worldview where each influences the other. In order to be fully apprehended, the message must take root in the cultural worldview. Pope Paul VI says that “what matters is to evangelize ... culture and cultures (not in a purely decorative way, as it were, by applying a thin veneer, but in a vital way, in depth and right to their

¹¹² Acts 2: 6.

¹¹³ See *Redemptoris Missio*, 37c.

very roots).”¹¹⁴ The message must penetrate the culture so that it is heard and received from within the culture and not as something foreign.¹¹⁵ The starting point for the evangelization of culture is the critical assumption of its worldview as a mode of expression. This “speaking from within” is a condition for genuine and efficient transformation of the culture by the Gospel message.

Pope Paul VI says that “the split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the drama of our time.”¹¹⁶ But the first act in this drama, the act that defines its plot, is the split between faith and reason brought about by the Renaissance and its aftermath.¹¹⁷ Therefore, in the effort to bridge the split between Gospel and culture, which is the heart and soul of the new evangelization, it is imperative to address the first act of this drama. As the *Lineamenta* points out, the search for new signs for speaking about God in today’s culture “requires a deeper understanding of the reasons why a discourse on God in our culture is so foreign.”¹¹⁸ Overcoming the “separation of the Gospel from life”¹¹⁹ demands a causative discernment; otherwise there is a risk of pursuing remedies that fail to treat the root of the problem.

¹¹⁴ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 20.

¹¹⁵ *Redemptoris Missio*, 52.

¹¹⁶ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 20.

¹¹⁷ See *Fides et Ratio*, 45. For a comprehensive historical review of how the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Scientific Revolution produced the “secular spirit of the modern age” and today’s prevailing worldview see Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View* (New York: Random House, 1991), 231-282. Paul Michael Privateer argues that “Renaissance science came into being with certain ideological ambitions. Perhaps as important as the science it produced, the Renaissance developed a unique *culture* of science, a radically new way of knowing human beings, the world, and the universe” (Paul Michael Privateer, *Inventing Intelligence: A Social History of Smart* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 77).

¹¹⁸ *Lineamenta*, 19. See also *Fides et Ratio*, 48; and *Instrumentum Laboris*, 118.

¹¹⁹ *Christifideles Laici*, 34. See also *Lineamenta*, 12.

Etiology of Displacement

The “profound shift in focus”¹²⁰ and prioritization of evangelization¹²¹ in the post conciliar years is chiefly attributed to the church’s perception that “the human race is involved in a new stage of history,”¹²² characterized by “profound and rapid changes,”¹²³ which have critically affected religious life. It is this new “cultural situation” that demands a *new* evangelization¹²⁴ and that requires the church to reconsider, “in an entirely new way, how she proclaims and transmits the faith.”¹²⁵ But, why demand such radical methodological change now? Why is evangelization perceived today as “much more complicated than in the past?”¹²⁶

The Catholic Church is a global institution with a two thousand year old history of uninterrupted evangelization. It has encountered a myriad of cultures, religions, philosophies, languages, political ideologies and all kinds of situations and circumstances throughout two millennia. Many of these peoples and circumstances have been hostile to the faith and oftentimes presented incredible challenges to the church. Christians have suffered persecution and opposition since Jesus began his public ministry (which ended in crucifixion for offending the religious sensitivities of his own people). The logistics of spreading the Good News everywhere throughout history were daunting and required

¹²⁰ Avery Dulles, “John Paul II and the New Evangelization: What does it Mean?” in *John Paul II and the New Evangelization: How can you Bring Good News to Others*, ed. Ralph Martin, and Peter Williamson (Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2006), 4.

¹²¹ Pope Benedict XVI, following the footsteps of his predecessors since Vatican II, placed “the topic of the new evangelization at the top of the Church’s agenda” (*Lineamenta*, 1). Pope Francis, echoing the words of John Paul II, calls evangelization an “absolute priority” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 110).

¹²² *Gaudium et Spes*, 4; See also *Lineamenta*, 3; *Christifideles Laici*, 35; *Evangelii Gaudium*, 41.

¹²³ *Gaudium et Spes*, 4; *Familiaris Consortio*, 1; *Lineamenta*, 3.

¹²⁴ *Instrumentum Laboris*, 49. See also *Evangelii Gaudium*, 41.

¹²⁵ *Lineamenta*, 3.

¹²⁶ *Instrumentum Laboris*, 41.

colossal effort and sacrifice.¹²⁷ Cultural change is nothing new. The church always had to adapt to the changing world to proclaim the gospel. What is so different now?

Ultimately, the root of the problem of evangelization today, as noted earlier, is an unprecedented global change of worldview, a radical cosmological paradigm shift that has shaken the foundation of what may be called the “content encoding” of the Christian message. The new evangelization faces a hermeneutical rather than a methodological challenge. The encoding of the message handed down from generation to generation through scripture and tradition¹²⁸ has become semiotically incompatible for a growing number of people today that are informed by a different worldview.¹²⁹ At the center of this incompatibility is a perceived schism between faith and science.

The New Cosmology

Despite the strong opposition of the church, Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo¹³⁰ over time managed to demonstrate the errors of the then prevalent astronomical system developed by Ptolemy in the second century.¹³¹ The new heliocentric cosmology, which

¹²⁷ See *Instrumentum Laboris*, 3.

¹²⁸ See *Dei Verbum*, 7-10.

¹²⁹ The *Instrumentum Laboris* points out that the "causes of the social changes which we have witnessed in recent decades are complex, tracing their origins far back in time and radically affecting our perception of the world" (*Instrumentum Laboris*, 43). The document also affirms that evangelization today faces "social and cultural changes that are profoundly affecting a person's perception of self and the world, and consequently, a person's way of believing in God" (*Instrumentum Laboris*, 6).

¹³⁰ Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) formulated the heliocentric astronomical model. See his book dedicated to Pope Paul III, Copernicus, *On the Revolutions of Heavenly Spheres* (Great Minds Series), trans. Charles Glenn Wallis (New York: Prometheus Books, 1995). Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) developed the laws of planetary motion. See Johannes Kepler, *Epitome of Copernican Astronomy & Harmonies of the World* (Great Minds Series), trans. Charles Glenn Wallis (New York: Prometheus Books, 1995). Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) invented the telescope and provided evidence for Copernicus' ideas. See Galileo Galilei, *Concerning the Two Chief World Systems: Ptolemaic and Copernican*, trans. Stillman Drake (New York: Modern Library, 2001).

¹³¹ Claudius Ptolemy (ca. 100-178) developed a geocentric mathematical model to explain celestial movements. See Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, trans. F.E. Robins (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

was later solidified by Newton,¹³² was perceived by church authority to be in conflict with the truths revealed in scripture about the nature of the universe.¹³³ The “Church’s error”¹³⁴ in condemning Galileo and the new cosmology produced a schism between faith and science in the public psyche.¹³⁵ In the long run, the logic of the scientific method prevailed over the faulty hermeneutics and authoritative style of the theologians of the Roman Inquisition.¹³⁶ The heliocentric cosmology and the ensuing scientific method became the foundations of a new worldview that sidestepped the church and brought about unprecedented technological advances that radically transformed human life on planet Earth.¹³⁷

¹³² Isaac Newton (1642-1727) formulated the laws of motion and gravitation. See Isaac Newton, *The Principia*, trans. Andrew Mote (New York: Prometheus Books, 1995).

¹³³ The Council of Trent’s *Decree Concerning the Edition and Use of the Sacred Books* (Section IV, published in 1546) condemns anyone who “relying in his own judgment” distorts “Holy Scriptures in accordance with his own conceptions” and offers opinions that are “contrary to that sense which holy mother Church, to whom it belongs to judge of their true sense and interpretation, has held and holds.” See H. J. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (Rockford: Tan Books, 1978), 18-20.

¹³⁴ In his last address to Rome’s clergy, Pope Benedict XVI points out that “the relationship between the Church and the modern period, right from the outset, had been slightly fraught, beginning with the Church’s error in the case of Galileo Galilei.” Benedict XVI (pope), “Meeting with the Parish Priests and the Clergy of Rome,” Vatican City on February 14, 2013, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2013/february/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20130214_clero-roma.html, accessed on December 2, 2014. See also Benedict XVI (pope), “Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia Offering Them His Christmas Greetings,” Vatican City, on December 22, 2005, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2005/december/documents/hf_ben_xvi_spe_20051222_roman-curia.html, accessed November 2, 2014.

¹³⁵ Sometimes this schism is referred to as a “separation between faith and reason” (See *Fides et Ratio*, 45) since the initial dispute was about cosmology (geocentric vs. heliocentric models) and not natural philosophy or what after Galileo was called science based on the scientific method.

¹³⁶ See Maurice A. Finocchiaro, *The Galileo Affair: A Documentary History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 147.

¹³⁷ The “scientific method” refers to a systematic method of inquiry for investigating empirical and measurable phenomena. The scientific method was initially developed by Galileo. Unlike the methods of natural philosophy (the precursor to what is called “science” today), the scope of the scientific method is limited to the measurement of “sets of stable, determinate entities interacting in law-governed ways in a mind-independent reality” and excludes most speculative theories (other than the scientific method itself; which is founded on *a priori* conceptions that cannot be proven by the scientific method). For a discussion of the epistemic value of modern science see Steven Yates, “A Fifth Method of Fixing Belief? Some Peircean Reflections on Methodological Apriorism,” Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2009, <http://www.mises.org/journals/scholar/yates4.pdf>, accessed March 22, 2013, 3.

After Galileo's case, the church maintained its authoritative doctrinal stance against the new cosmology for years. The Roman Inquisition added the books of Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo to the index of prohibited books where they remained, at least partially, until 1835. The attempt to authoritatively and tenaciously impose the geocentric cosmology (perceived by the theologians of the Inquisition as having a scriptural and doctrinal foundation) against the inferences of reason and logic backfired. Galileo's principles for investigating natural phenomena were deemed credible and trustworthy by the European intelligentsia.¹³⁸ The church's stance became suspect. Eventually, the prevalent worldview, much influenced by the credibility of the scientific method, became secular and was perceived by many as a form of emancipation from "false and outworn notions about life and the world"¹³⁹ that science had superseded.

Yet, it is important to highlight that the church was not against science *per se*. In fact, the church has played a key role in scientific discovery and advancement throughout history.¹⁴⁰ Even after the Galileo's debacle the church continued to support the teaching of natural philosophy and science in Catholic schools and universities, albeit always remaining cautious about protecting and preserving the primacy of revelation over the limits of science.¹⁴¹ In effect, the clash between faith and science mostly stems from the non-measurable, transcendental nature of faith, which lies beyond the scope of science.

¹³⁸ See Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View* (New York: Random House, 1991), 260-261.

¹³⁹ Paul VI (pope), *Ecclesiam Suam* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1964), 99.

¹⁴⁰ See Lawrence M. Principe, "That Catholics Did Not Contribute to the Scientific Revolution," in *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 99-106.

¹⁴¹ See *Fides et Ratio*, 7-12. See also Pius XII (pope), *Humanis Generis* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1950), 2-4, (herein after cited as *Humanis Generis*). Pius XII is very cautious of guarding the "truths that have to do with God" (*Humanis Generis*, 2) as he opens up the church to the possibility of accepting the theory of evolution if it was eventually accepted by science. Compare it to Leo XIII (pope), *Providentissimus Deus, On the Study of Holy Scripture* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1893).

But it is not only a matter of a simple divergence of scope, as is the case between science and other disciplines. The method of modern science emerged as a defense against the church's authoritative, yet unfounded, stance against the new cosmology. Hence, science is inherently apprehensive about any truth claims that are uncertain according to its own methods.

The church has recently accepted the new cosmology and recanted its condemnation of Galileo¹⁴² but now faces the global consequences of the deeply fragmented epistemology it brought about. Unlike patristic apologetics that skillfully defended the faith and orthodoxy using logic and persuasion, the authoritative method of protecting revelation and doctrine against the new cosmology was in many ways detrimental to the mission of the church. The church during the Renaissance acted from a position of power and worldly authority that was counterproductive. The new evangelization, however, follows a different approach that is characterized by “dialogue and sincere friendship”¹⁴³ in the search for knowledge and truth.

Therefore, in order to be effective in the evangelization effort today, this dialogue must take place using contemporary language that wholeheartedly assumes the scientific worldview. It is in this context that “faith intelligence” emerges as a possible sign for evangelization today. The word “intelligence” has a wide appeal in contemporary society. Howard Gardner says: “I don't remember when it happened but at a certain

¹⁴² See John Paul II (pope), “Discorso di Giovanni Paolo II ai Partecipanti alla Sessione Plenaria della Pontificia Accademia delle Scienze,” Vatican City, on October 31, 1992, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1992/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19921031_accademia-scienze.html, accessed July 7, 2014. Pope Benedict XVI in an encounter with the youth in Saint Peter's Square calls Galileo “the great Galileo” as he answers a question about reconciling faith and science from a young man named Giovanni (Benedict XVI (pope), “Encounter of His Holiness Benedict XVI with the Youth,” Vatican City, on April 6, 2006, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2006/april/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060406_xxi-wyd.html, accessed October 12, 2014, 5.

¹⁴³ *Fides et Ratio*, 33. See also *Lineamenta*, 5.

moment, I decided to call these faculties “multiple intelligences” rather than “assorted abilities” or “sundry gifts.” This seemingly minor lexical substitution proved very important; I am quite confident that if I had written a book called *Seven Talents* it would not have received the attention that *Frames of Mind* received.”¹⁴⁴

Initial Test of the Language and Concept of Faith Intelligence

The opportunity to test the idea of presenting the language and concept of faith intelligence in the weekend experience of Camino came at the end of February 2013.¹⁴⁵ The researcher and his wife participated as facilitators. The coordinators permitted the researcher to do a presentation about faith intelligence in the context of two talks about sacraments (traditionally reserved for the deacon who is the spiritual director of the movement). The presentations about the sacraments of the church are done at the end of each day of the weekend experience. These, together with a presentation titled *Jesus and the Church* are the most distinctively religious talks in Camino. After a personal anecdote to introduce the topic, the presentation on Saturday focused solely on faith intelligence for about half of the available time, and then continued with the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage in the wider context of developing faith intelligence. The results were very encouraging.

Since the presentation about sacraments on Saturday is the last presentation of the day, when it is done the participants usually leave immediately. The retreats start at 8:00 in the morning and by 5:00 in the afternoon they are ready to go. This time, though, four couples voluntarily and without prompting approached the researcher to discuss the subject before leaving and expressed great interest in the topic of faith intelligence. They

¹⁴⁴ Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), xi. Gardner also refers to the intellect as a “curiously seductive entity” (Ibid., 64).

¹⁴⁵ Camino #773.

said that they had never heard about faith intelligence before and that they thought that the idea was very interesting. They wanted to know where they could learn more about it. On Sunday morning, before starting the day, the workshop's coordinating couple, in a private conversation with the researcher, said that they had never heard a topic presented in Camino "at the level of the people."¹⁴⁶ When asked to clarify, they explained that the language of faith intelligence was something that the participants could easily relate to. They reported that they had heard very positive feedback from other facilitators.

For the Summary Feedback exercise on that Sunday morning, the coordinators distributed the different topics discussed on Saturday among several small groups. Each group was asked to present, in a creative way, a summary of the assigned topic. The small groups did their talented presentations randomly, without following the order in which the topics were presented the previous day. The first three presentations followed the typical pattern of focusing on the psychology of marriage and the participants did not make any reference to the religious content at all. Then it was the turn of the small group that presented the topic of the sacraments. In the past, the feedback on this topic has centered mostly on the concept of *lo importante es el otro* ("the important is the other").¹⁴⁷ This is the movement's slogan. It is posted on the wall during most the

¹⁴⁶ Larry and Nadia, interview by author, Miami, FL, February 24, 2013.

¹⁴⁷ Literally "the important thing is the other" or perhaps a better translation would be "the other is what's really important" in the sense of putting the other person first (translation by author). But the phrase is difficult to translate because it is a Spanish idiom. The Spanish phrase *lo importante* is a way of referring to things that are of the utmost importance, the one thing to really pay attention to; the most essential. For the first Camino in English (May 2014), the facilitating team made the decision to leave the phrase in Spanish and explain its meaning to the participants rather than attempt to translate it.

weekend experience.¹⁴⁸ It was mentioned as well during the presentation about faith intelligence.

The phrase *lo importante es el otro* has a strong theological grounding. The context is the conversation of Jesus with the Pharisee, described in Matthew 22: 34-40, about the Greatest Commandment. The conclusion, as usually presented in Camino, is that "o=O" where the lower case "o" stands for "other" (neighbor) and the upper case "O" stands for "Other" (God). Hence, *lo importante es el otro*, since the love of God is so closely tied to love of neighbor. Given that the closest neighbor is one's spouse or future spouse in the context of Camino, then *lo importante es el otro* becomes the central principle that guides Christian marital relationships. Yet, by the time it gets to the participant's feedback, the phrase in most cases has been reduced to marital advice and has lost its religious import. Usually, in the sketches that the participants perform it takes the form of conflict resolution by yielding to the desires of the other.

¹⁴⁸ Oftentimes, the moment that any of the facilitators mentions in their presentation *lo importante es el otro* for the first time during the weekend experience, the coordinating couple ceremoniously brings out the banner and hangs it on the wall.

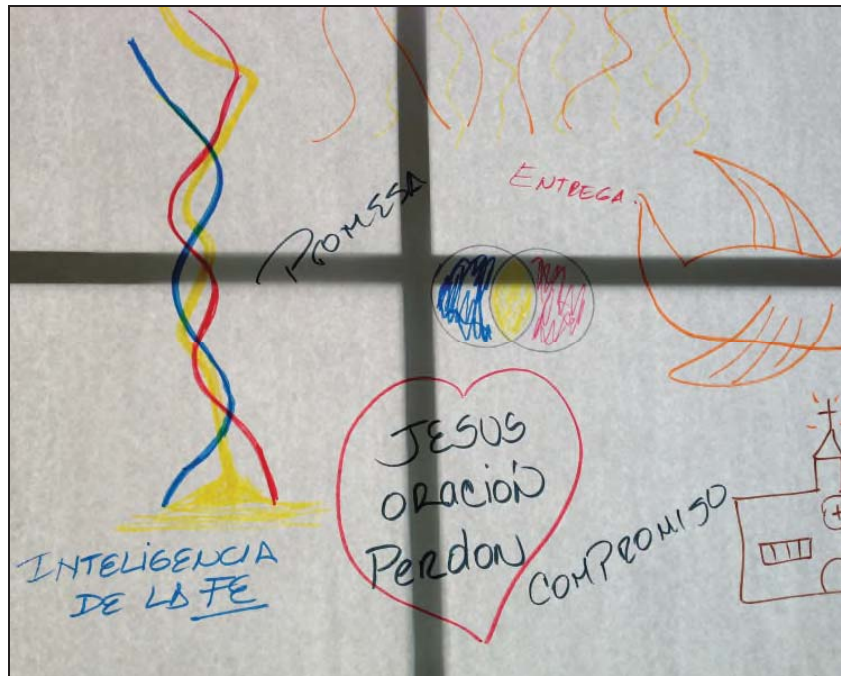


Figure 1 - Presentation Poster. The black cross is not part of the drawing. It is the frame of the window where the poster was hanging when the picture was taken.

This time, though, the participants drew a poster that included a DNA string with the words *Inteligencia de la Fe* (“Faith Intelligence”) under it, a heart with the words “Jesus, Prayer, Forgiveness” written in its center, a dove, the word “commitment” next to a drawing of a Church building, and two interlocked rings under flames with the words *entrega* (to give oneself) and *promesa* (promises)¹⁴⁹ on either side. Rather than doing any acting, the participants just took turns to excitedly speak mostly about faith intelligence, speaking the phrase itself and also using their own words to describe what it meant to them. The content of their presentation was distinctively religious and spiritual, which is very uncharacteristic of the participants' feedback as already mentioned. They said things like "marriage is a sacrament to serve the Lord" and "we have God in our hearts" and "the fire represents the Holy Spirit" and "in moments of difficulty we go to the house of God"

¹⁴⁹ The words *entrega* and *promesa* are part of the consent formula of the Roman Catholic Rite of Marriage in Spanish.

and things of that nature. Speaking to them about faith intelligence sparked an interest and at the same time legitimized for them the possibility of actively engaging in the ongoing religious conversation. Their atypical use of the religious language suggests that they desire to participate in the religious conversation as insiders.

Another very interesting thing happened after the feedback on the presentation about sacraments. One of the groups that followed interjected religious language in their feedback as well. The next group that presented did a sketch where a newscaster interviewed different participants about "the baggage" they bring to their marriage.¹⁵⁰ The interviewee's responses were spontaneous rather than rehearsed. Surprisingly, some of them discussed their religious upbringing (or lack thereof) as part of the content of their baggage, which is highly unusual. One of the ladies concluded with the words "may the love of God always be with us so that with God's help we may succeed [in our marriage]." During one of the breaks, some of the facilitators commented about the "unusual spirituality" of the participants of that Camino. Later, after the Eucharistic celebration, another facilitator made a similar comment to the researcher.

At the end of the weekend, the coordinators asked the participants to share their testimony about their experience in Camino. Usually, in every Camino, people come to the microphone and express their gratitude to the facilitators, they mention their appreciation of the "tools" they have learned about, and some tell the story of how they were reluctant to come at first or had the worse expectations about the weekend but now they are glad they came. It is very rare that during their testimonies the participants make any specific reference to the content of the presentations or say anything religious other

¹⁵⁰ In the presentation titled "Who am I?" the facilitating couple narrates stories about their different upbringings in their families of origin. They refer to the collection of learned behaviors as the "baggage" that they bring to the marriage.

than to give thanks to God, in general, for the weekend experience and/or the facilitators. This time, though, they specifically made references to faith intelligence. They also mentioned the "spiritual benefits" of the weekend experience. They gave thanks for the "God given opportunity to make new friends in the church," and said that they had learned the value of a "marriage based on Christian faith." Someone gave thanks to God for the "symbols of his presence" during the weekend experience. A man who began his testimony by saying that it was very difficult for him to speak in public, said emotionally that the experience had been "a blessing, something very big that the Lord has given me."

Every group that attends the Camino experience is unique. It would be difficult to ascertain with confidence that the spiritual tone of this particular Camino at the end of February 2013 can be attributed solely to the introduction of the topic of faith intelligence. Nevertheless, the high number of atypical reactions to the language and concept of faith intelligence suggest that it has appeal in Camino. It also served as an encouragement to continue this investigation.

Chapter Two

INVESTIGATION METHOD

Introduction

This chapter documents the method of practical theology employed in this dissertation for investigating effective strategies for the implementation of the new evangelization in the Camino movement of the Archdiocese of Miami. The first part of the chapter makes explicit the theoretical framework of the methodology itself. The second part provides a general description of the Camino movement. Finally, the chapter provides a more detailed description of the specific process that the researcher followed in this investigation.

Theoretical Framework

The method is part of the content. Tillich says that a "method is not an 'indifferent net' in which reality is caught, but the method is an element of the reality itself."¹⁵¹ It is therefore important to give serious consideration to the different methods available to practical theology and to choose in each case the one that is most suitable for the task at hand. Practical theology methods are characterized by an orientation towards praxis.¹⁵² Consequently, human experience is both a theological source and the objective target of doing practical theology.¹⁵³ The "see, judge, act" method suggested by Pope John XXII in *Mater et Magistra*¹⁵⁴ epitomizes, albeit in a very broad sense, the general

¹⁵¹ Paul Tillich, *Reason and Revelation*, vol. 1 of *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 60.

¹⁵² Gerben Heitink, *Practical Theology: History, Theory, Action Domains* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 7.

¹⁵³ David Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order: The New Pluralism in Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 43-45.

¹⁵⁴ John XXIII (pope), *Mater et Magistra* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1961), 236. The "see, judge, act" method originated with Cardinal Joseph Leo Cardijn and the Young Christian Workers (JOC). See Joe Holland, "Roots of the Pastoral Circle in Personal Experiences and Catholic Social Teaching" in

structure of most of the methods of practical theology. The "see" component refers to the assessment (reading, inventory, description) of a particular experience. The "judge" part represents the critical analysis of the situation illuminated by the Christian texts and tradition. Finally, the "act" element, which is the most distinctive of practical theology, is the putting into effect an action plan with a transformative intent. The transformation sought is to come closer to conforming human experience to the values of the Kingdom of God depicted in the Gospel.

The first two elements of the "see, judge, act" methodological structure call for a correlation between certain salient and relevant aspects of human experience (oftentimes referred to in some of the literature as "the situation")¹⁵⁵ and the experience of faith articulated in Christian texts and tradition. Tillich suggests that the method of correlation is the most appropriate to systematic theology.¹⁵⁶ According to Tillich's proposal, the objective of the correlation is for faith to inform human experience. In Tillich's model the transformative element is implied but not made explicit. The model assumes that praxis will impulsively follow the correlation of the Christian message to human experience; hence it does not attend to action planning.

The correlational model finds its way to practical theology through David Tracy's revisionist critique of Tillich's model.¹⁵⁷ In Tracy's proposal, human experience and language acquire new import in the dynamics of correlation. Tracy insists that the critical correlation must be between the questions and answers of both the "situation" and the

The Pastoral Circle Revisited: A Critical Quest for Truth and Transformation, eds. Frans Wijsen, Peter Henriot, and Rodrigo Mejía (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2005), 9.

¹⁵⁵ Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order*, 46.

¹⁵⁶ Tillich, *Reason and Revelation*, 34-68.

¹⁵⁷ David Tracy, "Foundations of Practical Theology" in *Practical Theology*, edited by Don S. Browning, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), 76.

"message" rather than the questions from the "situation' and the answers from the "message" as Tillich has it.¹⁵⁸ Tracy's model pays fuller attention to human experience¹⁵⁹ which also influences Don S. Browning's correlational approach to practical theology.

Browning's implementation of Tracy's correlational model makes the transformative element of practical theology very explicit by insisting in a "practice to theory and back to practice" movement;¹⁶⁰ which correlates closely with the "see, judge, act" structure. The "back to practice" part guides the entire process from the perspective of practical theology. It becomes the objective that drives the correlational model in practical theology. The concept is to "see" and "judge" in order to "act" intelligently in favor of the Kingdom of God. The process of attentively observing a situation and thinking critically about the underlying forces at play that sustain it acquires purpose and fecundity in an action plan for a renewed practice.

This process of practical theology requires postulating theories capable of accounting for the observed phenomena in order to formulate more robust theories that will inform a renewed practice in order to achieve the intended objectives more efficiently. A fundamental tenet of this model of practical theology is that practice is necessarily theory-laden. Browning explains that "all our practices, even our religious practices, have theories behind and within them. We may not notice the theories in our practices. We are so embedded in our practices, take them so much for granted, and view

¹⁵⁸ Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order*, 46.

¹⁵⁹ David Tracy's Revisionist Correlational Model holds that the central task of practical theology is the critical correlation, through critical reflection, of the questions and answers (the meanings) of each of the two sources of theology: human experience and language, and the Christian texts (Scripture and Tradition). The critical correlation consists of a hermeneutical comparison of the significant similarities and differences of the results of the investigations of the two sources of theology. See Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order*, 43-56.

¹⁶⁰ Don Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1991), 8-9, 45.

them as so natural and self-evident that we never take time to abstract the theory from the practice and look at it as something in itself."¹⁶¹ He gives a good example in a description of a community in crisis. "When a religious community hits a crisis in its practices, it then begins reflecting (asking questions) about its meaningful or theory-laden practices. It may take time to describe these practices so it can better understand the questions precipitated by the crisis. Eventually, if it is serious, the community must reexamine the sacred texts and events that constitute the source of the norms and ideals that guide its practices. It brings its questions to these normative texts and has a conversation between its questions and these texts. This community of interpreters will see its inherited normative sources in light of the questions engendered by its crisis. As its practices change its questions change, and the community will invariably see different meanings in its normative texts as its situation and questions change."¹⁶² Browning continues to explain how the process then repeats itself in an always-continuing cycle.¹⁶³

Investigating the Situation

Tracy points out that the investigation of human experience and language requires a hermeneutical phenomenological method "to analyze those symbols and gestures present to our everyday life and language that may legitimately manifest a religious dimension to our lives."¹⁶⁴ The hermeneutical phenomenological tools that social anthropology provides for the analysis of symbolic structures are very suitable to the investigation of the particular experience of the Camino movement. According to Clifford Geertz, social anthropology, or "what the practitioners of it do" is

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 6.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order*, 48.

ethnography.¹⁶⁵ Geertz explains that beyond "establishing rapport, selecting informants, transcribing texts, taking genealogies, mapping fields, keeping a diary and so on," what defines ethnography "is the kind of intellectual effort it is; an elaborate venture in ... "thick" description."¹⁶⁶

Borrowing the notion from British philosopher Gilbert Ryle, Geertz describes as "thick" the ethnographic description that includes the hermeneutical reading of the symbolic structures that provide the key for construing the meaning of a cultural symbol. Ryle gives the example of how rapidly contracting and releasing the eyelid of one eye can be a twitch or a wink, which will, of course, have different meanings. Another person doing a parody of somebody else's wink will also open and close the eyelid of one eye, except that this time it is neither a twitch nor a wink, but a parody. And so on.¹⁶⁷ The object of ethnography is to navigate through the "piled-up structures of inference and implication"¹⁶⁸ in order to render an interpretation of the data.

Geertz's interpretative approach to ethnography is founded on his understanding of culture. He writes: "The concept of culture I espouse ... is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of a law but an interpretative one in search of meaning."¹⁶⁹ Geertz formally defines culture as "an historical transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge

¹⁶⁵ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 5.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 5-7.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

about and attitudes toward life."¹⁷⁰ Ethnography for Geertz is essentially semiotical analysis of data acquired through very attentive observation of a situation.¹⁷¹

In general, semiotics is the study of signs. More precisely, "semiotic, as a branch of philosophy, is a formal, normative science that is specially concerned with the question of truth as it can be expressed and known through the medium of signs, and serves to establish leading principles for any other science which is concerned with signs in some capacity."¹⁷² A sign is anything that produces meaning. Peirce illustrates the concept of sign by providing a very long list of random things (a picture, diagram, natural cry, pointing finger, wink, and so on) and then adding "in short whatever, be it in the physical universe, be it in the world of thought, that whether embodying an idea of any kind (and permit us throughout to use this term to cover purposes and feelings), or being connected with some existing object, or referring to future events through a general rule, causes something else, its interpreting sign, to be determined to a corresponding relation to the same idea, existing thing, or law."¹⁷³

A sign produces meaning through a triadic process that involves an object, a sign, and an interpretant. The sign represents an object to a mind and produces a signification (interpretant) in that mind.¹⁷⁴ Peirce calls this triadic process "semiosis."¹⁷⁵ Accordingly, the semiotical analysis of the situation consists of gathering information by paying close

¹⁷⁰ Geertz, 89.

¹⁷¹ Geertz, 24.

¹⁷² James J. Lizska, *A General Introduction to the Semeiotic of Charles Sanders Peirce* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996), 14.

¹⁷³ Charles S. Peirce, "Ideas, Stray or Stolen, about Scientific Writing," in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 2 1893-1913, ed. Peirce Edition Project (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 326.

¹⁷⁴ See Charles S. Peirce, "On the Algebra of Logic: A Contribution to the Philosophy of Notation," in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 1 1867-1893, eds. Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 225-228. See also Lizska, 34-52.

¹⁷⁵ Charles S. Peirce, "Pragmatism," in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 2 1893-1913, ed. Peirce Edition Project (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 411.

attention to the signs that are relevant to the investigation, making their objects explicit, and figuring out the interpretant that they produce in the minds of the participants of the experience.

Ethnography and semiotic analysis requires long-term immersion in the situation as an active participant-observer.¹⁷⁶ The researcher is "required to hold both the position of *outsider* and that of *insider* within the particular setting."¹⁷⁷ The long-term exposure to the situation with "prolonged and close contact with research subjects" as a very attentive observer allows the deeper layers of meanings to emerge.¹⁷⁸ The sought-after benefit of this long-term investment is a more profound and richer understanding of the experience, which improves the probability for the practical theological endeavor to yield a more effective and fecund praxis.

The Referential Framework of the Correlational Model

The correlational model of practical theology calls for a mutually critical dialogue between the results of the investigation of human experience and a hermeneutical reading of the Christians texts that are relevant to the situation under investigation.¹⁷⁹ This dialogue also includes a conversation with other disciplines that may offer valuable insight to the analysis of the situation and the transformative action plan. The primary Christian texts are Scripture and Tradition.¹⁸⁰ The documents of the Second Vatican Council, papal encyclicals, pastoral letters of bishops' conferences, early Christian

¹⁷⁶ Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln, eds., *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3d. ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2005), 3.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 166.

¹⁷⁸ John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM Press, 2006), 167.

¹⁷⁹ Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order*, 45-48. See also Don Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology*, 46-47.

¹⁸⁰ *Dei Verbum*, 10.

writings, and other authoritative sources that express the teaching authority of the Church constitute the Tradition.

This mutually critical dialogue is hermeneutically conscious. Tracy proposes that the correlational conversation be informed by a hermeneutics that pays more attention to Gadamer's fusion of horizons (what lies in "front" of the text) rather than just concentrating in the historical context and "divinizing" the original intent of the author (what lies "behind" the text).¹⁸¹ For Gadamer interpretation is necessarily subject to the prejudices that constitute "the horizon of a particular present, for they represent that beyond which it is impossible to see."¹⁸² The texts chosen for dialogue "project a historical horizon that is different from the horizon of the present."¹⁸³ Understanding is the fusion of these horizons. Tracy explains that "the reader overcomes the strangeness of another horizon ... by understanding the basic vision of the author implied by the text and the mode-of-being-in-the-world referred to by the text."¹⁸⁴

The process of making the correlation between the two theological sources is a dynamic fusion of horizons. First, in the semiotic analysis there is an encounter between the prejudices of the participant-observer researcher and the program participants as well as between the researcher and the program itself. This encounter produces a particular understanding of the situation in the mind of the researcher (the fusion of horizons that produces new prejudices). The relevant Christian texts and other contributing literature are then chosen based on those prejudices. The ensuing conversation between the chosen texts and the researcher's understanding of the situation yields new meanings through the

¹⁸¹ Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order*, 77.

¹⁸² Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York, Continuum, 2000), 306.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order*, 78.

back and forth of the hermeneutical circle. The encounter with the parts of the text contributes to the understanding of the whole of both the situation and the texts themselves. At the same time, as the understanding of the whole matures in the mind of the researcher, the understanding of the parts of the text and of the particulars of the situation is refined. This process must be given enough time to produce a clear sense of the practical course of action that the situation requires.

The Action Plan

Practical theology, as discussed earlier, is intrinsically oriented towards transformative action. Ultimately, the methods of practical theology are tools to refine praxis and thus ensure an ever closer approximation to the values of the *basileia* that Jesus proclaimed. A pastoral plan is a very effective way of accomplishing such renewed praxis at an institutional level. Setting concrete objectives and operative strategies to realize them, a pastoral plan sets in motion a series of concrete and intentional actions to accomplish programmed goals.

It is important to set well-thought, clearly defined objectives. Commonly, pastoral plans distinguish two types of objectives: general and specific. General objectives are similar to mission statements; they summarize the overall mission and identity of the institution. General objectives spell out the vision and direction in which the institution will move in the next three to five years. They are informed by gospel values and respond to the perceived challenges. The general objectives are meant as a source of inspiration, vision, and direction. They make explicit what the organization is all about and what that organization's ultimate purpose in life is.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁵ See William Pickett, *A Concise Guide to Pastoral Planning* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 2007), 60-75.

Good general objectives may be motivational and inspirational, but it is in their nature to be ambiguous. There is no clear way to know whether such grand scale goals are being accomplished or not. Consequently, general objectives have to be broken down into measurable specific objectives or goals. Specific objectives define very precisely the ends that are to be accomplished in an established period of time. They are measurable statements (can be evaluated) that include a timeframe for completion. Specific objectives define the "what" and "when" of the desired end.

While specific objectives draw a clear picture of the desired end, it is still necessary to be more definite about how each specific objective is going to be accomplished and who will be responsible for each required step. Strategies are like step by step assembly instructions. They are the detailed breakdown of the process to accomplish the specific objectives that are in turn the concrete and practical expressions of the general objective. Strategies include dates, budget, list of people involved, tools and other resources that are required to accomplish each specific objective.

The objectives and strategies of a pastoral plan are informed by a theoretical and a referential framework. These frameworks provide the theory part of Browning's "practice to theory and back to practice" movement.¹⁸⁶ This investigation supplies the Camino movement of the Archdiocese of Miami with the theoretical and referential framework for developing an effective pastoral plan to meet the challenge of the new evangelization in their apostolic movement.

Part of the theoretical framework's function is to explain the structures of meaning that are operative in the organization. The semiotic analysis presented ahead as a thick description of the Camino movement accomplishes that part. The other significant

¹⁸⁶ Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology*, 8-9, 45.

aim of the theoretical framework is to offer ideas (or a system of ideas) for refining praxis. The language and concept of faith intelligence developed more fully in Chapter four is one of those ideas. The proposed brain-aware curriculum described in Chapter five is also a concrete idea for refining praxis. The referential framework is the consulted literature that has been incorporated into this investigation. The correlational model of practical theology, as can be readily seen, is an excellent tool for developing a sound theoretical framework that drives institutional transformative action through a pastoral plan.

Ultimately, the development of the pastoral plan will require a pastoral team with the proper authority to implement the necessary changes to the curriculum or to recommend to the steering committee the revisions required in their view. It is the prerogative of the steering committee to appoint the members of the team that will develop the pastoral plan and to approve the implementation procedures that they deem proper. This investigation concludes with a series of practical recommendations to the steering committee for formulating a future pastoral plan focused on responding to the church's urgent call to a new evangelization.

The Investigation of Camino del Matrimonio

This part of the chapter documents the specific implementation of the practical theology method described above in the investigation of the Camino del Matrimonio movement. This documentation of the process is intended to help the steering committee and the pastoral team that will be in charge of developing the pastoral plan to understand how the investigation was conducted and how the researcher arrived at the recommendations that this work offers. It also provides facts about the movement and

the population it serves. These facts are relevant to the "thick" description of the movement at the end of the chapter as well as to the future elaboration of the pastoral plan.

The documentation of the process is in itself part of the content. It describes the experiences that contributed to the hermeneutic horizon of the researcher. It is relevant data that informs about the context in which this process of practical theology, its conclusions, and resulting ideas emerged. It is intended to aid the steering committee in understanding the foundation of the recommendations made and to help them to look ahead to the work that remains to be done.

The Population that Camino Serves

The Camino movement identifies itself as an evangelization movement and perceives the population it serves as people "that need to be evangelized."¹⁸⁷ It is also a marriage preparation program attended by couples seeking a sacramental celebration of marriage that emphasizes a life-long commitment. The movement was founded with the intent of curbing divorce by raising awareness of the irreversibility of the sacramental commitment. It perceives the population it serves as "people who do not belong to the church"¹⁸⁸ and who do not completely understand the spiritual seriousness of the sacrament they are preparing to celebrate. The weekend experience is meant to ignite a relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church that will make it possible for participant couples to preserve their sacramental marriage despite any hardship that they may encounter throughout their married life.

The positive correlation between the groups identified in *Ubicumque et Semper* as

¹⁸⁷ Pedro, interview by author, Miami, FL, February 9, 2013.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid. The phrase *gente que no son de iglesia* ("people who do not belong to the church") is used often to describe the population that Camino serves.

the high priority target of the New Evangelization¹⁸⁹ and the population that the Camino movement serves, makes this apostolic movement a perfect fit for the project of the new evangelization in the Catholic Church. The Camino movement is de facto engaged in the new evangelization project precisely because of the population it serves. Consequently, the investigation of the Camino movement is also an investigation of the new evangelization in general.

In that sense, the participants of Camino constitute a purposeful sampling of the identified high priority target groups of the new evangelization.¹⁹⁰ A purposeful sampling, which is typical of qualitative studies, "yields insights and in-depth understanding"¹⁹¹ about the subject under study. The greatest weakness of purposeful sampling is lack of generalizability.¹⁹² The results of this investigation are specific to the Camino movement at a particular time of its history. Yet, while broad generalization of purposeful sampling cannot be technically justified,¹⁹³ arguably, the Camino movement is a critical case sampling and "logical generalizations" may be warranted.¹⁹⁴

A critical case sampling refers to the study of one case that is representative of many similar cases or larger groups.¹⁹⁵ The key dimension that makes the Camino movement a critical case is the positive correlation between the population it serves and the description of the high priority target group of the new evangelization. Many people

¹⁸⁹ In the Apostolic Letter *Ubicumque et Semper*, Pope Benedict XVI establishes the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization and references the three high priority target groups for the New Evangelization cited in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*: 1) Baptized Christians who live "quite outside" Christian life; 2) People with a certain faith but an imperfect knowledge of the foundations of that faith; 3) Intellectuals who feel the need to know the faith in a light different from the instruction they received as children. See Benedict XVI (pope), *Ubicumque et Semper* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2010).

¹⁹⁰ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*, Third Edition (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2002), 230.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 234.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 236.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 236-237.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 236.

in the target groups described in *Ubicumque et Semper* celebrate the sacraments, particularly baptism and marriage. Therefore, marriage preparation is a spontaneously occurring, privileged, and opportune moment of contact.

Characteristics of the Population that Camino Serves

Camino has served the Catholic Hispanic population of the Archdioceses of Miami since its inception in 1973. All activities of the movement are currently conducted in Spanish.¹⁹⁶ However, through the years, there have been a growing number of participants who are more fluent in English than Spanish. Today, approximately thirty percent of the people participating in Camino are born in the United States. U.S. born Hispanics are the largest group served.¹⁹⁷ The handout booklet that is currently in use is bilingual (English and Spanish) and sometimes the small group discussions during the weekend experience are conducted in English. Other participants¹⁹⁸ are from Colombia, Cuba, and Venezuela. There are more Cuban than Colombian men, but there are more Colombian than Cuban women.

Table 2.1. National Origin of Participants Served by the Camino Movement

Place of Birth	Male Percentage	Female Percentage	Total Percentage
United States	15%	15%	30%
Colombia	7%	8%	15%
Cuba	8%	6%	14%
Venezuela	5%	7%	12%
Mexico	2%	2%	4%
Nicaragua	2%	2%	4%
Peru	1.5%	1.5%	3%
Dominican Republic	2%	1%	3%
Argentina	1%	1%	2%
Brazil	1%	1%	2%

¹⁹⁶ The first *Camino* in English was held May 17-18, 2014. The author participated as a coordinator in that weekend experience.

¹⁹⁷ All population statistics are based on the author's tally of participants' registration forms from February 2012 to March 2013.

¹⁹⁸ The word "participant" refers to the couples preparing for sacramental marriage that the movement serves. The statistics do not include the married couples serving in *Camino*.

Puerto Rico	1%	1%	2%
Ecuador	1%	1%	2%
Honduras	1%	0%	1%
Spain	1%	0%	1%
Other	2%	3%	5%

Source: Data from Registration Forms between February 2012 and March 2013.

The average age of the participants in Camino is thirty-one for men and twenty-nine for women. The largest age bracket is between twenty-eight and thirty-nine years old (fifty-nine percent for men and fifty-two percent for women) followed by twenty-five to twenty-seven years old (twenty-two percent for men and twenty-six percent for women).

Table 2.2. Age Distribution of Participants Served by the Camino Movement

Age Group	Groom	Bride
Between 28 and 39 Years Old	59%	52%
Between 25 and 27 Years Old	22%	26%
24 Years Old and Under	8%	18%
Over 40 Years Old	10%	4%
Average Age	31	29

Source: Data from Registration Forms between February 2012 and March 2013.

The majority (76 percent) of the participants in Camino are employed in jobs that require at least some college education. Thirty-four percent are employed in professional jobs that require a college degree. Six percent are employed in blue collar jobs and eight percent are still in college. The majority of women participants (ninety-six percent) work outside of the home. Overall, ten percent of the women participants are teachers.

Table 2.3. Employment Distribution of Participants in the Camino Movement

Occupation Category	Groom	Bride
Managerial (Sales, Banker, Logistics, Office-Worker, Administrator)	43%	40%

Professional (MD, Engineer, Lawyer, CPA, Architect, Teacher, RN)	30%	39%
College or Graduate Student	4%	11%
Business Owner (Self-Employed)	8%	3%
Blue Collar (Construction, AC Technician, Mechanic, Lawn Service)	8%	3%
Public Service (Police, Fire Fighter, Armed Forces)	6%	1%

Twenty-six percent of the couples participating in Camino celebrate their church wedding ceremony outside of the United States. In most cases (eighty-eight percent of the time), the wedding celebration out of the country takes place in the bride's country of origin. Of those celebrating their wedding outside of the United States, only a small percentage (six percent) are “destination weddings” (weddings in a Catholic church in a country other than where the couple or any of the parents of the couple live).²⁰¹

Description of the Camino del Matrimonio Movement

Camino del Matrimonio is the largest apostolic movement of the Archdiocese of Miami in terms of number of people served. During the time of this investigation, between January 2011 and December 2012, one thousand two hundred eighty-five couples preparing to celebrate the sacrament of marriage participated in twenty-five weekend retreats. During that same period of time, three hundred and fifty-four married couples participated as facilitators in those twenty-five weekend experiences (some couples attend more than once a year).²⁰²

Table 2.4 Population Served in the Camino Movement Between 2011 and 2012

Camino #	Date	Total Participant Couples	Total Facilitating Couples	Total Small Groups
747	Jan. 15-16, 2011	32	11	9
748	Feb. 19-20, 2011	43	15	12
749	Mar. 19-20, 2011	43	13	11

Cohabiting Couples: An Information Report on New Realities and Pastoral Practices (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1999).

²⁰¹ The Catholic Church requires a special permission for the celebration of marriages in a church other than the bride's or groom's parish. See *Code of Canon Law*, c. 1118, sec. 1, in Canon Law Society of America, *Code of Canon Law: Latin English Edition* (Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America, 1999). These “destination weddings” take place in a Catholic parish in places like Bahamas or the Dominican Republic after the required ecclesiastical approvals are obtained.

²⁰² Camino maintains a database of couples that have served as facilitators in the weekend experiences. During 2011 and 2012, there were approximately seven hundred and fifty married couples marked as “active” in the database. However, the list of active facilitating couples is not updated regularly. Jackie Rey, the person in charge of maintaining the database, estimates that about half of those enlisted are truly willing and available to serve. Jackie Rey, interview by author, Miami, FL, October 4, 2012.

750	Apr. 16-17, 2011	42	17	11
751	May 14-15, 2011	43	17	15
752	Jul. 16-17, 2011	48	17	15
753	Aug. 13-14, 2011	49	17	15
754	Sep. 17-18, 2011	30	15	11
755	Oct. 8-9, 2011	39	15	12
756	Oct 22-23, 2011	29	14	11
757	Nov. 9-10, 2011	36	13	11
758	Dec. 10-11, 2011	37	14	10
Total for 2011		471	178	
759	Jan 14-15, 2012	41	13	10
760	Feb. 25-26, 2012	42	14	11
761	Mar. 17-18, 2012	36	13	11
762	Apr. 21-22, 2012	38	15	13
763	May 5-6, 2012	36	17	14
764	May 19-20, 2012	34	11	9
765	July 14-15, 2012	41	17	13
766	Aug. 11-12, 2012	40	10	9
767	Sep. 15-16, 2012	40	14	12
768	Oct. 13-14, 2012	34	14	12
769	Oct. 27-28, 2012	25	13	11
770	Nov. 17-18, 2012	25	15	9
771	Dec. 8-9, 2012	28	10	7
Total for 2012		460	176	

Source: List of Participants of the 2011 and 2012 Weekend experiences.

A total of fifty-three parishes in the Archdiocese of Miami sent couples to participate in Camino during that period of time. The top five parishes in terms of referrals to Camino (Sts. Peter and Paul, Immaculate Conception, St. Francis of Sales, St. Kevin's, and St. Patrick's) sent between twenty to thirty couples per year.

Governing Board

The Camino movement is governed by a steering committee that calls itself the *Secretariado*. The steering committee consists of seven married couples and a spiritual director appointed by the Archbishop of Miami. The members of the steering committee

serve for a two year term. The couples are appointed by the steering committee itself among the hundreds of married couples active in the movement. There are elections every year which replace three or four couples each time. One of the married couples among those on the second year of their term is elected by the steering committee to serve as the coordinators of the movement for one year. The remaining couples are assigned different responsibilities (treasury, team building, formation, communication, materials, and secretary). The steering committee meets twice a month. The spiritual director is a non-voting, albeit highly influential, member of the steering committee. The Archbishop replaces the spiritual director (who is usually a priest or deacon) about every ten years. When the spiritual director is a deacon, his wife tacitly serves with him.

The Team Responsible for the Weekend Experience

The steering committee pre-selects two couples for every weekend experience offered during the year. One couple is assigned the role of coordinator and the other couple is assigned the role of assistant coordinator ("*base*"). The two couples are responsible for creating a team for the particular weekend experience they are assigned to coordinate. Typically, the teams consist of seventeen couples including the coordinators. Each couple is assigned at least one functional responsibility during the weekend.²⁰³ Out of the twenty presentations or activities of the weekend experience, sixteen are assigned to facilitating couples (of the remaining four, two are given by the spiritual director, and the rest are handled by the coordinators).

²⁰³ Responsibilities include: Welcoming Committee, Photography, Cashier, Coffee and Snacks, Materials, Kitchen, Mass, Parking, Participants' List, Time Keeper, Folklore, Confession, and Technology. Everyone in the team shares the responsibility for cleaning the bathrooms, and organizing the conference room. *Camino's Manual*, 33-47.

Most facilitating couples view the weekend experience as an opportunity for strengthening their own marriage. The leaders agree that the movement is a sacramental preparation service for couples seeking to be married in the Catholic Church as much as it is a retreat for the married couples who serve as facilitators. Facilitators report that serving with other couples is very enriching for them. It is also an opportunity to meet other married couples with similar interests. Many couples have become long-time friends after serving together in the movement.

The facilitating teams hold at least two planning meetings prior to the weekend experience. The first meeting is usually scheduled about a month and half prior to the weekend experience. The main purpose of the first planning meeting is to know one another better.²⁰⁴ During this first meeting, the coordinators assign the presentations and activities to the facilitators. They also describe practical procedures and expectations of each team member. A good portion of the time during this first meeting is dedicated to prayer and creating a sense of spiritual purpose to the work that they will be doing together.

The second meeting normally takes place about two weeks before the weekend experience. During this meeting, facilitators perform a chorological review of all the presentations and activities of the weekend experience. Each couple gives a brief summary of their presentation followed by comments, questions and answers. The effort to give a sense of spiritual purpose to their work continues during this meeting. Constant

²⁰⁴ In most cases, about half of the couples serving together in a weekend experience do not know each other given the large number of facilitating couples that participate in the movement.

prayer and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament are cited in the manual as the "secret for success" of the weekend experience.²⁰⁵

The Friday prior to the weekend experience, there is a third meeting for those able to attend and help set up the conference room. While attendance to this meeting is not required for all the team members, many of them volunteer and go out to eat after setting up the place. This kind of social sharing is encouraged and serves to create a cohesive team.

On Saturday during the weekend experience, after the participants go home, the team meets again to evaluate the day. Each facilitating couple gives a brief report about the small group of participants assigned to them. The main purpose of this exercise is to find out if there are any major issues that should be addressed during the next day's presentations. In the spirit of service to others, the team is asked to buy Sunday breakfast for the participants. During this meeting each couple is asked to bring specific breakfast items.

The Curriculum of the Weekend Experience

There are twenty presentations given during the weekend experience. All presenters use Microsoft PowerPoint for their presentations.²⁰⁶ The PowerPoint slide shows are provided by the movement and presenters are discouraged from changing them. The presentations last between twenty minutes to an hour. The participant couples are assigned to small groups and remain with the same group during the entire weekend

²⁰⁵ *Camino's Manual*, 3, 7-9, 14.

²⁰⁶ Using Microsoft PowerPoint for all the presentations started with the 2004 curriculum revision. Prior to the 2004 curriculum revision the speakers delivered their speeches from a podium without any visual aids to accompany the oral delivery of the topic.

experience.²⁰⁷ After most of the presentations there is time for discussion in the small groups. The twenty presentations are as follows:

1. *Welcome and Orientation*. The team welcomes the participants. There is an ice-breaker group dynamic so that the participants introduce themselves and learn each other's names. The coordinators give practical details about the place and schedule.²⁰⁸

2. *Who am I?* The topic explores the influence of a person's upbringing, culture, and family of origin in certain patterns of behavior that may affect the couple's relationship. The presenters share personal examples of the "baggage" that they bring to the marriage, including religious attitudes, values, and traditions.

3. *Man and Woman: Interpersonal Relations*. This topic examines gender differences²⁰⁹ and introduces the concept of "us"²¹⁰ as a new "entity" that is created as the couple's relationship develops. Building a healthy "us" may require yielding to certain personal desires in favor of the relationship through a balanced "give and take" dynamic. The presenting couple gives several examples of the benefits of developing a spiritually strong "us."

4. *Developmental Stages of Relationships*. Adapted from Paul R. Gibling's *Stages of Growth in Marriages*,²¹¹ this presentation identifies four developmental stages of couples' relationships (Passion, Discovery, Power Struggle, and Commitment). The presentation insists on the corrective that true love is not a feeling but an act of the

²⁰⁷ The small groups are called "tables" because each group sits in a round table in the conference room.

²⁰⁸ *Camino's Manual*, 50.

²⁰⁹ John Gray, *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus: The Classic Guide to Understanding the Opposite Sex* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).

²¹⁰ Terry D. Hargrave, *The Essential Humility of Marriage: Honoring the Third Identity in Couple Therapy* (Phoenix: Zeig, Tucker & Theisen, 2000).

²¹¹ Paul R. Gibling, "Stages of Growth in Marriage," *For Your Marriage*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/stages-of-growth-in-marriage/>, accessed October 23, 2013.

will.²¹² It also highlights the fact that conflict is normal in the life of every couple.

Presenters usually give testimony of how prayer and an active participation in sacramental life help the relationship through the different stages.

5. *Family Economy*. The participants take an individual test to discover their economic personality type followed by a compare and contrast with their partner.²¹³ Presenters explain that there are four basic economic personality types that represent fundamental attitudes towards money that affect the couple's relationship independently of income level.²¹⁴ One personality type is not necessarily better than the other, but conflicting types can cause serious discord in the relationship. On the other hand, sharing the same economic personality type can also have dire long-term consequences for the couple. The recommended approach is to be aware of one's own economic personality type and to strive for balance. Presenters give testimony of a shared-economy model and highlight the value of Christian charity.

6. *Communication Techniques*. This presentation encourages participants to practice and develop the art of "active listening" and "respectful dialogue."²¹⁵ Active listening requires paying close attention to what the other person is saying in order to be able to give feedback summarizing the gist of what the other person is saying. Respectful dialogue requires making one's case without name-calling or accusatory language. The

²¹² Morgan Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth* (New York: Touchstone, 1978), 81-180.

²¹³ The economic personality test was taken from Miriam Arond and Samuel Pauker, *The First Year of Marriage: What to Expect, What to Accept, and What You Can Change* (Lincoln: iUniverse, 2006).

²¹⁴ Gail e. Hudson, "Money Fights," *Parents Magazine*, February 1992. See also William Betcher and Robie Macaulay, *The Seven Basic Quarrels of Marriage: Recognize, Defuse, Negotiate, and Resolve your Conflicts* (New York: Villard Books, 1990).

²¹⁵ J. Dan Rothwell, *In the Company of Others: An Introduction to Communication* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 275-334.

presenters give testimony of how they developed and continue to practice these communication techniques.

7. *Conflict Resolution*. Conflicts are normal and unavoidable in the life of the couple.²¹⁶ The key to a healthy relationship is knowing how to deal with conflict. The first step is to identify in advance possible areas of conflict and to start dialoguing about the subject before it becomes a crisis. During the presentation, participants play a game of *Family Feud* to identify common causes of conflict during the first five years of marriage. The answers of the *Family Feud* game are based on a study of the first five years of marriage made by the Center for Marriage and Family of Creighton University.²¹⁷ The participants are given an opportunity to identify the ones that apply to them in particular. The presentation emphasizes how to "fight fair."²¹⁸ Participants sign a contract committing to follow the communication techniques outlined in the previous presentation. The presenters share their testimony of experiencing God's love and forgiveness.

8. *Sacraments of Baptism and Marriage*. This presentation is typically given by the spiritual director in every weekend experience. The topic centers on the idea that lo importante es el otro as discussed earlier. The Sacrament of Baptism celebrates "becoming Church" and making a commitment to be disciples of Christ and missionaries of the Good News of the Gospel.²¹⁹ Baptism is the beginning of a life-long process of

²¹⁶ Many of the concepts for this presentation about conflict resolution are based on Dr. Gottman's work. See John M. Gottman and Nan Silver, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work* (New York, Three Rivers Press, 1999).

²¹⁷ Creighton University, Center for Marriage and Family, *Time, Sex and Money: The First Five Years of Marriage* (Omaha: Creighton University, 2000).

²¹⁸ Paul R. Giblin, "Stages of Growth in Marriage," For Your Marriage, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/25-ways-to-fight-fair/>, accessed October 23, 2013.

²¹⁹ *Aporecida*, 3. See also *Evangelii Gaudium*, 24, 119, 173.

conversion that is realized in loving others. It is a fundamental option to live for others. The presenter reviews in detail the Rite of Marriage and the meaning of the nuptial vows.

9. *Morning Prayer and Reflection.* Sunday morning begins with a brief reflection about God's presence in our lives.²²⁰ The participants are invited to "tune in" to the presence of God in their lives. After the reflection, one couple among the participants leads everyone in prayer.

10. *Summary of Saturday's Presentations.* The participants creatively present a summary of the key concepts of the seven topics discussed the day before. The participants are divided into seven groups. Each group is assigned a different topic. Groups can use music, poetry, art, or acting to express the central theme of each topic. The facilitators use the small group presentations to highlight key concepts of the presented material.

11. *Domestic Violence.* The presenters affirm that domestic violence (verbal, physical, or psychological) is unacceptable under any and all circumstances. After dispelling some common myths about domestic violence, the presenters list some indicators that may predict domestic violence and give information about where to seek help.

12. *Love, Sex, and Intimacy.* Following John Paul II's theology of the body and Benedict XVI's *Deus Caritas Est*, this presentation discusses the spiritual role of sexual relations in sacramental marriage. The topic also explores possible obstacles and practical recommendations for a healthy sexual life throughout married life. Presenters share testimony of the spiritual dimension of sex in their lives.

²²⁰ The reflection is inspired by Ignatian spirituality's concept of finding God in all things. See George W. Traub, ed., *An Ignatian Spirituality Reader* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2008), 48-87.

13. *Responsible Parenthood*. Raising children is a great responsibility. The education and evangelization of their children is the primary responsibility of the parents. A Christian family is called to be a domestic church. It is critical to assume parenthood responsibly. Therefore, family planning is very important. The participants make a list of needs for the adequate development of children and discuss how to address those needs. Presenters also talk about natural family planning and where to obtain more information about the NFP method.

14. *Defending Life*. Life is sacred and Christians are called to defend it from conception to natural death. The presentation shows the development of human life in the mother's womb. Presenters insist on God's love and forgiveness for those who may have been involved in an abortion.

15. *My Experience of Jesus and the Church*. It is a faith sharing moment. The presenters give their testimony of faith to the assembly followed by sharing in small groups. Facilitators also give their testimony of faith to the participants in the small groups as they encourage them to do the same.

16. *Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation*. This presentation is typically given by the spiritual director. The topic highlights the value of participating frequently in the weekly celebration of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is a place of encounter with God through his Word and sacramentally in the bread and wine transformed in the body and blood of Christ. The presenter insists on the value of praying together as a couple. Regarding the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the presentation insists that God, who loves unconditionally, is always willing to forgive the contrite heart. The presenter explains that the celebration of all the sacraments requires an ordinary minister; which in the case

of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is the priest. The participants are invited to examine their conscience and to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

17. *Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.* The facilitators set up between three to five confessional areas in the backyard for face-to-face confessions. The setup consists of two chairs, one for the priest and one for the penitent. Different parish priests are assigned by the Archbishop for each weekend experience of Camino.

18. *Participant's Testimonials.* The participants are given the opportunity to share an evaluative testimonial of their experience during the weekend with the assembly. On average, there is enough time for about fifteen interventions. People applaud and some get emotional during this time.

19. *Celebration of the Eucharist.* The weekend experience ends with a mass. The meeting room is quickly transformed into a place of worship. All the tables are removed and the chairs are arranged in a semicircle facing an altar. Many of the participants' parents come to the Eucharistic celebration. Other couples who work in the movement also come and bring their children. One or two of those children serve in the mass. There is usually a small choir. Lectors and gift bearers are chosen among the participants.

20. *Certificate of Attendance Awards.* In a simple ceremony, the program coordinators call the facilitating couples one at a time to the front of the meeting room and hand them a basket with all the Certificates of Attendance for the participants in the small group they accompanied during the weekend experience. The facilitators then call each couple in their small group and present the certificates to them. This concludes the weekend experience.

Process Description

The researcher obtained the required approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at St. Thomas University, and requested to be included in the agenda of a meeting of Camino's steering committee to present the research proposal. The approximately fifteen minute presentation to the steering committee centered on the topic of the new evangelization and the need to investigate new and more effective ways of presenting the gospel message in the Camino movement. The discussion after the presentation quickly gravitated toward the topic of conversion. Some members of the steering committee compared Camino to the Cursillos de Cristiandad movement, which focuses more on conversion.²²¹

One couple referenced the poor level of interest of the participants in the religious content of the curriculum. Nevertheless, there was consensus about the value and long-term effectiveness of the faith testimony of the facilitating couples during the weekend experience. The members of the steering committee also inquired about the specific requirements of the research. The researcher explained that ethnographic research requires full immersion in the program, including access to written materials and to activities, as well as interviewing participants and facilitators during and after the weekend experience. Approximately one week after the researcher's presentation to the steering committee, Deacon Jorge González, the Spiritual Director of the Camino movement at the time, informed the researcher that the steering committee had approved the research.

²²¹ The Cursillo is a four-day conversion retreat. It is perceived by many of the facilitating couples in Camino as a very effective conversion tool. The Camino movement was founded by people who had participated in a Cursillo retreat and many of the couples working in Camino are also members of the Cursillo movement. See Chapter four for a more detailed description of Cursillo.

Insertion into the Program as a Participant-Observer Researcher

The most significant factor that contributed to the successful insertion of the participant-observer researcher in the Camino movement was his prior knowledge of and involvement with the program.²²² In addition to participating as a facilitator in approximately twelve weekend experiences prior to the beginning of the current research, the researcher led a pastoral team through a two-year planning process that culminated in a comprehensive restructuring of the curriculum of the weekend experience in 2004. The researcher also served in the steering committee for two years (2006 to 2008) after the revision of the curriculum. Later, after completing his tenure in the steering committee, the researcher continued to participate sporadically as a facilitator in the weekend experiences. By the time the present investigation commences, the participant-observer was very familiar with the culture of the movement.

One difficulty of studying archdiocesan apostolic movements is that their leaders are typically very protective and secretive about the inner workings of their movement.²²³ One reason for this is that the element of surprise is often perceived as playing a significant role in the design of the experience they offer.²²⁴ They are reluctant to make public many details of their program's experience for fear that it may diminish the effect for others. It is also partly due to a strong sense of kinship among the members of the movement. In many cases, graduating from the movement's experience provides the

²²² The participant-observer role is quite different from the other prior roles that the researcher played in the Camino movement. This investigation required an insertion in the program in a different role.

²²³ Ivan Rohloff, a historian of the *Cursillos Movement* made a similar remark about *Cursillos*. See Ivan Rohloff, *The Origins and Development of Cursillo: 1939-1973* (Dallas: National Ultreya Publications, 1975), V.

²²⁴ Most of the apostolic movements of the Archdiocese of Miami offer a weekend retreat experience that characterizes the movement. See http://www.miamiarch.org/ip.asp?op=Lay_Groups.

participants with a new identity²²⁵ and a sense that they had such a unique experience that no one else can understand unless they participate in the program themselves.

Overcoming this general mistrust of "outsiders" is a significant challenge to researchers.

Even after obtaining all the required clearances and authorizations to conduct the research, rapport with leaders in the field is the key to being able to work effectively.

Gathering Materials

The Camino Movement publishes a manual titled "*Manual de Coordinadores y Bases*"²²⁶ which is updated yearly by the steering committee. The manual includes a brief history of the movement, detailed, step-by-step instructions for implementing the weekend experience (including the pre-experience preparation), an outline of every presentation including bibliography, and templates for several reports that the coordinators are required to submit to the steering committee after the weekend event is over. There are handouts for each topic and they are bound in a booklet given to the participant during the weekend experience. Most of the handouts consist of exercises related to the discussion topics. The movement has a website (www.caminodelmatrimonio.org) that includes information about the movement and the weekend experience, as well as all the PowerPoint presentations for each topic.

Registration is done online and there is a volunteer who processes the registration information and maintains participants' records. Another volunteer keeps a Microsoft Access database with general information on the facilitating couples. The researcher had unrestricted access to the registration records, database, manuals, handouts, results of a

²²⁵ For example, the participants of *Cursillos de Cristiandad* become "*cursillistas*." The participants of *Encuentros Juveniles* become "*encuentristas*." The participants of Camino become "*caminantes*." In this investigation "caminantes" are referred to as "participants."

²²⁶ See *Camino's Manual*.

2001 survey of the participants, evaluations of the weekend experiences, organization charts, bylaws, financial statements, correspondence with the Archbishop, e-mails, and reports to the steering committee made by the coordinators of the weekend experience.

The Interviews

Interviews provide information that is not available through observation alone.²²⁷ Interviewing participants and facilitators of the Camino movement allowed capturing new and unexpected perspectives and insights. Most of the interviews were "informal conversational interviews" that rely "on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction" as part of the ongoing fieldwork.²²⁸ The informal interviews were also conducted through texting and e-mail.²²⁹ Texting allows exchanging information with key informants at flexible times. It also creates a rapport with the informants who perceive the research as an ongoing conversation in a wider context. The same happens with e-mails that are part of a continuous exchange rather than a one-time interview. This type of informal exchange constituted a primary source of information for this investigation.

Five open-ended interviews with key leaders and founding members provided the researcher a clearer understanding of the history, theology, and meanings of the Camino movement. Each formal interview lasted approximately one hour to one hour and a half. The researcher arrived with a list of topics to be addressed with that particular

²²⁷ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*, 3d. ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2002), 340-341.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 342.

²²⁹ Asynchronous, semistructured, in-depth interviewing through recurring e-mail and text exchanges is convenient and offers many benefits. See Lokman I. Meho, "E-Mail Interviewing in Qualitative Research: A Methodological Discussion," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 57, no. 10 (2006): 1284-1295.

interviewee, but allowed the conversation to take its natural course.²³⁰ These interviews were audio recorded. All the interviewees agreed to be available by e-mail for any follow-up questions or clarifications. Three open-ended interviews with the participants during the last day of the weekend experience focused on their perceptions of the weekend and their reactions to the religious content. The interviews were conducted during the time for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and lasted approximately twenty minutes. Finally, in order to allow some distance between the weekend experience and the interview, the researcher conducted two open-ended interviews with couples who had participated in a Camino three and seven months prior respectively.²³¹

Participation in Weekend Experiences

The researcher participated in three weekend experiences as an observer. During these weekend experiences the researcher took notes, interviewed participants and facilitators, recorded presentations, and carefully reviewed handouts. In these three occasions, the researcher was formally introduced to all participants and facilitators at the beginning of the weekend experience. The researcher briefly explained the purpose of the research and described the purpose of his work.

Additionally, the researcher took part in three weekend experiences as a participant observer. In these three weekend experiences the researcher and his wife were part of the team of facilitators. The researcher explained to the other members of the team the nature of the research and the scope of the work to be done during the weekend experience (take notes and conduct informal interviews). Also during these

²³⁰ See Appendix A.

²³¹ See Appendix B.

weekend experiences the researcher presented the concept of faith intelligence; once as part of the talks about sacraments as described in chapter one and the other times as part of the talk about Jesus and the Church.

Focus Groups

The researcher conducted three focus group meetings specifically to present, test and explore the usefulness of the concept of faith intelligence in general. The selection criteria for inclusion in the focus group were to have a positive correlation with the high priority target groups of the new evangelization and not be affiliated with the Camino movement.²³² A group of thirty two possible candidates were identified among friends and acquaintances. They were invited by e-mail. Nineteen invitees (eight men and eleven women) accepted and participated in the focus groups.

All the participants are college educated individuals who work in a variety of professions (five architects, five teachers, three business entrepreneurs, a nurse, a musician, a computer programmer, a dentist, a student, and a housewife). They all self-identify as Catholics. Except for one person, none of the focus group participants have any formal training in religion.²³³ Eleven of the participants are married, four are single, three are divorced, and one is a widow. Six of the married participants came with their spouse (three couples).

The focus group meetings were held in St. Brendan Catholic Church. The participants of the focus groups were asked to arrive at 7:30 pm. The presentation and discussion started at 8:00 pm and lasted until 10:00 pm. The meetings consisted of three

²³² The purpose of the focus group was to test the concept of faith intelligence outside of Camino in order to create a baseline for comparison.

²³³ “Formal training in religion” refers to not having ever participated in Bible study groups, lay ministry training, college courses in religion or theology, and so forth.

parts: a one hour topic presentation, followed by twenty minutes of discussion in small groups, and then a forty minute large group discussion. The topic of the first meeting was about the church's call to a new evangelization. The topic of the second and third meetings was faith intelligence as a strategy of the new evangelization.²³⁴ The insights gained from the focus groups are described in chapter four.

²³⁴ See Appendix D.

Chapter Three

A THICK DESCRIPTION OF CAMINO

Introduction

This chapter presents an ethnographic thick description of the results of the investigation of Camino del Matrimonio. This thick description, as discussed in the previous chapter, is a semiotic reading and rendering of the meanings of the Camino movement particularly in light of the church's call to a new evangelization. The thick description includes a historical review of the roots of the movement, the role of conversion, and a semeiotical analysis of the theological content of the weekend experience. The results of this last analysis demonstrate the need for new signs to evangelize in Camino.

Cursillo Roots of Camino

The Camino movement was created by *cursillistas* (those affiliated with the Cursillo movement) and the predominant religious paradigm of many of the married couples that work in Camino, now and at its inception, is profoundly informed by the Cursillo experience. Paco, who started working in Camino shortly after attending a Cursillo many years ago, says "Cursillo had a big impact [in my life] - very big. Our lives changed completely from that moment. Completely! At least for me, it was a radical change."²³⁵ Elena, who was a team member of the first Camino in 1973, says: "In 1971 we went to a Cursillo and there we met the Lord in front of us ... we fell in love

²³⁵ "El Cursillo fue un impacto bien grande [en mi vida] - muy grande ... de ahí cambió nuestra vida completamente. ¡Completamente! Por lo menos a mí me cambió radicalmente." Paco, interview by author, Miami, FL, October 23, 2013.

with the Lord."²³⁶ Caridad recalls that in a matter of a month after the Cursillo experience she and her husband had a "completely new" life, including "totally new" friends.²³⁷

These voices exemplify the typical story of a large percentage of facilitators who work in Camino: the Cursillo experience propelled them to active ministry in the Church and they found in Camino a suitable apostolate.

The weekend curriculum of Camino was adapted from Cursillo, mimicking its method and style. It was designed by people who, inspired by the Cursillo experience, were very eager to evangelize their environments, but who did not have any formal pastoral or theological training. They believed then, as they do now, that the core of the curriculum's content should be their witnessing as committed married couples. They felt that the most significant cause of divorce was the lack of serious commitment to a life-long marriage. Additionally, they thought that Catholics were getting married without a clear understanding of the nature of marriage as a sacrament. This led to the creation of a Cursillo-like experience to share and model the idea of a marriage centered in Christ that would empower the couple to withstand the vicissitudes of life and remain together "til death do us part."

Determined to do what they could to prevent divorce, they intuitively substituted some of the topics of the rollos ("scrolls")²³⁸ of Cursillo for talks about Christian marriage. For example, the conceptual structure of the Cursillo's talk *Obstacles to a Life*

²³⁶ "En el año '71 fuimos a Cursillo y ahí fue donde conocimos de frente al Señor... nos enamoramos del Señor." Elena, interview by author, Miami, FL, October 23, 2013.

²³⁷ Caridad, interview by author, Miami, FL, October 23, 2013.

²³⁸ In the Cursillo weekend experience, the talks are called "rollos" (as if reading from scrolls). There are fifteen rollos in the curriculum of the Cursillo weekend experience. See United States National Secretariat of the Cursillo Movement, *The Cursillo Movement, What Is It?* (Jerrell, TX: National Cursillo Center, 2006), 26. See also Eduardo Bonnín, Francisco Forteza, and Bernardo Vadel, *Structure of Ideas (Vertebration)*, Collice H. Portnoff and Maria Escudero, trans. (Dallas: National Secretariat of the Cursillo Movement, 2007).

of Grace became Camino's *Problems and Remedies*. The same happened between Cursillo's *Study of the Environment* and Camino's now discontinued talk called *The Environment*; and so on. As in the Cursillo, when the Camino movement started, talks that were considered more technical in nature were assigned to the clergy and professional experts, leaving the more general topics to lay members of the team. Up until the last curriculum revision in 2004, a priest or deacon would deliver the talk about sacraments, a physician would talk about family planning and sex, and a psychologist would speak about the psychology of marriage.²³⁹

During the curriculum revision in 2004, the focus of the conversation about family planning and sex shifted to a less technical content hence it was no longer required for a physician to make the presentation. Also, the psychology of marriage became the underlying theme of most of the talks and the psychologist was eliminated as well. Yet, the Spiritual Director insisted on leaving his presentations about the sacraments intact. This part of the curriculum was not revised by the pastoral team and remains to this day a topic primarily reserved for the clergy.²⁴⁰

Camino as a Conversion Experience

The strategy to the conversion dimension of the weekend experience that the founders of Camino designed and followed for many years depended mainly on the element of emotional surprise. There was no mention of religion at all during the first few talks, enough to give the impression to the participants that the discourse of the

²³⁹ The physician and the psychologist were guest speakers, called "consultants" and normally would not stay during the entire weekend. When the movement started a priest would stay during the whole weekend (like it happens in *Cursillo*). The practice was discontinued due to the shortage of priests.

²⁴⁰ After the resignation of Deacon Jorge González in 2013 and the appointment of Fr. Rafael Capó, SchP, as director the talk about the sacraments now may be presented by a layperson because Fr. Capó's other responsibilities do not allow him to commit to giving this talk in every Camino. Yet, most coordinators still prefer that it be presented by clergy.

weekend experience was about common-sense strategies for lasting and successful marriages.²⁴¹ Suddenly, the conversation would turn to faith. The first religious talk, *My Friend Jesus*, delivered with passion and conviction, presented Jesus Christ as "the way, the truth, and the life."²⁴² Affirming that in Jesus, God offers his unconditional friendship and love to everyone, the participants were invited to follow him and center their marriages in him.

This first religious talk would typically change the mood of the remaining of the weekend experience. After the first religious talk, the facilitators were free to talk about their faith more openly and to give testimony of the significance of their relationship with God. Through the years, the authenticity of the testimony of the facilitators has been patent and it comes across as genuine and joyful. Participants consistently express their appreciation of the testimony of the facilitators and name it as the aspect of the weekend experience that has the greatest impact on them.

It would be difficult to measure the success rate of the conversion strategy that was used for more than thirty years in Camino. Clearly, it has not been as successful as Cursillo at producing indicators of sudden, radical life transformations the Camino founding members intended. Comparing the testimonies of the participants at the closing events of Cursillo and Camino makes this evident. In Cursillo the testimonies of the participants at the closing mass are typically about radical life change (the "I was lost but now I am found" type of testimony), while in Camino the participants' testimonies through the years have been about gratitude for the experience and appreciation for what

²⁴¹ Before the 2004 curriculum revision, the talks Saturday were: "Economy," "True Love and Happiness," "Psychology of Men and Women," "My Friend Jesus, the Church," and "The Sacrament of Marriage. "

²⁴² A reference to John 14:6.

they have learned. In other words, the participants of Camino do not construe the weekend experience as a conversion type of event.

Emotions play a very significant role in the conversion strategies in apostolic movements like Cursillos, Youth Encounters, Emmaus, and others. The talks are meant to inspire the heart and move the participants to desire and commit to changing their lives. The leaders in these types of movements instinctively correlate the emotional response of the participants and their spiritual transformation process. While emotions may erupt at any time during these experiences, there are certain peak moments in which many participants are more likely to display emotion. Leaders often measure the rate of success of the experience in terms of the emotional response at these peak moments.

For instance, in Cursillo the Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated after a day of "encounter with self" and a day of "encounter with Christ." The time for confession is typically a very emotionally charged moment. In many cases, people, including those who have not celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation in a very long time, or never, take this opportunity to outwardly express their willingness to change the course of their lives. The leaders construe the level of participation in this peak moment as an indicator of success of the weekend experience.

The *cursillistas* who founded Camino brought the same evaluation criteria to the Camino movement. Even after the 2004 curriculum revision, there are still facilitators who quietly gauge the success of the weekend experience on the basis of the level of participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Yet, in Camino, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated in a context very different from Cursillo. Compared to Cursillo, Camino has never been a highly emotional experience. Most, if not all, of the

topics presented do not lend themselves to an emotional response. The characteristically emotional responses in other movements like Cursillo are the product of an introspective build-up process. In Cursillo, the rollos are strategically placed in thoughtful sequence, building one upon the other, carefully taking the participants through a self-examination process that culminates in the religious experience.²⁴³ In Camino, there is no introspective process. The talks in Camino have traditionally been conceptual rather than reflective.

The celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in Camino is the exception. The Sunday afternoon time for confession comes as a rough and sudden turn. The participants have to be extrinsically motivated to participate. The motivation strategies have varied through the years, depending on the style of the Spiritual Director. At times, it consisted of a gloomy examination of conscience. Other times, the Spiritual Director encourages the participants in Camino to go to confession because it will be "short and sweet."²⁴⁴ The mood of the weekend experiences changes during this time. Many facilitators nervously project to the participants that there is an expectation for them go to confession. The participants perceive it and often comply. It is, nonetheless, by and large disconnected from the spiritual dynamics of the participants.

The typical participants of the Camino experience do not celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with any regularity, nor do they perceive it as a valuable spiritual tool for them. Most will not go to confession again after Camino for a very long time, if ever. Thus, the very tool that the leaders of the Camino movement, including the team

²⁴³ Ivan Rohloff, *The Origins and Development of Cursillo: 1939-1973* (Dallas: National Ultreya Publications, 1975), 37-39.

²⁴⁴ The Spiritual Director, citing the possibility that there may be many willing participants, asks the priests who celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation to make it simple and brief. The penitents come with the expectation that they will just list their sins and be immediately forgiven. Yet, there have been instances in which priests have withheld absolution. For example, there was a priest who asked penitents if they were cohabitating and unless they promised to move out he would not give them absolution. Usually this denial of absolution produces detrimental results for participants.

responsible for the 2004 curriculum revision, see as an essential spiritual component of the weekend experience is perceived as irrelevant and awkward by the participants.

During the curriculum revision of 2004, the pastoral team insisted on the idea that while Camino is an evangelization movement, the weekend experience should not be about conversion. At that time, leaders of the movement dropped the conversion strategy it had followed until then, and adopted a research-based, religious-seminar style methodology.²⁴⁵ However, they retained the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Most team members simply felt that discontinuing the practice would be too radical of a change and that most people in the movement would oppose it.²⁴⁶

The Theological Content of the Weekend Experience

The researcher collected hundreds of phrases with religious references during three weekend experiences using a notebook and a voice recorder. The phrases were narrowed down to three hundred and fifty-five unique entries which were then fully transcribed and entered into a Microsoft Access database.²⁴⁷ For those phrases with possible ambiguous meanings, a comment was entered explaining the context of the phrase based on the ethnographic notes. The phrases, which semiotically speaking are signs, were then categorized according to the object they represent. The chief part of the

²⁴⁵ The “religious-seminar style” is a reference to the content and delivery method. Whereas before the curriculum revision of 2004, the talks consisted of personal testimonies grounded in personal experience, in the post-revision model, the presentations consist of research-based material, accompanied by personal testimony, presented with the aid of a slideshow.

²⁴⁶ During the process of the curriculum revision of 2004, the movement leaders made three general consultations that were open to all couples who have been coordinators or assistant coordinators (bases) in the movement. One of the group dynamics used in these consultations was called “Mi Camino” and consisted of designing an imaginary curriculum for the weekend. While only seventeen percent of the proposed changes specifically included a time for confessions as part of the imaginary curriculum, no one suggested discontinuing it.

²⁴⁷ The researcher has a strong expertise in Microsoft Access and Visual Basic. After thoroughly testing several qualitative research software programs available in the market, the researcher concluded that there was nothing that these programs offered that could not be accomplished with Microsoft Access.

present analysis consists of the researcher's hermeneutical reading of the interpretants that these signs produce in the participants and facilitators of the Camino movement.

The phrases can be grouped in eleven general categories with an uneven frequency distribution. The top five categories, which contain eighty percent of the phrases, are: Faith, Prayer, God's Plan, God's Creation, and God's Presence. The remaining general categories, which include a much lower number of phrases, are: Participation in the Life of the Church, Recommendations for Christian Living, Being Church, Being Catholic, Sin, and Religion.

Faith

Faith is the predominant category. Faith is understood in Camino as relational. God is described as an imminent, loving and trustworthy presence. There is a recurring invitation, expressed throughout the different topics, to develop a relationship with God, not only as individuals, but especially as a couple (make God part of the marriage). The relationship with God is presented as the source of fulfilment, wellbeing, and a happy, lifelong marriage. It is also the source of strength during difficult times. The testimonies of the facilitators continuously highlight an increased awareness of God's presence during hard times (unemployment, life frustrations, illness, and death). Consistently, God is perceived as present and personally involved in the situation regardless of the outcome. God's involvement is understood as pivotal to being able to cope with and endure the difficult experience.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁸ When asked to cite an example of when they felt God most present in their lives, most facilitators recalled experiences of suffering. For example, Camilo cited the death of his wife to cancer, Lazaro and Rebeca talked about their granddaughter's life-threatening illness (which she survived), Pedro recalled a horrible car accident in which his wife got hurt (she recovered fully) and so on. Camilo, Lazaro, Rebeca, Pedro, interviews by author, Miami, FL, October 23, 2013.

The facilitators perceive the presence of God most concretely in other people, particularly their spouse. They also perceive God in the poor, the needy, in Scripture, and in the sacraments. The idea of *lo importante es el otro* has deeply permeated their thinking. It is a fundamental point of reference that is articulated often in Camino's discourse. Being Christian is perceived as intrinsically tied to responding to the needs of others. Love is a choice for the other. Faith is other-oriented. It has a strong horizontal dimension.

Prayer

Prayer, the second largest category in the list above, is promoted as the most concrete way of fostering a relationship with God. The facilitators place added emphasis on creating the habit of praying as a couple. Prayer is demonstrated and encouraged during the weekend experience. Couples are chosen among the participants to lead the entire group in formal prayer before lunch, and on Sunday morning. When Deacon Jorge presents the talk about sacraments, he begins by asking all couples to embrace each other and pray.²⁴⁹ The participants find the embracing to pray part “new and interesting.”²⁵⁰ They think it is an effective way to introduce them to the experience of praying as a couple.

Camino's Manual says that “there is no other activity during the weekend of Camino that is more effective than praying before the Blessed Sacrament.”²⁵¹ During the weekend experience the facilitators take turns praying before the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel. The prayer time before the Blessed Sacrament is unstructured except that the

²⁴⁹ When presenters other than Deacon Jorge do the sacraments talk they often do the same.

²⁵⁰ Lissette, interview by author, Miami, FL, December 8, 2013.

²⁵¹ (No hay otra actividad durante el fin de semana de Camino más efectiva que la oración ante el Santísimo Sacramento). *Camino's Manual*, 7.

coordinators schedule continuous one-hour shifts throughout both days. Most facilitators pull the chair closer to the tabernacle and sit in quiet prayer during the assigned hour. Some use a kneeler. The idea of praying and offering sacrifice for the success of the weekend experience is inherited from Cursillo.²⁵²

There is also a form of prayer that is embedded in the facilitator's everyday language. In casual conversation they are quick to give thanks to God for whatever is good in their lives. They make references to God's plan and God's will when they speak about future events. They usually end their presentation asking God to bless the participants. Some of these signs are generally present in Hispanic cultures (they are inherited from Christian Spain). But in the case of the facilitators of Camino, these signs are used more frequently and acquire intentional religious meaning.

By contrast, the participants use these signs much less frequently and usually without religious intent. For example, "Oh my God" is more accurately construed as an expression of surprise. It has an obvious religious referent but it would hardly qualify as a prayer. It is just a saying with a religious etymology. But oftentimes when the facilitators say in conversation, for example, that they are grateful to God for something, there is religious intent in their usage of the sign. It is a form of prayer.

Prayer is part of the facilitators' living experience. It is the day-to-day way of relating to God and dealing with the world. Their prayers are worded in simple but fluent language, which is indicative of extensive practice. The content of their prayers are primarily gratitude and intercession for others. Sorrowful prayers are less frequent.

²⁵² The *cursillistas* refer to this form of prayer and sacrifice as "palanca" (Spanish for lever). In *Cursillos* the word palanca is used in figurative sense meaning to use one's influence to achieve an end. See World Organization of the Cursillo Movement, *The Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement* (Dallas: National Cursillo Movement, 2008), 133-134, 257.

Some like to pray, particularly when they are by themselves, as if they were talking to a friend. This kind of dialogue is characterized by the informality of the expressions used and the casual style of the conversation.

Praying as a couple is a moment of shared intimacy. Eduardo and Rocio explained that “when you pray as a couple, your spouse knows your innermost thoughts and feelings.”²⁵³ They explain that it is an opportunity to share aloud personal feelings, concerns, and apprehensions. This sharing in a context of prayer creates a safe space that promotes intimacy between the couple. It is also an expression of faith that furthers a relationship with God as a family.

Outside of the Camino weekend experience, the facilitators often ask one another to pray for them or for situations they are concerned about. Many facilitators use social media to connect with each other and ask for prayers at the time of need. Sometimes the steering committee sends e-mails to all the facilitating couples asking for prayers for someone in need.

Prayer is not unique to facilitators; most participants in Camino report that they pray as well. But it would not be accurate to say that the typical participant has a prayer life or practices praying assiduously as part of their spirituality. In their case, prayer is usually reserved for a time of need and to express gratitude after a petition is granted. In most cases it takes the form of a private interior conversation directed towards God, the Virgin Mary, or a saint. Many times, it takes the form of a *quid pro quo* negotiation (this happens among the facilitators as well).

²⁵³ (Cuando oras en pareja, tu pareja sabe lo que está en tu interior). Eduardo and Rocio, interview by author, Miami, FL, February 9, 2013.

When participants are asked to pray in front of the group during the weekend experience, usually their spontaneous prayers are not fluent. They are not accustomed to praying publicly. But many reported that they have the habit of saying a short prayer every night or in the morning. They also ask for God's help before engaging in a performance activity that may be significant to them. When they empathize with someone's suffering (illness, predicament, and so on) they usually offer to pray for them and they do. Prayer is certainly the most common religious practice among Camino's facilitators and participants.

God's Plan

The third category used to classify the religious signs employed in Camino is God's Plan. The discourse about God's Plan in Camino centers on the idea that God actively intervenes in people's lives. The facilitators consistently construe the significant events of their lives as acts of God. These acts of God are understood as teleological and benevolent. God is portrayed as loving, giving, generous, merciful, helpful, and inspiring. God is understood as the source of life and everything in it. The will of God is the good of humanity as a whole and the good of each particular individual as well. God is perceived as a steering force behind all significant life events from the number of children that a couple may end up having (Anne and David), to the miraculous cure of a terminal disease (Lorenzo), or meeting their spouses (Camilo and Elena). While sometimes the will of God is described as imposable,²⁵⁴ the facilitators believe that God respects human freedom. They believe that love, consistently understood as a free choice, requires free will.

Untimely death, illnesses, accidents, injustices, failures, and all other maladies are never ascribed to God. Yet, for the most part, the facilitators do not offer a theodicy. They simply state that they do not know why bad things happen despite God's goodness.²⁵⁵ Some insist that all woes in life are ultimately for the better according to God's plan even when it is difficult to perceive or understand why. As mentioned earlier, they consistently report that it is precisely at the time of affliction that God's presence is

²⁵⁴ For example, Lorenzo told the participants that God had brought them to Camino against their will (Dios los trajo en contra de la voluntad de ustedes). Larry and Nadia, "Morning Prayer" (Sunday morning prayer at Camino 787, Miami, December 8, 2013).

²⁵⁵ For example, Chucho during a presentation in the weekend experience explained how he cannot understand God's plan or how prayer works but that he knows that prayer works and that God's plan is always for the best. Chucho, "Resolución de Conflictos" (Camino 787, Miami, December 8, 2013). Later during that same weekend experience, Deacon Jorge recalled Chucho's words and made a similar remark regarding not being able to know. Jorge, "Sacramentos" (Camino 787, Miami, December 8, 2013).

perceived more clearly and strongly. This presence of God is credited with providing the strength to cope with the “blows of life.”²⁵⁶ Hence, beyond any logic that might make sense of evil despite God’s good plan for humanity, there is the goodness of his presence during the most difficult times.

The goal of God’s plan is understood to be human happiness and fulfillment both now and for eternity. But in Camino’s discourse there is more emphasis on the “now” than on life after death. Happiness and fulfillment in life happens as a result of a relationship with God that allows God’s plan to come to full fruition in the person’s life. While at times it may seem that some facilitators believe that God manipulates events so that his will be forcibly done, the idea that God’s grace is a free offer that requires human acceptance and participation is more prevalent. Ultimately, the underlying message of the dialogue about God’s plan is that there is great profit in getting increasingly involved in a personal relationship with the God of love that has a great plan for each human being.

²⁵⁶ For example, Deacon Ernesto talking about “the blows of life” (los golpes de la vida) told the story of his mother in law who has been dying of cancer for a year and during this time he and his wife have felt more than ever that they are not alone – that “God is with us.” Deacon Ernesto, “Jesús y su Iglesia” (*Camino* 787, Miami, December 8, 2013).

God's Creation

The Scripture-based idea that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God is cited often in Camino.²⁵⁷ In the data collected by the researcher, it is referenced in ten out of the fifteen major talks of the weekend experience.²⁵⁸ It is a fundamental idea that is used as a foundation to talk about human dignity, beauty in nature, divinity within, humanity's role as co-creators with God, the gift of sexuality, sacramental love, and the mystery of the Incarnation.

The references to God's creation in Camino are frequently optimistic. These references are used to depict human grandeur as creatures created and loved by God. Sin, which is one of the last categories in the researcher's semiotic classification, is mentioned but not emphasized. Rather, it is presented as part of human reality that must be contended with. For example, in the talk about the sacraments, original sin is brought up in the context of Baptism. Deacon Jorge, in a very humorous part of his presentation, uses a song that is well-known by the participants to explain the meaning of original sin. The song made famous by Cuban singer Celia Cruz is titled *Burundanga*. The lyrics of the song say:

*Songo le dio a Borondongo,
Borondongo de dio a Bernabé,
Bernabé le pegó a Muchilanga
Le echó burundanga
Les hinchan los pies...*²⁵⁹

*Songo hit Borondongo,
Borondongo hit Bernabé
Bernabé struck Muchilanga
Gave him burundanga
Now the feet are swollen...*

²⁵⁷ Genesis 1:27.

²⁵⁸ It is mentioned in *Man and Woman: Interpersonal Relations, Developmental Stages of Relationships, Family Economy, Conflict Resolution, Sacraments, Domestic Violence, Love, Sex, and Intimacy, Responsible Parenthood, Defending Life*, and in *My Experience of Jesus and the Church*.

²⁵⁹ Translation by the author. *Burundanga* is a soporific herb used in Afro-Cuban syncretic religions. Celia Cruz, *Burundanga*, La Sonora Matancera, ©1956 by Seeco Records, SCLP 9067, LP. The humor of the lyrics stems from the association of the song's story (obviously unrelated to sacraments) to the idea of how original sin is passed on from generation to generation.

Deacon Jorge starts saying the lyrics and the audience spontaneously finishes the verse. Then the deacon asks: Why did Borondongo hit Bernabé instead of Songo? Why did Bernabé hit Muchilanga instead of Borondongo? Everyone laughs. The conversation about original sin acquires buoyancy. In the discourse about sin there is no call to repentance or fostering guilt for past transgressions as other church movements do. Instead, the magnificence of God's creation is emphasized over sin. Forgiveness is also emphasized over sin. The other time that sin is mentioned during the weekend experience is in the presentation titled *Defending Life* during which abortion is described as a grave sin. But the presenters make a conscious effort to insist on God's unconditional love and forgiveness during this presentation.

God's Presence

God is often described in Camino as a presence. It is a reference to the perceived proximity and accessibility of God. The facilitators talk about God being present in their marriage and in their spouse. They often invite the participants to "put themselves in the presence of God" citing Matthew 18:20: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." In one presentation, Deacon Ernesto asked: "Where is Christ? He is right in front of us. Christ is like the air. We cannot breathe without the air. His presence is his essence. Without the invisible air we would die. Without Christ we would die too."²⁶⁰

In Camino's discourse about the presence of the divine in the world the words "God," "Lord," and "Jesus Christ" are used interchangeably. Sometimes, though, the references are specifically to the historical Jesus. In the same presentation cited above,

²⁶⁰ (¿Dónde está Cristo? Delante de uno. Cristo es como el aire. No podemos respirar sin aire. Su presencia es su esencia. Sin el aire invisible moriríamos. Sin Cristo moriríamos también."). Deacon Ernesto, "My Experience of Jesus and the Church" (Camino 787, Miami, December 8, 2013).

Deacon Ernesto explained that “Christ is a historical figure and a presence among us that moves us.”²⁶¹ In a different context, Lorenzo said “Jesus is not someone from two thousand years ago. He is someone in our midst.”²⁶²

The participants use the words interchangeably as well, albeit sometimes in an unconventional manner. For example, during one of the presentations, the participants are asked to share in their small group their answer to the question “Who is Jesus for me?” One participant said “Jesus is the creator, the king and central axis of our lives.”²⁶³ The designation of Jesus as creator, which is inconsistent with the economy of the Trinity in Christian tradition, is a good example of the semiotic ambiguity and ensuing faith displacement that some of these signs produce as discussed shortly below.

Another example that occurs often during the discourse about God’s presence is the use of the word “person” when speaking about God. The word “person” is commonly understood as “individual” and not in the technical sense of “hypostasis” of patristic Christology or Trinitarian theology. The tacit logic is that if God became a person in Jesus, and Jesus is God, then God is a person (understood as an individual). The end result is a reductive anthropomorphism that contributes as well to faith displacement.

In the data collected in the category of God’s presence there was no mention of the Holy Spirit. The missing pneumatology may be a reaction to a period in Camino’s history when charismatics exerted a heavy influence in the movement. Many facilitators today believe that the style that was used then in Camino was too fanatical and was counterproductive to the movement’s mission. Nonetheless, there are still many

²⁶¹ (Cristo es un personaje histórico y una presencia entre nosotros que nos mueve.” Ibid.

²⁶² (Jesús no es alguien de hace dos mil años, sino alguien en medio de nosotros.”). Lorenzo, “Conflict Resolution” (Camino 773, Miami, January 26, 2013).

²⁶³ (Jesús es el creador, rey y eje de nuestras vidas). Manuel, “My Experience of Jesus and the Church” (Camino 787, Miami, December 8, 2013).

facilitators who associate themselves with the archdiocesan charismatic movement.

Thus, the absence of any references to the Holy Spirit in the presentations is surprising; and more so in the context of the conversation about God's presence.

One thing is clear, though, both the facilitators and the participants believe in God's presence in the world. They believe that God, the creator of the universe, is somehow personally involved in their lives and that it is possible to communicate with God through prayer. Both the facilitators and the participants have some type of faith relationship with God which they value and consider important. The difference between the participants and the facilitators is a difference in their development of faith intelligence.

The Other Categories

The remaining categories occur at a much lower frequency (less phrases in each category). The Participation in the Life of the Church category consists of statements in which the facilitators describe to the participants their involvement in the church, particularly the work they do in their parish or in an archdiocesan ministry (member of the choir, Eucharistic ministers, catechism teachers, and similar activities). These references occur mostly when the facilitators are introducing themselves to the participants at the beginning of their presentations. It serves perhaps to establish some sort of credential and rapport with the participants. Even when the greatest part of the content of the presentation is about the psychology of marriage, many facilitators feel it is important to disclose their level of participation in the life of the church.

The Recommendations for Christian Living category consists of those instances in which the facilitators make specific recommendations such as to read the bible regularly,

study the teachings of the church, go to mass and receive communion often, attend to the needs of the poor, and encourage them to participate in a Cursillo or Emmaus. The most common recommendation, which was classified under the Prayer category above, is to pray as a couple. Many of these recommendations occur at the closing of the presentations as a way of leaving the participants with something practical to do or to consider doing.

Camino inherited from Cursillo the value of stressing the teaching that all Christians are Church. The *being church* category consists of phrases in which the facilitators describe themselves as being church. The church is described as a personal ontological reality rather than a place or an institution. By virtue of the Sacrament of Baptism, church is something one is. In Camino they also insist on every family's call to be a domestic church charged with the mission to evangelize. The mission starts at home. Most of this conversation takes place during the presentation titled "My Experience of Jesus and the Church."

Sometimes the facilitators share the fact that they were brought up Catholic or that they received a Catholic education. Like the category above, Participation in the Life of the Church, most of the references in the Being Catholic category take place as the facilitators are introducing themselves to the participants before a presentation. Often, the topic is brought up as the spouses do a brief comparison of their upbringings. Many times there is a contrast between their religious upbringings. The participants, of course, share the Catholic identity and in many cases have also received a Catholic education.

The last category, Religion, has the fewest entries. It is usually mentioned in reference to religious differences as a possible source of conflict in a marriage,

particularly in the cases of mixed marriages. Sometimes the word is used to speak about the importance of religion in general. But the facilitators do not describe themselves as religious; and religion itself is not a topic of conversation in Camino. Instead, they speak about their living their faith and give testimony of their faith experiences.

Other Signs

In addition to the religious language that is spoken in Camino, there are other signs that are intended to purport a religious content as well. The facilitating team is the most prominent non-linguistic sign. During the greatest part of the weekend experience, the facilitators are just silently present. They sit at their tables and listen like all the participants. In fact, there are some facilitators that do not do any presentation at all. Even those who do a presentation, speak for a maximum of one hour. That means that ninety-five percent of the time (or more) during the weekend they are engaged in accompaniment. Their commitment to accompany the participating couples is a powerful sign.

The venue where the weekend experience takes place is also a sign. The Camino movement has a contractual agreement with the Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI) to use their facilities. SEPI is a busy place, and most of the time there are several pastoral activities happening there during the weekend. Since there are areas participants must stay away from, in every weekend experience it become necessary to briefly tell the participants about the place and the other pastoral activities that are going on there. This creates an awareness that they are in the midst of a pastoral center where non-liturgical church activities are taking place. For many participants this is an unprecedented and unheard of experience.

In SEPI there are many religious artifacts that adorn the campus including several large mosaic murals representing the different apparitions of the Virgin in Latin America and the Caribbean. There is a chapel which is visible from the conference room. The parking lot is right in front of the seminary for the Piarist Fathers. In the conference room there is a picture of Jesus and a large crucifix. By the entrance door there are large banners used by the regional youth groups.²⁶⁴ There is also the flag of the Catholic Church. At any time, there may be people coming and going from the different classrooms, library and bookstore. The place produces a general feeling of being in a religious ambiance that is yet different from the church building, which is more familiar to the participants. The bible is also a sign that is part of the weekend experience. All participant couples receive a bible.

Finally, the transformation of the conference room into a worship area is also a sign that purports religious meaning. The round tables where the participants sit during the presentations are taken away and the chairs are arranged into a semicircle. The altar is placed at the center front of the room. Other couples who work in the Camino movement come to celebrate the Eucharist. There is a choir. The children of the facilitators serve at the altar. There is a priest and a deacon. Before the celebration begins the facilitators exchange warm greetings with the visiting couples. There is a feeling of friendship and joy.

²⁶⁴ SEPI is the educational branch of the Southeast Regional Office for Hispanic Ministry which serves thirty dioceses in the southeastern United States (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Regions V and XIV). They have different programs including youth ministry. For more information see <http://www.miamiarch.org/CatholicDiocese.php?op=SEPI>, accessed February 9, 2014.

What does it all mean?

In the process of semiosis, a sign is initially pure potentiality.²⁶⁵ It corresponds to the category of firstness. Before it is interpreted, the sign is independent of anything else. It is one in itself. The relationship to an object and the interpretant it triggers only occur through the process of semiosis. But the sign itself has no meaning of its own. It only purports meaning through semiosis. In a strict sense, it will be inaccurate to say that the signs listed and described above are religious signs. Being religious corresponds to the category of thirdness. Describing the signs as “religious” is already a semiotic act that recognizes the object that the sign represents and the meaning it produces as religious.

The “religious” classification of a sign is already an interpretation. It is entirely possible that someone, perhaps from a different culture or epoch, would not interpret the sign as religious but as something entirely different. In that case, the sign remains intact, but it now refers to a different object or to a different property of the same object, and consequently triggers an interpretant that would not qualify for that interpreter as religious. This distinction highlights the dependency of semiosis on culture. While the mechanics of semiosis are consistently the same across time and cultures, the interpretant that a sign produces may vary depending on the culture or subculture of the interpreter.

Peircean semeiotics distinguishes between the immediate and the dynamical object. The immediate object is the semeiotical object that is representatively present in semiosis. The dynamical object is the object as it is in reality. The semiotic effectiveness of the immediate object depends on the familiarity of the interpreter with the dynamic

²⁶⁵ As discussed in Chapter two, a sign produces meaning through a triadic process that involves an object, the sign itself, and an interpretant. The sign stands for or represents an object to a mind and produces a signification (interpretant) in that mind. Peirce calls this triadic process "semiosis" (see Charles S. Peirce, “Pragmatism,” in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 2 1893-1913, ed. Peirce Edition Project (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 411).

object. In other words, a sign represents an object, or something about the object, provided that the interpreter is already familiar with the object from collateral observation or experience. The sign itself is incapable of furnishing acquaintance with the object it represents; hence the relevance of culture to semiosis.

Therefore, in the semiotic analysis of the signs used in Camino to evangelize, it is necessary to distinguish the religious subcultures of the facilitators and the participants. There are, of course, similarities and differences between both groups. The similarities account for the ability of both groups to fully and successfully participate in the weekend experience. There is a shared level of understanding between them. The participants think that they understand what the facilitators communicate and vice versa. Both groups share a Catholic identity and are therefore familiar with the dynamic objects of the signs intended to convey a religious meaning. There are also other similarities that contribute to the success of their semiotic interaction. Both groups are involved in couple relationships. They also share the same language and ethnic heritage. They all live in the same geographical area and are, of course, contemporaries.

Both groups share the scientific worldview that characterizes twenty-first century global culture. They all use the technologies of today like smart phones, computers, and electronic social media. Participants and facilitators alike have a high degree of confidence in the scientific method and trust scientific claims at face value. And, the two groups experience the faith displacement that resulted from the historic schism between faith and science as discussed earlier. But here, there is a significant difference that distinguishes the semiotic process in the two groups.

In the case of the facilitators, despite its continuing displacement, faith acquired prominence. In most cases, this happened as a result of a conversion experience like Cursillo or Emmaus. For whatever reason, they responded well to that conversion experience and got involved in the church. Through their involvement they became “church people.”²⁶⁶ Put differently, the conversion experience moved and inspired them to engage in a process of developing their faith intelligence. Faith, while it is still in a general state of displacement for most facilitators, functions as the dominant hermeneutical life lens. It is a sort of faith displacement in reverse.

The participants do not experience conversion in Camino as discussed earlier (the weekend experience is not a conversion experience). They do not become “church people” as a result of their one-time participation in Camino. Worse still, the signs that are meant to convey religious meaning wind up working to reinforce faith displacement because the immediate object of all these signs used in Camino only exist in the displaced “compartment for religion.” Faith is relevant there, but it is disconnected from the rest of life.

The ultimate goal of the new evangelization is to move faith to the center of life. It is to give primacy to the relationship with God so that it may continuously transform living in the world, particularly our relationships with all the other people around us. A displaced faith is about the occasional participation in a sacramental celebration, a prayer here and there, and perhaps making sure that the kids take CCD classes. But a displaced faith is divorced from daily life, from the day to day struggle, from the way that people live in the world.

²⁶⁶ In different Hispanic apostolic movements they use the phrase “*son gente de iglesia*” (they are people of the church) not in reference to church attendance but to their effort to live a Christian life, which often includes involvement in some ministry.

Signs like the testimony of the facilitators trigger interpretants that are innocuous. It is nice to see couples that “have God in their marriage.” The participants want to have God in their marriage too. But these signs produce meanings with no practical consequences. They are therefore devoid of real meaning. The signs that merely reinforce displaced faith are insufficient to fulfill the purpose of the call to a new evangelization. The new evangelization requires signs that move the interpreters into action, even if it is only a first step.

The strategy that this dissertation proposes is to use signs that may begin to correct faith displacement by using as a starting point the prevalent scientific worldview. Faith intelligence, as a sign, references an immediate object that is *de facto* already out of the displaced zone for the participants of Camino. It produces interpretants that have the potential, as the researcher has been able to observe, to strike at least an initial interest, which is a first step in the right direction. Of course, faith intelligence requires a more comprehensive exposure in Camino to be able to fully ascertain its effectiveness as a sign with practical implications.

The next chapter develops the concept of faith intelligence using Howard Gardner’s model of multiple intelligences. In order to qualify as an intelligence under Gardner’s model, it is necessary to demonstrate a neurological foundation for faith through a series of criteria that his model proposes. The work of Andrew Newberg provides the required neurological foundations to meet those criteria.

Chapter Four

FAITH INTELLIGENCE

Faith intelligence constantly demands that its contents be expressed in a new language capable of presenting, to all who ask, the reason for the hope present in those who believe (cf. 1 Pet 3:15).

—Pope Benedict XVI²⁶⁷

Testing the language and concept of “faith intelligence” in Camino del Matrimonio during the course of this investigation yielded very positive and encouraging results. The conversation about faith intelligence works well as an evangelization tool. It fully engages the participants of the weekend experience in a living dialog about faith that they consistently find appealing and enticing. The expectation is that this conversation begins a process to correct faith displacement as they continue searching for ways to develop their faith intelligence.

Even though when talking about faith intelligence in Camino it is not necessary to be too technical, incorporating faith intelligence into their curriculum does require that this concept be well-developed.²⁶⁸ This chapter aims to clearly define the different terms and notions related to faith intelligence and to ground the concept theologically. It also explains how faith intelligence fits in Gardner’s model of multiple intelligences.

²⁶⁷ *Fides per Doctrinam*, 1. The original Latin “fidei intellectus” is translated in the English publication cited above as “The understanding of the faith.” The translation of “fidei intellectus” as “faith intelligence” is by the author. All the other available translations of this document in different languages use the word “intelligence” instead of “understanding.”

²⁶⁸ In the experience of the author in the course of this investigation, getting too technical about the science behind the concept is distracting. The participants do not seem too interested in validating the science. Instead, they are very interested in talking about faith using a language that is consistent with their scientific worldview.

Critical Concepts

The participants of Camino who were part of this investigation had never heard of “faith intelligence” before. They were, of course, familiar with the words “faith” and “intelligence.” Hence, upon hearing the juxtaposition of these two words for the first time, their brains automatically attempted to construe the meaning of the term based on their pre-understanding of these words.²⁶⁹ Examining this pre-understanding that the participants bring to Camino is an excellent starting point for developing a clear, distinct, and practical definition of “faith intelligence” for the purpose of this work.²⁷⁰

The dialogue with the participants reveals that “faith” in Camino is fundamentally understood as “believing without proof.”²⁷¹ They believe in God but at the same time they are very self-conscious of the lack of empirical evidence to support their belief. The definitions of faith they offer when prompted are consistently couched in some sort of apologetic language. They do not know *why* they believe; they just do. In most cases they have believed in God all their lives. They are aware that their notion of faith is inherited from their parents. They grew up believing in God, praying to God, and understanding the universe as created by God. They want to pass on these beliefs to their children.

²⁶⁹ Heidegger explains that “whenever something is interpreted as something, the interpretation will be founded essentially upon fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception. An interpretation is never a presuppositionless apprehending of something presented to us.” See Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row), 191-192.

²⁷⁰ The fundamental starting point for practical theology is the situations in which people find themselves. See Don S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 5-6. “Clear, distinct, and practical” is a reference to Peirce’s Theory of Meaning and the Pragmatic Maxim. See Charles S. Peirce, “How to Make Our Ideas Clear” in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 1 1867-1893, eds. Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), 124-141.

²⁷¹ “Believing without proof” summarizes what most participants answer when asked to define faith. Faith is consistently understood as believing in God in the context of trusting without knowing or accepting as truth something that is beyond proof.

“Intelligence” in Camino is understood as mental ability; being smart. Some of the participants, particularly those who are teachers, have heard of the theory of multiple intelligences, although they often confuse it with the theory of learning styles. Most see a correlation between intelligence and knowledge (the more intelligent people are, the more they know about math, science, history, and so on). They think that IQ is an accurate measurement of intelligence but they think that it can be developed.²⁷²

According to these pre-understandings, “faith” and “intelligence” do not seem to fit together very well. Additionally, since faith is understood as “believing without proof” it seems more related to emotions than to cognition for some participants. They reason that love, understood as an emotional experience that cannot be proven scientifically, is analogous to faith.²⁷³ Some participants report that they think that faith and intelligence are opposites. For this group, intelligence is related to the apprehension of knowable facts while faith is speculative and uncertain.²⁷⁴

Yet, despite the apparent incongruities, initial exposure to the term “faith intelligence” produces interest rather than opposition. During the presentations, the participants do not express dissenting comments. On the contrary, they engage in the conversation in a very positive way. Their interest offers an opportunity to explore a deeper and more insightful understanding of both terms. For instance, it is helpful to

²⁷² Proponents of a definition of intelligence as a “single, inviolable capacity” (referred to as “g” for general intelligence or general factor in psychometrics, a term coined by psychologist Charles Spearman) that humans are born with and over which they have little control. See Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 7.

²⁷³ For this group emotion and cognition are understood as distinct mental processes that affect each other and at times one takes over the other (i.e., emotions take over cognition or cognition controls emotions). The overall understanding for this group is that faith and love are irrational.

²⁷⁴ They pointed to the many religions in the world and to the different beliefs even among those who profess the same religion (different Christian denominations, and different interpretations among members of the same denomination). Some argued that religion offers a private, subjective understanding of reality while intelligence has to do with public, objective understanding of reality.

point out to them that the definition of faith as “believing without proof” is deficient and can be misleading. It places religious belief in the wrong context resulting in a distortion of the concept and meaning of faith.

Believing without Proof

Proofs belong to the realm of the empirical, measurable, physical world. The underlying assumption in the “believing without proof” conception is that knowledge derived from experimental data not only has a higher epistemic value but that somehow it encompasses the only knowable truth with any degree of certainty. Pope Francis speaks of a “crisis of truth in our age” due to a tendency in contemporary culture “to consider the only real truth to be that of technology: truth is what we succeed in building and measuring by our scientific know-how, truth is what works and what makes life easier and more comfortable. Nowadays this appears as the only truth that is certain, the only truth that can be shared, the only truth that can serve as a basis for discussion or for common undertakings.”²⁷⁵

The conception of “believing without proof” emerges in the context of this “crisis of truth” alluded to by Pope Francis. It ends up reducing faith to stubborn tenacity²⁷⁶ that disregards the lack of evidence required to sustain any such claim within the scientific paradigm. It makes faith practically undistinguishable from superstition or subjective illusions. It degrades faith to “a beautiful story, the projection of our deep yearning for happiness, something capable of satisfying us to the extent that we are willing to deceive

²⁷⁵ *Lumen Fidei*, 25.

²⁷⁶ Peirce describes four methods for settling belief: tenacity, authority, *a priori*, and the scientific method. Peirce assigns greater weight to the scientific method as the only one capable of making opinions coincide with the facts. At the same time, Peirce recognizes that the *a priori* method is “far more intellectual and respectable from the point of view of reason” than tenacity or authority. See Charles S. Peirce, “The Fixation of Belief” in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 1 1867-1893, eds. Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), 109-123.

ourselves. Either that, or it is reduced to a lofty sentiment which brings consolation and cheer, yet remains prey to the vagaries of our spirit and the changing seasons, incapable of sustaining a steady journey through life.”²⁷⁷

The “believing without proof” construct is a primary cause of faith displacement. The predominant scientific worldview that reduces knowable truth to the theories of empirical science causes the perceptions of the “spiritual brain”²⁷⁸ about the transcendent to be privatized for an increasing number of people. The human yearning for God is compelling.²⁷⁹ Privatization can be thought of as the “survival mechanism” of a human yearning for God that cannot be quashed despite the materialistic presumptions²⁸⁰ that empirical science has made prevalent in popular culture. At the same time, the fact that the yearning for God persists in the form of “believing without proof” is a testament to the depth and breadth of human beings’ desire for God.²⁸¹

²⁷⁷ *Lumen Fidei*, 24.

²⁷⁸ The “spiritual brain” refers to the “fact that the human brain has a neurological substrate that enables it to experience a spiritual state” (Mario Beauregard and Denyse O’Leary, *The Spiritual Brain: A Neuroscientist’s Case for the Existence of the Soul* (New York: Harper Collins, 2007), 39). See also Andrew Newberg and Mark Waldman, *How God Changes Your Brain: Breakthrough Findings from a Leading Neuroscientist* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2009), 49).

²⁷⁹ St. Augustine writes about human yearning for God: “Great are you, O Lord ... because you have made us and draw us to yourself, and our heart is unquiet until it rests in you.” See Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding, ed. John E. Rotelle (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1997), 39. Findings in neurological studies suggest, in line with St. Augustine, that the human brain has an “inherited ability to experience spiritual union” with God (“something deeper and more potent than intellect and reason”) which is the “real source of religion’s staying power.” Andrew Newberg, Eugene D’Aquili, and Vince Rause, *Why God Won’t Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2001), 139. Also, Pope John Paul II talks about “the quest for meaning which has always compelled the human heart” (*Fides et Ratio*, 1).

²⁸⁰ Pope John Paul II also talks about “a positivistic mentality” that has taken hold “which not only abandoned the Christian vision of the world, but more especially rejected every appeal to a metaphysical or moral vision” (*Fides et Ratio*, 46).

²⁸¹ Benedict XVI offers an interesting reflection on human beings’ desire for God in secularized Western culture in one of his Wednesday General Audiences. He points out how the Catechism of the Catholic Church opens with the consideration: “The desire for God is written in the human heart ...” (CCC, 27) and how such consideration continues to be valid today. See Benedict XVI (pope), “The Year of Faith. The Desire for God,” Vatican City on November 7, 2012, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2012/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20121107.html, accessed January 5, 2014. See also *Gaudium et Spes*, 21.

The corrective that may be offered to the participants of Camino is twofold. First, the unique and privileged epistemic status of science in popular culture has to be challenged.²⁸² One approach to meet this challenge is to point out to the participants that science, the same as any other discipline, must rely on philosophy (logic) to establish the truth status of its method.²⁸³ It helps to point out that “science *qua* science cannot establish its own metaphysical, epistemic and methodological supremacy by experimental or other means.”²⁸⁴ In other words, the scientific method cannot be used to proof the validity or superiority of the scientific method itself. It depends on the *a priori* method of philosophy of science for validation and credibility.²⁸⁵ Yet, the fact that science is restricted to observable and measurable phenomena may give the skewed perception that its findings and conclusions are totally certain. Most scholars have abandoned this form of positivism²⁸⁶ but the idea persists in popular culture.²⁸⁷

²⁸² The purpose of challenging a privileged epistemic status of science is to open the horizon of the participants to knowledge and truth beyond measurable phenomena, and not to discredit science. It is important to be aware that some participants may confuse this challenge with Christian fundamentalists’ creationist positions that are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church supports science including the theory of evolution. For example, see International Theological Commission, *Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004), 63-64.

²⁸³ Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (New York: Routledge Classics, 2002), 3.

²⁸⁴ Steven Yates, "A Fifth Method of Fixing Belief? Some Peircean Reflections on Methodological Apriorism," Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2009, <http://www.mises.org/journals/scholar/yates4.pdf>, accessed March 22, 2013, 3.

²⁸⁵ Yates points out that the belief that science “can yield reliable, lasting knowledge about sets of stable, determinate entities interacting in law-governed ways in a mind-independent reality is something its practitioners must take for granted; otherwise scientific inquiry loses its point. Nevertheless, attempts to establish such points are not scientific but philosophical” (Steven Yates, "A Fifth Method of Fixing Belief? Some Peircean Reflections on Methodological Apriorism," Ludwig von Mises Institute, <http://www.mises.org/journals/scholar/yates4.pdf>, accessed March 22, 2013, 3.

²⁸⁶ Positivism refers to a theory developed by Auguste Comte that asserts that the only knowledge that can be certain (positive) is scientific knowledge (See Auguste Comte, *Introduction to Positive Philosophy*, Hackett Classics, Frederick Ferré, ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988), 25. On the other hand, Popper says: “The old scientific ideal of *epistēmē* – of absolutely certain, demonstrable knowledge – has proved to be an idol. The demand for scientific objectivity makes it inevitable that every scientific statement must remain *tentative for ever*. It may indeed be corroborated, but every corroboration is relative to other statements which, again, are tentative” (Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, Routledge Classics (New York: Routledge, 2002), 280. See also 29-31). See also Steven Yates, "A Fifth Method of Fixing Belief?"

As the fall of significant conceptual paradigms like Newtonian mechanistic physics demonstrates, scientific theories, even the ones that are widely accepted by the scientific community at large, are subject to rejection, revision and correction.²⁸⁸ The community of inquirers must continue to test and verify scientific beliefs and be ready to change or drop them should they prove to be false at any given time.²⁸⁹ In addition to the fact that the conception of the scientific method is based on *a priori* methods of philosophy and that scientific theories that were once accepted could later turn out to be false, the scientific method itself consists of formulating *a priori* hypotheses based on philosophical logic and then testing them empirically to see if they are false.²⁹⁰ In some cases, these hypotheses cannot be experimentally proven false and yet the scientific community may hold on to them as instrumental truths. The hypotheses of dark matter and dark energy are good examples.²⁹¹

Some Peircean Reflections on Methodological Apriorism," Ludwig von Mises Institute, <http://www.mises.org/journals/scholar/yates4.pdf>, 3, accessed March 22, 2013.

²⁸⁷ See *Fides et Ratio*, 88.

²⁸⁸ Yates also points out that “the fall of the Newtonian paradigm in physics set the stage for a conception of science as revolutionary instead of evolutionary, involving large scale conceptual changes replacing old concepts with new ones rather than merely showing the old ones as special cases of the new” (Yates, “A Fix Method for Fixing Belief?,” 2).

²⁸⁹ Peirce’s thesis of *fallibilism* holds that “no inquirer can ever claim with full assurance to have reached the truth, for new evidence or information may arise that will reverberate throughout one’s system of beliefs affecting even those most entrenched” (Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel, *Introduction to the Essential Peirce in The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 1 1867-1893, by Charles Sanders Peirce, eds. Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), xxii). Hence, for Peirce the community of inquirers plays a central role the always continuing process of scientific inquiry.

²⁹⁰ Scientific findings may be corroborated but never proven. See the concept of falsifiability in Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, Routledge Classics (New York: Routledge, 2002), 17-20. Gardner also acknowledges this fact. He says: “Nor does science ever yield a completely correct and final answer. There is progress and regress, fit and lack of fit ... this has been true at the most sophisticated levels of physics and chemistry” (Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 63).

²⁹¹ As the name suggests, dark matter is not perceivable. Dark matter is a scientific construct that is logically inferred as a possibility to account for certain observations of distant astronomical objects that cannot be otherwise explained using current understandings of gravity. See Derek Raine and Ted Thomas, *An Introduction to the Science of Cosmology* (Philadelphia: Institute of Physics, 2001), 5. Likewise, dark energy is a hypothetical form of energy that serves to explain the acceleration of the expansion of the universe by opposing the gravitational attraction of matter. See Brian Greene, *The Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 299-303. There are, of course,

The point is that human search for understanding and truth, including empirical science, “must recognize the primacy of philosophical *enquiry*, from which it stems and which it ought loyally to serve.”²⁹² It is not only that science stems from philosophy, but that science must rely upon philosophical presuppositions to do its work. Pope John Paul II points out that “through philosophy's work, the ability to speculate which is proper to the human intellect produces a rigorous mode of thought; and then in turn, through the logical coherence of the affirmations made and the organic unity of their content, it produces a systematic body of knowledge.”²⁹³ This includes the scientific knowledge that empirical science produces but it is not limited to that which can be known about the physical universe.

In addition to questions about nature, human beings have, in the words of Paul Tillich, questions of “ultimate concern”²⁹⁴ that lie beyond the scope of empirical science and for which there are answers to explore just as well.²⁹⁵ It is true that historically “metaphysicians have never come to any fixed agreement, but the pendulum has swung backward and forward between a more material and a more spiritual philosophy.”²⁹⁶ Yet, these fundamental questions address matters that *transcend* the human intellect.

other scientific hypotheses that offer possible explanations for these phenomena, but dark matter and dark energy are the most commonly accepted conjectures because they make the most sense. This “making sense” is not result of direct observations or measurements of these entities, but a priori logical thinking. They are the product of scientific speculation that may or may not turn out to be true.

²⁹² *Fides et Ratio*, 4.

²⁹³ *Fides et Ratio*, 4.

²⁹⁴ See Paul Tillich, *Reason and Revelation*, vol. 1 of *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 11-12. Pope John Paul II also talks about the “fundamental questions which pervade human life: *Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?*” (*Fides et Ratio*, 1).

²⁹⁵ *Fides et Ratio*, 1; 4.

²⁹⁶ Charles S. Peirce, “The Fixation of Belief” in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 1 1867-1893, eds. Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), 119.

Therefore the emerging answers are necessarily incomplete; otherwise they would not be addressing *transcendental* questions.²⁹⁷

Therefore, the first corrective that may be offered to the participants of Camino is an invitation to assess the tacit positivism that is interfering with their understanding of faith. Science “offers an ever greater knowledge of the universe as a whole”²⁹⁸ and technology continues to improve human life on the planet in unprecedented ways; yet, there is more to know and understand about the universe than what the scrutiny of empirical data can reveal.²⁹⁹ There is more to human existence than what any technological breakthrough can offer, as wonderful as it may be.

Science and technology “leave unresolved the deepest searchings of the human soul.”³⁰⁰ Certainly science sheds light that fosters knowledge and understanding, but it would be foolish to think that science is the only light there is and to reduce human yearnings to the answers that science may provide. There is also the “light of faith”³⁰¹

²⁹⁷ Pope Francis speaks of the “limitations before the mystery, while striving to investigate, with the discipline proper to reason, the inexhaustible riches of this mystery” (*Lumen Fidei*, 36). Pope John Paul II points out (more poetically perhaps) that “our vision of the face of God is always fragmentary and impaired by the limits of our understanding” (*Fides et Ratio*, 13). Neurologist Mario Beauregard discussing the studies of neurological correlates to spiritual experiences asks: “Do our findings prove that mystics contact a power outside themselves? No, because there is no way to prove or disprove that from one side only” (Mario Beauregard and Denyse O’Leary, *The Spiritual Brain: A Neuroscientist’s Case for the Existence of the Soul* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 276, 278).

²⁹⁸ *Fides et Ratio*, 106.

²⁹⁹ In *Gaudium et Spes*, the Council Fathers write: “Man judges rightly that by his intellect he surpasses the material universe, for he shares in the light of the divine mind. By relentlessly employing his talents through the ages he has indeed made progress in the practical sciences and in technology and the liberal arts. In our times he has won superlative victories, especially in his probing of the material world and in subjecting it to himself. Still he has always searched for more penetrating truths, and finds them. For his intelligence is not confined to observable data alone, but can with genuine certitude attain to reality itself as knowable, though in consequence of sin that certitude is partly obscured and weakened” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 14).

³⁰⁰ Benedict XVI (pope), “General Audience: Meditation on the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” Castel Gandolfo, on August 16 2006. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2006/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20060816.html, accessed October 4, 2014.

³⁰¹ *Lumen Fidei*, 1.

which “is unique, since it is capable of illuminating *every aspect* of human existence.”³⁰²

It is a light that allows “peering into the depths”³⁰³ of all that is, totally transforming being in the world.

³⁰² *Lumen Fidei*, 4.

³⁰³ *Lumen Fidei*, 30.

The Concept of Faith

The second step of the twofold corrective is to invite the participants to re-conceptualize faith. The main “active ingredient” in faith is not “to believe” but rather “to be in a relationship” with God. Believing is the aftereffect of the encounter with God.³⁰⁴ Faith is born of the encounter between God who loves first and humanity that openly seeks meaning to existence.³⁰⁵ Precisely because God loves first, faith is a grace, a gift that God offers to those who seek, and gives it freely to those who accept the offer.³⁰⁶ The encounter with God is an encounter with love, because God is love.³⁰⁷ “Faith transforms the whole person precisely to the extent that he or she becomes open to love. Through this blending of faith and love we come to see the kind of knowledge which faith entails, its power to convince and its ability to illumine our steps. Faith knows because it is tied to love, because love itself brings enlightenment. Faith’s understanding is born when we receive the immense love of God which transforms us inwardly and enables us to see reality with new eyes.”³⁰⁸

Believing, then, happens in the context and as a consequence of the relationship with God which is primary. For instance, the encounter with the word of God in sacred Scripture is not a matter of absorbing religious information and critically judging its truth-value as a literary text. There is more to Scripture than text; hence the church affirms that *it is the word of God* and, together with tradition, the source of God’s

³⁰⁴ *Lumen Fidei*, 4, 26. *Fides et Ratio*, 7.

³⁰⁵ In the opening paragraph of the encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, Pope John Paul II explains that “faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth—in a word, to know himself—so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves (cf. Ex 33:18; Ps 27:8-9; 63:2-3; Jn 14:8; 1 Jn 3:2).

³⁰⁶ “The life of faith, as a filial existence, is the acknowledgment of a primordial and radical gift which upholds our lives” (*Lumen Fidei*, 19). See also *Dei Verbum*, 5.

³⁰⁷ *Deus Caritas Est*, 1.

³⁰⁸ *Lumen Fidei*, 26.

revelation.³⁰⁹ The encounter with God in his word elicits a response which is different in kind to a reaction to ordinary literature that may be judged as believable or not.³¹⁰ It is a response that requires *loving* “with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.”³¹¹ The scriptural text is a sign that represents a transcendental living object (in this case a subject) that lies beyond the text and produces an interpretant that relates the interpreter to that transcendental reality as ultimate meaning.³¹²

In Jesus Christ “a great love has been offered, a good word has been spoken to us,”³¹³ a Word that becomes flesh in order to open the possibility of a personal and transforming relationship with God. The human intellect “can discover the Creator,”³¹⁴ and, through *a priori* human reasoning, it can entertain the probability of God, but that by itself is not faith.³¹⁵ Faith requires metanoia, reaching out and connecting to the intelligence that lies beyond³¹⁶ and being open in turn to the transformation of our intelligence through love. It is through faith that the intellect becomes “open to

³⁰⁹ *Dei Verbum*, 9-10.

³¹⁰ The encounter with the living God through his word in Scripture is of a different kind than the impression that ordinary literary works may have on its readers because of the transcendental nature of the encounter. Pope Francis points out that “hearing God’s word is accompanied by the desire to see his face” (*Lumen Fidei*, 29) in “those who have opened their hearts to God’s love” (*Lumen Fidei*, 37) which describes the nature of a relationship that lies beyond the text.

³¹¹ Mark 12:30; Deuteronomy 6:5. The encounter with God requires a response of the whole person. Faith is that response.

³¹² This is an adaptation of Peirce’s triadic model discussed in Chapter two: a sign (representamen) represents an object and produces an interpretant in the mind of the interpreter. In this case, the process of semiosis works not only in relation to the meaning of the text in itself (the literal meaning) but beyond the text because the sign points to a living transcendental reality (God) that is actively engaging with the interpreter.

³¹³ *Lumen Fidei*, 7.

³¹⁴ *Fides et Ratio*, 8. See also 16.

³¹⁵ “The truth made known to us by Revelation is neither the product nor the consummation of an argument devised by human reason. It appears instead as something gratuitous, which itself stirs thought and seeks acceptance as an expression of love” (*Fides et Ratio*, 15).

³¹⁶ Speculating about God’s essence, Thomas Aquinas reasons that God *is* intelligence. Aquinas explains that “*intellectus igitur et voluntas in Deo sunt idem quod eius essentialis*” (In God, therefore, intellect and will are identical with His essence). Thomas Aquinas, *Compendium Theologiae*, trans. Cyril Vollert (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1947), Part I, ch. 33. See also *Summa Theologica* I, q10, a3, ad 3. All citations from the *Summa Theologica* taken from Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. The Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Catholic Way Publishing, 2013), Kindle edition.

transcendence”³¹⁷ and encounters God that is always already present. The knowledge that is born out of faith, out of this relationship with God, is a deeper truth with much farther consequences for humanity than knowing the wonders of the created universe. It is a knowledge that comes from having a relationship with the Creator of all that exists and which consequently affects “*every aspect* of human existence.”³¹⁸

It is in the context of the encounter-metanoia dynamic that faith is an act of belief that is then articulated and confessed. Believers recognize in the articles of faith of the ecclesial community their own experience of faith, and at the same time these articles of faith are instrumental to the encounter-metanoia dynamic.³¹⁹ The believing aspect of faith is contingent on the encounter-metanoia dynamic that produces trust in the “God who is fidelity,”³²⁰ a trust that is founded in Christ. Pope Francis points out that “Christ is not simply the one in whom we believe, the supreme manifestation of God’s love; he is also the one with whom we are united precisely in order to believe. Faith does not merely gaze at Jesus, but sees things as Jesus himself sees them, with his own eyes: it is a

³¹⁷ Pope Benedict XVI, speaking about bioethics explains that “scientific discoveries in this field and the possibilities of technological intervention seem so advanced as to force a choice between two types of reasoning: reason open to transcendence or reason closed within immanence. We are presented with a clear either/ or. Yet the rationality of a self-centered use of technology proves to be irrational because it implies a decisive rejection of meaning and value. It is no coincidence that closing the door to transcendence brings one up short against a difficulty: how could being emerge from nothing, how could intelligence be born from chance? Faced with these dramatic questions, reason and faith can come to each other’s assistance. Only together will they save man. Entranced by an exclusive reliance on technology, reason without faith is doomed to flounder in an illusion of its own omnipotence. Faith without reason risks being cut off from everyday life” (*Caritas in Veritate*, 74).

³¹⁸ *Lumen Fidei*, 4.

³¹⁹ The conciliar fathers in Vatican II, describing how the tradition that comes from the Apostles continues to develop in the church, explain that it “happens through the contemplation and study made by believers, who treasure these things in their hearts (see Luke, 2:19, 51) through a penetrating understanding of the spiritual realities which they experience, and through the preaching of those who have received through Episcopal succession the sure gift of truth” (*Dei Verbum*, 8). This understanding of living tradition illustrates the dynamics of the encounter-*metanoia* process that characterizes faith. Believing is not a matter of just assenting to the truths which have been handed down through the ages. Instead, through the dynamics of faith, the believers recognize in those truths the work of the Holy Spirit and develop a “*sensus fidei*” that allows them to recognize those truths as the articulation of their personal encounter with God. See *Lumen Gentium*, 12.

³²⁰ *Lumen Fidei*, 10.

participation in his way of seeing.”³²¹ The knowledge and understanding gained by “seeing through Jesus” are a direct consequence of faith as an encounter-metanoia experience – thus the insight: “unless you believe, you will not understand (cf. Is 7:9).”³²²

“Philosophy and the sciences function within the order of natural reason; while faith, enlightened and guided by the Spirit, recognizes in the message of salvation the “fullness of grace and truth” (cf. Jn 1:14) which God has willed to reveal in history and definitively through his Son, Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Jn 5:9; Jn 5:31-32).”³²³ These two interdependent forms of knowing and understanding reality, faith and reason, both involve the human brain, which is the seed of our humanity.³²⁴ The human brain is directly involved in reasoning and loving.³²⁵ Both human perception of sensorial data and the perception of the transcendent have correlations in the brain. In fact, it is our human intellect that makes us creatures created in the image and likeness of God.³²⁶ The brain is the bodily center of intellectual activity; it is the way that human beings *are* in

³²¹ *Lumen Fidei*, 18.

³²² *Lumen Fidei*, 23. The encounter-metanoia experience as a condition to understanding explains the difficulty of apprehending the knowledge that comes from faith. To a person without faith (out of the encounter-metanoia context) this knowledge is not available (cannot understand without believing first) hence the things related to faith may seem absurd.

³²³ *Fides et Ratio*, 9.

³²⁴ In a discussion about evolution and the *imago Dei*, the pontifical International Theological Commission points out that there is a point of divergence in the process of evolution that gives rise to *Homo sapiens*. This point of divergence occurs as a result of brain evolution. They explain that “the decisive factor in human origins was a continually increasing brain size, culminating in that of *Homo sapiens*.” The development of the brain’s neo-cortex introduced “the uniquely human factors of consciousness, intentionality, freedom and creativity, biological evolution was recast as social and cultural evolution.” (International Theological Commission, *Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004), 62.

³²⁵ See *Deus Caritas Est*, 17.

³²⁶ Cf. Genesis 1: 27. Aquinas distinguishes between the speculative and the practical intellect. The practical intellect is “ordained to good which is outside of it” while the speculative intellect “has good within it, viz. the contemplation of truth” (*Summa Theologica* I-II, q3, a5, ad 2). He reasons that “in regard to the principal thing known, which is His Essence, God has no practical but merely speculative knowledge” (*Summa Theologica* I-II, q3, a5, ad 1). The resemblance to God of the human practical intellect “is one of proportion; that is to say, by reason of its standing in relation to what it knows, as God does to what He knows. But the likeness of the speculative intellect to God is one of union and “information”; which is a much greater likeness” (*Summa Theologica* I-II, q3, a5, ad 2).

the world.³²⁷ Speaking of the “whole person” as a human being is a reference to the brain and its neurological functions as well as the mind and spirit.³²⁸ Therefore, this conversation about faith, intelligence, and the faith intelligence construct requires looking at the brain and its neurological functions.³²⁹

The Concept of Intelligence

During one of his General Audiences at St. Peter’s Square in the Vatican, Pope

³²⁷ The acknowledgment of the brain as the center of intellectual activity should not be construed as a proposition of anthropological reductionism. Pope Benedict XVI is critical of reducing the “mind to the brain” (see Benedict XVI (pope), “Address to the Participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council “Cor Unum,”” Vatican City on January 19, 2013, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2013/january/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20130119_pc-corunum.html, accessed September 10, 2014. Instead, as cited above, the brain is conceived as the part of the body that is the “decisive factor” in understanding humanity as created in the image of God. Therefore, the brain is not only the most fundamental constituent of bodiliness but as such, it is also the “temple of the Spirit” in Jesus Christ “who himself took a body for the world’s salvation” (See Pope John Paul II, *Oriente Lumen* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995), 11). Pope Benedict XVI insists that the human person is a “unified creature composed of body and soul,” a unity “in which spirit and matter compenetrates, and in which each is brought to a new nobility” (*Deus Caritas Est*, 5). Consequently, the brain is spiritual not only in Newberg’s neurological understanding of its capacity to perceive transcendent reality, but also in the church’s anthropological conception of the union of body and soul in the human person. For an interesting discussion of the mind-body problem in quantum mechanics see Herry Stapp, *Mindful Universe: Quantum Mechanics and the Participating Observer*, 2d ed. (New York: Springer-Verlag, 2011).

³²⁸ “In the Bible, the heart is the core of the human person, where all his or her different dimensions intersect: body and spirit, interiority and openness to the world and to others, intellect, will and affectivity. If the heart is capable of holding all these dimensions together, it is because it is where we become open to truth and love, where we let them touch us and deeply transform us” (*Lumen Fidei*, 26). Today, using a more anatomically correct depiction, it is the brain that is the core of the human person. Emotional sensations physiologically reflected in the heart are caused by the limbic system’s autonomic functions that regulate heart rate. The classic case of Phineas Gage (1823-1860), a New England railroad worker who was struck in the head with an iron bar, helped establish a connection between personality and the brain since the mid-nineteenth century. For a detail discussion of the connections between the prefrontal cortex, personality, the limbic system, etc. see Joaquín Fuster, *The Prefrontal Cortex*, 4th ed. (San Diego: Elsevier, 2008), 173-177. Fuster explains that there is a “dominant – not necessarily exclusive role – of particular prefrontal areas in particular neuropsychological functions” (172) such as empathy, (177) social interactions (178), intelligence (195), emotional behavior and decision-making (356), etc.

³²⁹ As discussed in Chapter Two, the correlational model of practical theology that this work follows calls for a mutually critical dialogue between the two sources of theology (human experience and the Christian texts). The result of the correlation is to be followed by an investigation of the truth-claims of the religious and theistic meanings through dialogue with a reflective discipline. For a description of the required characteristics of this discipline see Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order*, 55-56. Neuroscience (the scientific study of the nervous system), particularly those neurological studies that investigate religious experience and the brain, serves as the allied discipline for this investigation of practical theology. The use of an allied discipline is inherent to practical theology (See Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 163. See also Johannes van der Ven, *Practical Theology: An Empirical Approach* trans. Barbara Schultz (Kampen, The Netherlands: Kik Pharos Publishing, 1993), 89-112).

Francis prayed: “*Dacci, Signore, il dono dell’intelletto.*”³³⁰ In this catechesis, Pope Francis distinguishes two intelligences: intellectual prowess shared to different degrees by all human beings, and the intellect as a gift of the Holy Spirit which “awakens in a Christian the ability to go beyond the outward appearance of reality and *to probe the depths of the thoughts of God and his plan of salvation.*” Pope Francis continues to explain that “il dono dell’intelletto” (the gift of the intellect) “*is closely connected to faith.*” The presence of the Holy Spirit “enlightens our minds, he makes us grow day by day in the *understanding of what the Lord has said and accomplished.*”³³¹ In his prior catechesis about the gifts of the Holy Spirit (April 9, 2014), Pope Francis speaks about wisdom, describing it in very similar language as he does intelligence.³³²

In the following weekly audiences – until mid-June – the pope continues his

³³⁰ (Give us, Lord, the gift of understanding). Francis (pope), “The Gifts of the Holy Spirit: The Intellect,” Vatican City, on April 30, 2014, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140430_udienza-generale.html, accessed June 6, 2014. As pointed out earlier, the word “intellect” is translated to “understanding” in the British English used in the Vatican’s official translations. Most of the translations that are available in other languages consistently use a word in that language similar to “intellect” and not a word corresponding to “understanding” in that language. The translation to “understanding” is an *interpretation* of the meaning of the intellect influenced by British empiricist philosophers such as Bacon, Hobbes, Locke and Hume who reduce the intellect to sensorial experience. See Aloysius Martinich, *A Hobbes Dictionary, The Blackwell Philosopher Dictionaries* (Cambridge, MA, Blackwell, 1995), 305. For the “humanization of intelligence” see Paul Michael Privateer, *Inventing Intelligence: A Social History of Smart* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 30. The exact word spoken by the Pope in Italian was “intelletto” and not “capire,” “comprendere,” or “intendere” which mean “understand.” In fact, the meaning of “intelletto” in the context of the entire speech differs substantially from the empiricists’ philosophical assumptions as discussed above.

³³¹ See also *Dei Verbum*, 5. Also in one of his letters to the Corinthians, Paul explains that Holy Spirit enables seeing the “depth of God” and distinguishes between “a wisdom of this age” and God’s wisdom (I Corinthians 2: 10-12). Also in his letter to the Ephesians, Paul prays for the enlightenment of the mind (*dianoias*) with a spirit of perception (*eidenai*) so “you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call” (Ephesians 1: 18).

³³² In his first catechesis about the gifts of the Holy Spirit, Pope Francis distinguishes between “human wisdom, which is the fruit of knowledge and experience” and wisdom as “the grace of being able to see everything with the eyes of God” (Francis (pope), “The Gifts of the Holy Spirit: Wisdom,” Vatican City, on April 9, 2014, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140409_udienza-generale.html, access June 6, 2014). He continues to reflect on how the gift of wisdom “comes from intimacy with God.” In these introductory catecheses, the general descriptions of wisdom and the intellect are very similar.

teachings about the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, following the same line of thought.³³³

Yet, it was only the catechesis about the intellect that made headline news in secular media.³³⁴ Why? Most probably for the same reason that Camino's participants find the conversation about faith intelligence both appealing and surprising. Influenced by the prevalent worldview, the conception of intelligence in popular culture is restricted to measurable cognitive abilities principally related to academic performance (logic, math, and language).³³⁵ What do measurable cognitive abilities have to do with God and faith?

A corrective to the reductive concept of intelligence dominant in popular culture may also serve as a catalyst in Camino to engage the participants in a conversation about faith using concepts and language that are relevant in contemporary culture. The cause of the apparent dissonance in the words of Pope Francis stem from the fact that the concept of intelligence that the pope's catecheses and Catholic doctrine advocate is rooted in biblical, patristic, and scholastic, pre-Renaissance metaphors while contemporary conceptions of intelligence are post-Renaissance, post-Enlightenment, post-Scientific

³³³ Catholic tradition speaks of seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, intellect, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord (CCC, 1831). The list is founded on Isaiah 11: 1-2 that attributes these gifts to the Messiah in whom they are fulfilled. These gifts serve to foster the virtues (faith, hope, and charity – the theological virtues; as well as prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance – the moral virtues). See CCC, 1804-1829.

³³⁴ See ANSA, "Papa: Dono dell'Intelletto Apre Mente," *MSN Notizie*, April 30, 2014, accessed July 9, 2014, <http://notizie.it.msn.com/italia/papa-dono-dellintelletto-apre-mente>. See also Iacopo Scaramuzzi, "Francesco: Chiediamo a Dio il Dono dell'Intelletto," *La Stampa, Vatican Insider*, April 30, 2014, accessed July 9, 2014, <http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/vaticano/dettaglio-articolo/articolo/francesco-francisco-udienza-audience-audiencia-33821>. See also "Papa: Chiediamo Tutti Insieme il Dono dell'Intelletto," *La Repubblica*, April 30, 2014, <http://www.repubblica.it/ultimora/24ore/papa-chiediamo-tutti-insieme-il-dono-dell-intelletto/news-dettaglio/4493235>, accessed July 9, 2014. See also Aldo Buonaiuto, "Papa: il Dono dell'Intelletto tra Fede e Ragione," *Il Velino*, April 30, 2014, <http://www.ilvelino.it/it/article/2014/04/30/papa-il-dono-dellintelletto-tra-fede-e-ragione/a2aeacd-df88-43d5-8022-f695644694ec>, accessed July 9, 2014.

³³⁵ In popular culture, the concept of intelligence is primarily associated with IQ (Intelligence Quotient) and the results of IQ tests. See Elaine E. Castles, *Inventing Intelligence: How America Came to Worship IQ* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2012), 15, 19. Howard Gardner and others have challenged this notion. See Stephen Murdock, *IQ: A Smart History of a Failed Idea* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2007), 181-188. There are others like Robert Sternberg who expands the concept of intelligence beyond IQ tests without abandoning belief in the usefulness of psychological testing. See Robert J. Sternberg, *Beyond IQ: A Triarchic Theory of Human Intelligence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Revolution constructs.³³⁶ Nevertheless, the emergence of models that challenge the prevailing post-Renaissance concept of intelligence offers an auspicious opportunity to recover a dimension of intelligence that was abandoned by the secularized world in the aftermath of the Galilean debacle. Gardner recognizes that his theory of multiple intelligences “pluralizes the traditional concept”³³⁷ of intelligence, thus opening the door to an expansion of the intelligence construct out of the limited psychometric cage where Alfred Binet and the French school of intelligence put it in the late nineteenth century. Logic, math, and language are intelligences but they are not the only intelligences, nor are IQ tests the only determinant of intelligence.³³⁸

³³⁶ Tracing the history of intelligence, Privateer explains that “the Greeks produced three notions of intelligence: intelligence as a divine, absolute entity, proving that a stable and rational universe made certitude possible; intelligence as a divine gift given to humans; intelligence personified, with the divine nature of intelligence incarnated as “*sophos, sophistes, or sophia,*” the clever, wise, skilled, or highly knowledgeable person” (Privateer, 23). Aristotle understands the intellect (*nous*) as “the direct contemplative beholding of the sources of knowledge (1141a 7-8), that gets hold of the universal within any particular perception (1139b 28-29). Hence, as grasping the highest unarticulated sources of thinking, intellect is at the opposite extreme from the perception of ultimate particulars (1142a 25-27), but since this grasping is not an abstraction but an openness to that which organizes those very particulars into wholes, intellect unites those extremes (1143a 35-b 5). Grasping the particulars ... is a contemplative act by which intellect stands at the root of both theoretical and practical knowing, being at once the starting point of wisdom’s reasoned knowledge (1141b 2-3) and the experienced eye for particulars of someone with practical judgment (1143b 13-14)” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Joe Sachs (Newburyport, MA: Focus, 2002), 207). Yet, the centuries old concept of intelligence suffered a radical transformation beginning in the Renaissance: it lost its transcendental referent and became humanized – strictly derived from human power of reason (Privateer, 28). Intelligence was reduced to “an attribute that an individual processes,” (Ibid.) mental ability for dealing with life’s challenges and opportunities in an empirical world. But in Catholic tradition, the intellect is understood as a “spiritual faculty of cognition, which is characterized by transcendence and therefore ... an inevitable ordination to God” (Karl Rahner and Herbert Vorgrimler, *Theological Dictionary*, ed. Cornelius Ernst, trans. Richard Strachan, Trans. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), 232).

³³⁷ For Gardner “traditional” means post-Renaissance and post-Enlightenment. Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 15.

³³⁸ Theories like Multiple Intelligences (Gardner), Factor Analysis (Louis Thurstone) and the Triarchic Theory of Intelligence – also known as the Theory of Successful Intelligence (Stenberg) have influenced mainstream thinking about the concept of intelligence as involving more than a single general (g) factor as proposed by Hans Eysenck, Arthur Jensen, Charles Spearman, and others. For instance, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) in its fifth publication of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) explains that “IQ test scores are approximations of conceptual functioning but may be insufficient to assess reasoning in real-life situations and mastery of practical tasks” (American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 37). Consequently, deficiency in adaptive functioning is required in addition to IQ tests in the diagnosis of intellectual disability (intellectual developmental disorder).

Nonetheless, Gardner's definition of intelligence,³³⁹ as well as the more comprehensive definition of the DSM-5,³⁴⁰ still focuses on problem solving, adaptive behaviors, and functional skills that ignore the transcendental dimension of the intellect. Is there a way of recovering the spiritual dimension of the intellect in mainstream science? Or, are the materialistic constraints of the post-Renaissance definition of intelligence a more accurate and truthful definition? Alternatively, are the current definitions incomplete because they leave out a very important aspect of human intelligence? Would a definition of intelligence that includes a faith dimension be less scientific?

The varying definitions of intelligence that are held today ultimately are attempts to describe the outcomes of neurological processes based on phenomenological observations.³⁴¹ Intelligence is a psychological construct with an underlying biological foundation that neuroscientists are barely beginning to understand thanks to recent advances in neuroimaging.³⁴² Studies that correlate intelligence phenomena and

³³⁹ Gardner defines intelligence as “the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting or community” (Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*, 15).

³⁴⁰ The operational definition founded on the diagnostic criteria for intellectual disability is that intellectual functions include “reasoning, problem solving, planning, abstract thinking, judgment, academic learning, and learning from experience” (DSM-5, 33). It also includes adaptive functioning in conceptual, social, and practical domains, including personal independence and social responsibility (communication, social participation, and independent living). The American Psychological Association argues that there are different levels of intelligence – “individuals differ from one another in their ability to understand complex ideas, to adapt effectively to the environment, to learn from experience, to engage in various forms of reasoning, to overcome obstacles by taking thought” (Ulric Neisser, Gwyneth Boodoo, Thomas Bouchard, Jr., A. W. Boykin, Nathan Brody, S. J. Ceci, D. F. Halpern, et al., “Intelligence: Knowns and Unknowns,” *American Psychologist* 51, no. 2 (1996): 77-101).

³⁴¹ See Rex E. Jung and Richard J. Haier, “The Parieto-Frontal Integration Theory (P-FIT) of Intelligence: Converging Neuroimaging Evidence,” *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 30, no. 2 (2007): 135. Jung and Haier explain that Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) synthesized previously discordant viewpoints about localization of higher cognitive function in the brain, including intelligence, summarizing “brain function as comprising distributed interactions between cortical regions united to perform a common cognitive task, a conceptualization that persists to the present day.”

³⁴² Eileen Luders, Katherine L. Narr, Paul M. Thompson, Arthur W. Toga, “Neuroanatomical Correlates of Intelligence,” *Intelligence* 37, no. 2 (March 2009): 156-163.

interaction among precise brain regions' neurochemical mechanisms are just beginning to emerge. One example is the Parieto-Frontal Integration Theory (P-FIT), which proposes that "the critical interaction between association cortices within parietal and frontal brain regions which, when effectively linked by white matter structures (i.e., arcuate fasciculus, superior longitudinal fasciculus), underpins individual differences in reasoning competence in humans, and perhaps in other mammalian species as well."³⁴³

P-FIT does not purport to provide brain correlates for all intelligences or for all intellectual activity.³⁴⁴ Yet, it offers an important contribution that is relevant to this investigation. It points to the *interaction* between brain regions as structural correlates of intelligence. Intelligence is not an activity limited to one specific area of the brain (the prefrontal cortex) but the interaction of discrete neurological networks. This is also the case for spiritual experiences. For instance, a neuroimaging study of Franciscan nuns during centering prayer³⁴⁵ reported cerebral blood flow changes in the prefrontal cortex, inferior parietal lobes, and inferior frontal lobes.³⁴⁶

In a separate study using more advanced neuroimaging technology,³⁴⁷ the researchers scanned the brains of contemplative Carmelite nuns while they remembered

³⁴³ Jung & Haier, "The Parieto-Frontal Integration Theory," 138. The study concludes that "the array of neuroimaging studies reviewed here demonstrates that scores on many psychometrically based measures of intellectual ability have robust correlates in brain structure and function" (Ibid., 152).

³⁴⁴ The study is limited to the review of "37 modern neuroimaging studies" in an effort "to understand how brain and behavior are linked through the expression of intelligence and reason" (Jung & Haier, "The Parieto-Frontal Interaction Theory," 135). The thirty seven neuroimaging studies are discrete studies mostly conducted by other researchers that used psychometrically based measures of intelligence (See Ibid., 152).

³⁴⁵ Centering prayer is a method or discipline leading to contemplative prayer. See Thomas Keating, *Foundations for Centering Prayer and the Christian Contemplative Life* (New York: Continuum International, 2002), 9-14.

³⁴⁶ Newberg, *Why God Won't Go Away*, 7. See also Andrew Newberg, Abass Alavi, Michael Baime, P. D. Mozley, and Eugene d'Aquili, "The Measurement of Regional Cerebral Blood Flow during Complex Cognitive Task of Meditation: A Preliminary SPECT Study," *Psychiatry Research* 106, no. 2, (2001): 113-122.

³⁴⁷ Mario Beauregard and his team used functional magnetic resonance (fMRI) and qualitative electroencephalography (QEEG).

and mentally relived an experience of *unio mystica*.³⁴⁸ As with Newberg's neurological study of the Franciscan nuns, these studies also found significant loci of activation in the medial prefrontal cortex (right medial), parietal lobes (left inferior and superior, right superior), and orbitofrontal cortex (right medial), as well as other areas.³⁴⁹ This suggests that at least some experiences that are construed as spiritual are also the result of the interaction of discrete neurological networks. In fact, there is fifty percent overlap between the Brodmann areas identified by the P-FIT study and those found in Beauregard's study of the Carmelite nuns.³⁵⁰

Interpretation of Neurological Correlates of Spiritual Experiences

Human beings are persons in the unity of body and spirit.³⁵¹ The emerging discoveries of the neurological correlates of spiritual experiences simply disclose the neurophysiology of these experiences. The brain is involved in loving, praying, thinking, making friends, imagining, meditating, socializing, worshiping, communicating, playing, and any other act or mental activity that is proper to human beings as intelligent agents. The overlapping of the P-FIT neurological correlates and those of spiritual experiences suggests that faith is an intelligence. Certainly faith is unique to human beings; and human religious imagination (relating to the transcendent) requires high intelligence. The

³⁴⁸ Mario Beauregard and Denyse O'Leary, *The Spiritual Brain: A Neuroscientist's Case for the Existence of the Soul* (New York: Haper Collins, 2007), 267-276. For details about Carmelite spirituality and the experience of *unio mystica* (mystical union) see Paul Marie, *Carmelite Spirituality in the Teresian Tradition*, rev. ed., ed. Steven Payne (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1997), 74-76.

³⁴⁹ The other areas include the visual cortex, caudate nucleus, right middle temporal cortex, left brain stem, left insula, and the cingulate cortex (right and left anterior). See Beauregard, *The Spiritual Brain*, 273.

³⁵⁰ Brodmann areas 7, 10, 18, 19, 21, 32, and 40 overlap. Areas 11 and 13 are unique to the study of the nuns; and areas 6, 9, 37, 39, 45, 46, and 47 are unique to P-FIT.

³⁵¹ Pope John Paul II is critical of Cartesian dualism and the tendency to make a "radical contrast" between spirit and body. In human beings, body and spirit (or soul) are inseparable. "The body can never be reduced to mere matter: it is a *spiritualized body*, just as man's spirit is so closely united to the body that he can be described as an *embodied spirit*." John Paul II (pope), *Gratissimam Sane* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994), 19. See also *Lumen Fidei*, 26; *Deus Caritas Est*, 5; *Gaudium et Spes*, 14; CCC, 362-368.

neuroimaging studies support the view that “religious experience is a cognitive structured phenomenon for which thoughts and beliefs are central ... and challenge an alternative, highly popularized view that religious experience is entirely a matter of a pre-cognitive, arousal-type brain response localized to the limbic system.”³⁵²

Yet the neurophysiology of spiritual experiences does not explain causation or the origin of these experiences. “The results of functional imaging studies of religious experience cannot properly be used to fund causal explanations of religious experience (i.e., why people have them at all), let alone explanations for religion (why there is religion at all; or, what the origins of religion are).”³⁵³ Faith is a personal response in body and spirit, brain and mind, body and soul to God. The encounter with God “engages our will and our intellect. Acknowledgment of the living God is one path towards love, and the “yes” of our will to his will unites our intellect, will and sentiments in the all-embracing act of love.”³⁵⁴

The neurophysiology of religious experience explains the neurological correlates of the human intellect responding to a reality that transcends the human experience itself and is part of it at the same time. God transcends the metaphors of human language and the limits of culturally-conditioned human perception.³⁵⁵ The grace of God cannot be

³⁵² Nina P. Azari, “Neuroimaging Studies of Religious Experience: A Critical Review” in *Where God and Science Meet: How Brain and Evolutionary Studies Alter Our Understanding of Religion* ed. Patrick McNamara (Westport, Conn: Praeger Publishers, 2006), 43. Azari continues to explain that “what makes an experience *religious* as opposed to *nonreligious* has to do with complex cognitive factors.” (Ibid.). The limbic system is a part of the brain functionally related to simple emotions. More complex emotions, for example empathy and sympathy, involve the prefrontal cortex (same as religious experiences) that plays “an especially important role in particular kinds of social-relational cognitive processes.” (Ibid.).

³⁵³ Ibid., 42.

³⁵⁴ *Deus Caritas Est*, 17.

³⁵⁵ Researchers of the neurology of religious experiences depend on the subjective reports of the study’s participants to interpret the neurological data (Beauregard, *The Spiritual Brain*, 265). At the same time, the study’s participants are interpreting and articulating their religious experience through a hermeneutical lens that is informed by their existing belief system. Hence the Catholic nuns’ report is coded using Catholic metaphors while the Buddhists report is coded using Buddhist metaphors. Additionally, the objective

reduced to measurable neurological exchanges that a functional MRI can record. Nevertheless, God is revealed in nature, and fMRIs do disclose to the tuned mind the grace of God at work. After all, the brain is God's creation and it is wholly involved in how humans relate to the sacred and how God relates to humans. For theologians, the neuroimaging studies may serve to recover and bring to the forefront the role of the intellect in the experience of faith, which is a concept deeply rooted in Christian tradition but lost to post-Renaissance secular culture as discussed earlier.

The effort to demonstrate that faith is an intelligence in Gardner's multiple intelligences model ultimately is an exercise in articulating a traditional theological concept using the categories of this model. It is a way of participating in today's conversation about intelligence with the intent of recovering the spiritual dimension that is so distinctly human. But it is clear that from a theological perspective, at least within Catholic tradition, the relationship between faith and the intellect long precedes Gardner's model. Yet the advantage of using multiple intelligences (MI) to talk about faith intelligence in Camino is that it provides a modern context that resonates with the movement participants.

Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Model

As discussed earlier, while Gardner expands the concept of intelligence, he still offers a definition that is embedded in the post-Renaissance, post-Enlightenment, Post-Scientific Revolution "humanization" of the construct. For Gardner, intelligence is "the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular

experience is necessarily mediated (processed by the human brain) and consequently distorted especially if it is an experience of transcendence.

cultural setting or community.”³⁵⁶ The problems that Gardner is considering are functional and pragmatic within a cultural context. These problems are solved through *computations* performed by autonomous neurological circuits that exhibit a “biological potential to analyze certain kinds of information.”³⁵⁷ For Gardner, the computational aspect is at the core of the intellectual realm. He explains that “linguistic intelligence computes the sounds and sights of language; spatial intelligence computes positions and perspectives of entities in space; interpersonal intelligence computes the status, attitudes, motivations of other individuals in relation to oneself, and so on.”³⁵⁸

Consequently, the first step for considering whether faith is a candidate intelligence in Gardner’s MI model is to address two fundamental questions: What kind of *computations* are involved in faith intelligence? And, what are the *problems* it solves? The first step in answering the question about computation is defining clearly and distinctly the meaning of the word “compute.” Gardner uses computers as an analogy for his list of intelligences,³⁵⁹ a popular habit among cognitive psychologists until a few years ago;³⁶⁰ hence examining computers is a good starting point.

Defining “Compute”

Personal computers, for example, use microprocessors to do their work. The microprocessor is capable of two distinct operations: adding and comparing binary

³⁵⁶ Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*, 15.

³⁵⁷ Howard Gardner, “A Case Against Spiritual Intelligence,” *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 10, no. 1 (2000): 32.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

³⁵⁹ Gardner writes: “I contend that we have not one general-purpose computer but rather a set of discrete computers – the multiple intelligences – that operate somewhat independently of one another” (Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, xii).

³⁶⁰ “There is a long history of the use of the computer metaphor in cognitive psychology. Indeed, developments in computer science were said to inspire, in part, the cognitive revolution.” However, “the connectionist metaphor has, to a large extent, taken the place of the computer metaphor.” (Eamon Fulcher, *Computer Models of Cognition and Connectionism*, Ch. 9 of *Cognitive Psychology* (Exeter: Crucial, 2003, <http://www.eamonfulcher.com/CogPsych/page10.htm>).

numbers.³⁶¹ Binary numbers are represented in the computer using electricity where the lack or presence of voltage signifies numbers 0 and 1. Computer processing occurs by shifting the 0 and 1 electrical representations through input and output registers according to algorithms called programs. Despite the anthropomorphic attributes that sometimes are used to describe them, computers are inanimate tools.³⁶² They are like string puppets whose moving parts may create the illusion of animation, but in reality it is all the work of the puppeteer. In a similar manner, the actual computing in this case is done by the engineers who develop the algorithms to program the machine. It is not the paper and pencil that solve mathematical equations, but the human beings using them. Therefore, the first distinction to consider is that “computing” is a human act sometimes accomplished with the aid of a machine, but machines themselves do not compute.

The question then becomes: What exactly are people doing when they are computing? The etymology of the words “compute” and “computer” provides a good clue. Originally, in the seventeenth century, “compute” and “computer” referred to “books of calculation tables” and the people who put them together.³⁶³ It was not until

³⁶¹ All mathematical computations (subtracting, multiplying, dividing, etc.) are accomplished by repeatedly processing and adding binary numbers. For example, the computer solves the equation $7-2=x$ as follows: 7 in binary is 111 and 2 in binary is 10. The equation then becomes $111-010=x$. The computer inverts the lower number so that 010 becomes 101. It then ADDS $111+101$ which is equal to 1100. It then takes the first digit on the left and adds it to the result ($100+1=101$). It multiplies by adding in sequence, etc. Comparison or logic means determining if a binary number is equal, greater, or lesser than another number. It accomplishes this by processing the number, two binary digits at a time, through AND, OR, and NOT logic gates. Every computation in a computer, from word processing to the Internet are accomplished through these two operations. See David Harris and Sarah Harris, *Digital Design and Computer Architecture* (New York: Elsevier, 2013).

³⁶² For example, dumb and intelligent terminals in reality are neither dumb nor intelligent. They are just equipment with different characteristics. The nomenclature in the field of Artificial Intelligence is substantially anthropomorphic which has tickled the philosophical imagination of some and inspired great science fiction pieces. But as John Searle’s Chinese room demonstrates, the intelligent agent in Artificial Intelligence is the human programmer. See John R. Searle, *Mind: A Brief Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

³⁶³ The word “compute” comes from the Latin *computare*, a compound word consisting of *com* (“with”) and *putare* (“reckon together”). In the seventeenth century a “reckoner” or “ready reckoner” was a handbook of tables to facilitate computations (i.e., tables of money, weight, measures, multiplication,

the late nineteenth century that these words had anything to do with calculating machines. Nevertheless, the origin of the word “compute” discloses the core operation behind computations: *connecting one thing with another*.³⁶⁴ In fact, “the connectionist metaphor has, to a large extent, taken the place of the computer metaphor” in cognitive psychology because it is a closer model of how the brain works.³⁶⁵ Computations in the human brain are the result of complex interconnections of neural networks.³⁶⁶ Computing, from a neurological perspective, consists of *logically connecting one neurological representation with another*.

For instance, solving problems is accomplished by connecting logically fitting solutions with desired goals. The “logic” aspect is described by semiotics.³⁶⁷ Linguistic computing entails connecting sounds with environmental objects and experiences. Spatial computing connects perceptions of space with possibilities of movement, space arrangements, and so on. Thus, intelligence can be defined as *logically connecting one*

division, etc.). Creating the tables required hours of tedious manual calculations hence the incentive to develop a mechanical “computer” to do them. For an overview of “the battle over machine intelligence and whether the conscious mind works like a computer” see Anthony Freeman, *Consciousness: A Guide to the Debates* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2003), 101-119.

³⁶⁴ For example, a table of calculations consists of vertical columns and horizontal rows. The first column contains the known values and the columns to its right their equivalencies. The table *connects* one value with another. Computer algorithms do exactly the same thing. The computer processes a given input to produce a *related* output. Input and output are necessarily *connected* since the output is consistently dependent on the input. The required algorithm (computer program) consists of the series of steps to go from input to its related output.

³⁶⁵ Fulcher, *Computer Models of Cognition and Connectionism*.

³⁶⁶ For a discussion of brain representation process see Alexander G. Huth, Shinji Nishimoto, An T. Vu, and Jack L. Gallant, "A Continuous Semantic Space Describes the Representation of Thousands of Object and Action Categories Across the Human Brain," *Neuron* 76, no. 6 (2012): 1210-1224.

³⁶⁷ For Peirce logic is formal semiotic. He writes: “Logic, in its general sense, is, as I believe I have shown, only another name for semiotic (σημειωτική), the quasi-necessary, or formal, doctrine of signs. By describing the doctrine as “quasi-necessary”, or formal, I mean that we observe the characters of such signs as we know, and from such an observation, by a process which I will not object to naming Abstraction, we are led to statements, eminently fallible, and therefore in one sense by no means necessary, as to what must be the characters of all signs used by a “scientific” intelligence, that is to say, by an intelligence capable of learning by experience. As to that process of abstraction, it is itself a sort of observation” (Charles S. Peirce, *Elements of Logic*, vol. 1 of *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, eds. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), 2.227). Sign theory describes how signs connect to objects and produce interpretants which are in turn a new signs (semiosis). Interpretants are, of course, connected to the sign just as well.

thing with another in order to solve problems and create new products.³⁶⁸ The popular metaphors of “connecting-the-dots” or “putting two and two together” are good descriptors of the essence of intelligence. Whether through “insight” or as the result of “analytical processing,” problem solving, and creativity are the product of brain processes that logically match possibilities³⁶⁹ using the available information in the brain.³⁷⁰

Faith “Computations”

Based on this understanding of “computing” and the ensuing refinement of Gardner’s definition of intelligence, does faith qualify as a candidate intelligence? What kind of *computing* is involved in faith understood as a relationship with God? First, faith *computing* entails *connecting* the fact of human existence with its transcendental context. Human questions of ultimate concern seek to understand the context of existence which necessarily transcends humanity itself.³⁷¹ Gardner admits that the existential quest qualifies as a candidate intelligence and that it “scores reasonably well on the eight

³⁶⁸ For a practical discussion of deductive, inductive, and abductive logic in problem solving see Michael Meyer, “Abduction: A Logical View for Investigating and Initiating Processes of Discovering Mathematical Coherences,” *Educational Studies in Mathematics* 74, no. 2 (2010): 185-205.

³⁶⁹ For an example of a neuroimaging study of the neural correlates of brain computing in solving verbal-reasoning problems see John Kounios, and Mark Beeman, “The Cognitive Neuroscience of Insight,” *Annual Review of Psychology* 65, no. 1 (2014): 71-93. In this study Kounios and Beeman distinguish between solutions that “popped into awareness suddenly” (insight) and those that result from “a more methodical hypothesis-testing approach” (analytical processing) (Ibid., 73).

³⁷⁰ In addition to the computational aspect included in Gardner’s definition of intelligence, the neurological mechanisms for obtaining the information to be processed (perception, attention, memory, etc.) should also be considered as necessary prerequisites of computing. In the prior examples, both constructing calculation tables and writing algorithms require some initial data to process. There is no output without input. Additionally, as Gardner points out, the act of computing may also involve creating or producing something new besides solving problems. Therefore, the processed output may contain new information based on the given input. Hence, intelligence involves possibility thinking. For a discussion of the role of attention on intelligence see Isabel A. Muzzio, Clifford Kentros, and Eric Kandel, “What is Remembered? Role of Attention on the Encoding and Retrieval of Hippocampal Representations,” *Journal of Physiology* 587 (2009): 2837-2854.

³⁷¹ The context of existence is necessarily transcendent because 1) humans are self-aware, 2) human beings know that they are not a product of their own creation, and 3) human knowledge is limited.

criteria” that he developed to judge if a candidate intelligence qualifies.³⁷²

The “computing” in Gardner’s existential intelligence involves “the capacity to locate oneself with respect to the furthest reaches of the cosmos – the infinite and the infinitesimal – and the related capacity to locate oneself with respect to such existential features of the human condition as the significance of life, the meaning of death, the ultimate fate of the physical and the psychological worlds and such profound experiences as love of another person or total immersion in a work of art.”³⁷³ Faith, inasmuch as it encompasses existential intelligence, “the obligation to ask the ultimate religious questions,”³⁷⁴ “computes” the questions of ultimate concern.

Existential intelligence for Gardner, however, is restricted to intellectual curiosity without practical consequences. It is the “species potential to engage in transcendental concerns, a capacity that can be aroused and developed under certain circumstances.”³⁷⁵ Nevertheless, he is wary of any specific content or claims of “spiritual truth” that cannot be “measured objectively.”³⁷⁶ While he recognizes that this capacity for transcendental concerns “has been valued in every known human culture,”³⁷⁷ he finds the diversity in

³⁷² Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 64. See also, Gardner, “A Case Against Spiritual Intelligence,” 29-30.

³⁷³ Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 64.

³⁷⁴ Pope John Paul II speaks of the “obligation” to ask the “religious questions” as part of the human search for knowledge. He writes that in the depths of the human heart “there always remains a yearning for absolute truth and a thirst to attain full knowledge of it. This is eloquently proved by man’s tireless search for knowledge in all fields. It is proved even more by his search for the *meaning of life*. The development of science and technology, this splendid testimony of the human capacity for understanding and for perseverance, does not free humanity from the obligation to ask the ultimate religious questions.” (John Paul II (pope), *Veritas Splendor* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), 1). See also *Fides et Ratio*, 1; and *Centesimus Annus*, 24; *Gaudium et Spes*, 10.

³⁷⁵ Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 60-61.

³⁷⁶ Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 56. Gardner admits that he “feels no personal involvement in the realm of spirituality.” He writes: “I do not have a religious identity (though I have a cultural identity) as a Jewish person. And I am as much frightened as intrigued by people who see themselves (or who are seen by others) as spiritual individuals” (Ibid., 64-65). He associates spirituality with “affective and phenomenological” content (Ibid., 59) and “emotional reactions” (Ibid., 65).

³⁷⁷ Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 61.

spiritual or religious content to be problematic and controversial.³⁷⁸ Therefore, for Gardner, existential intelligence is about puzzling over the transcendental questions without making any attempt to answer them.

Conversely, the value that every known human culture places on transcendental concerns is not so much about pondering about existential question as it is about *living* according to the best answers that they can come up with. Beliefs affect the ethical choices people make, the hopes they hold on to, how the family and societies are structured, politics and economics; in other words, “the answer given to these questions decides the direction which people seek to give to their lives.”³⁷⁹ This figuring out how to live life is another, and perhaps the most palpable, “computing” of faith.

Beliefs, as discussed earlier, come as result of the experience of encounter. “From ancient times down to the present, there is found among various peoples a certain perception of that hidden power which hovers over the course of things and over the events of human history; at times some indeed have come to the recognition of a Supreme Being, or even of a Father. This perception and recognition penetrates their lives with a profound religious sense.”³⁸⁰ Most often throughout history and today around the world, the “computing” of faith leads to the discovery of a *living being* rather than a dead fact. The most characteristic expressions of spirituality and religion take the form of a relationship to transcendent living being or beings. Even in the most primitive forms of religion (such as animism), the believer establishes a subjective relationship with living non-physical entities. Believing in a magic rock is not religious. Believing in the

³⁷⁸ Gardner, “A Case Against Spiritual Intelligence,” 29-30.

³⁷⁹ *Fides et Ratio*, 1.

³⁸⁰ See Vatican II Council, *Nostra Aetate, Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*, in Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Vatican Collection Series, vol. 1, ed. Austin Flannery, 738-742 (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1988), 2.

spirit that dwells in the rock is.³⁸¹

Faith is more than the “species potential to engage in transcendental concerns” as simple intellectual curiosity, but the capacity to wholly engage in a relationship with the transcendental with practical consequences that affect life in its entirety. Faith is “performative ... a message which shapes our life in a new way” rather than “just information”³⁸² that may be interesting to know but is of no real consequence for daily living. Pope John Paul II, talking about “the fundamental questions which pervade human life” says: “In fact, the answer given to these questions decides the direction which people seek to give to their lives.”³⁸³ Gardner recognizes that existential intelligence “captures at least part of what individuals mean when they speak of spiritual concerns,”³⁸⁴ but faith intelligence is more comprehensive in the sense that it captures the questions and their consequences.

³⁸¹ Gardner is concerned that the claim of an “encounter with a deeper or higher truth” leads to “a specific content – a spiritual truth – to which only some or only those who have followed certain path can have access” (Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 56). He finds the transcendental concerns “uncontroversial” whereas the specific content or truth claims are not universally agreed upon. But the content of the faith’s experience of encounter precedes and transcends the articulation of this content as “spiritual truths” (see *Lumen Fidei*, 4). After providing some samples of the transcendental concerns that characterize existential intelligence, Gardner warns: “Note that there is no stipulation here of attaining an ultimate truth, any more than the deployer of musical intelligence must produce or prefer certain kinds of music. Rather, there is a species potential to engage in transcendental concerns, a capacity that can be aroused and developed under certain circumstances” (Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 60). But musical intelligence is not *thinking* about music but producing it, performing it, expressing it. While claims to the universality of any particular musical expression may have detractors (not everyone may find Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 5* or The Sugarhill Gang’s *Rapper’s Delight* appealing or representative) music intelligence is recognized in its expression which will necessarily have particularities such as genre and style that may not have universal appeal. However, music intelligence is not the expression itself but what lies underneath. The same is true of faith intelligence. It is not about doctrine or dogma, but the *encounter with the transcendent* (see *Deus Caritas Est*, 1).

³⁸² *Spe Salvi*, 10.

³⁸³ *Fides et Ratio*, 1. The fundamental questions he lists are: “*Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?*” He continues: “These are the questions which we find in the sacred writings of Israel, as also in the Veda and the Avesta; we find them in the writings of Confucius and Lao-Tze, and in the preaching of Tirthankara and Buddha; they appear in the poetry of Homer and in the tragedies of Euripides and Sophocles, as they do in the philosophical writings of Plato and Aristotle” (Ibid.).

³⁸⁴ Gardner, “A Case Against Spiritual Intelligence,” 28.

The knowledge and understanding that faith intelligence brings about is necessarily transformative and performative because of the close relationship between faith and love as discussed earlier. Faith intelligence, in the always-continuing encounter-metanoia dynamic, penetrates (without ever exhausting it) the mystery of God who is love. Therefore, “intelligence and love are not in separate compartments: *love is rich in intelligence and intelligence is full of love.*”³⁸⁵ Created in the image of God, “who is supreme intelligence,”³⁸⁶ human beings are called to love.³⁸⁷ Hence faith intelligence is ineludibly oriented to action rather than to simply having passive spiritual concerns.³⁸⁸

Problem Solving and Faith

The primary purpose of the computational ability in Gardner’s model is to solve

³⁸⁵ *Caritas in Veritate*, 30. In this social encyclical, Benedict XVI insists on the primacy of the virtue of love in the practice of business and economics. In this context, he highlights the deeply-rooted relationship between love and intelligence. “Knowledge is never purely the work of the intellect. It can certainly be reduced to calculation and experiment, but if it aspires to be wisdom capable of directing man in the light of his first beginnings and his final ends, it must be “seasoned” with the “salt” of charity. Deeds without knowledge are blind, and knowledge without love is sterile” (*Caritas in Veritate*, 30). The encyclical *Lumen Fidei* also highlights the relationship between knowledge and love by pointing out that “an individualistic and narrow conception of knowledge” fails to “appreciate the significance of mediation, this capacity to participate in the vision of another, this shared knowledge which is the knowledge proper to love (*Lumen Fidei*, 14).

³⁸⁶ Benedict XVI (pope), “General Audience: Saint Albert the Great,” Vatican City, on Wednesday, March 24, 2010, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20100324.html, accessed November 14, 2014. See also John Paul II (pope), “Address of His Holiness John Paul II to the Young People Gathered in the Vatican Basilica,” Vatican City, on March 14, 1979, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1979/march/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19790314_giovani.html, accessed August 29, 2014. Pope John Paul II points out that “the marvels which the various specific sciences reveal to us about man and the world, about the microcosm and macrocosm, about the internal structure of matter and the depths of the human psyche, are such as to confirm the words of the sacred authors, leading us to recognize the existence of a supreme Intelligence which created the universe and gives it order” (John Paul II (pope), “God Who Reveals Himself Is He Who Exists.” Vatican City, on July 31, 1985, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1985/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19850731.html, accessed July 21, 2013). See also *Summa Theologica* I, q18, a3.

³⁸⁷ The encounter with God is conditioned to the love of neighbor. See *Deus Caritas Est*, 16.

³⁸⁸ Contrary to the popular understanding of love as a feeling, Pope Benedict XVI says that love “is not merely a sentiment” that comes and goes. “It is characteristic of mature love that it calls into play all man’s potentialities; it engages the whole man, so to speak. Contact with the visible manifestations of God’s love can awaken within us a feeling of joy born of the experience of being loved. But this encounter also engages our will and our intellect. Acknowledgment of the living God is one path towards love, and the “yes” of our will to his will unites our intellect, will and sentiments in the all-embracing act of love” (*Deus Caritas Est*, 17).

problems. He argues that problem solving is “central to most concepts of intelligence” including his.³⁸⁹ The question then is: What problems can faith solve? Arguing that “spirituality might be conceived of as a type of intelligence”³⁹⁰ in Gardner’s model, Robert Emmons points to “the ability to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems in living” and the well-documented “effectiveness of spiritual and religious resources in the coping process”³⁹¹ as convincing examples of how faith plays a role in problem solving. In fact, “problem solving is the *sine qua non* of effective coping, as effective coping entails the implementation of problem solving skills.”³⁹² Emmons suggests that “spiritual conversion can shape the reprioritization of goals” and that “intrinsically religious individuals are more likely to be adept at handling traumatically induced stress,” to find meaning in traumatic crises, and are more likely to grow from these experiences than non-religious people.³⁹³

Any sort of relationship with God (through questions of ultimate concern, metanoia, or religious involvement of some kind) is very likely to provide an existential point of reference with practical consequences for daily living. In a sense, solutions to life problems from ethics to suffering might be informed by faith. Faith provides solutions to these problems by offering a guiding light through a relationship with the transcendent that grounds hope and transforms perspectives. Hence, there is a widespread correlation between faith and the meaning of life as well as between faith and

³⁸⁹ Gardner, “A Case Against Spiritual Intelligence,” 30.

³⁹⁰ Robert A. Emmons, “Is Spirituality an Intelligence? Motivation, Cognition, and the Psychology of Ultimate Concern,” *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 10 (2000): 3.

³⁹¹ Emmons, “Is Spirituality an Intelligence?” 12.

³⁹² Emmons describes certain abilities that are required for problem solving (i.e., search for information, analyze situations, generate alternative courses of action, weigh alternatives, and the implementation of an appropriate action plan) and points out that “the ability to revise and reprioritize goals are indicators of intelligence” (Ibid.).

³⁹³ Ibid.

the direction that people give to their life. In effect, much of the conversation in Camino about marriage presupposes that faith plays a decisive role in managing the intricacies of marital relationships. The central theme of *lo importante es el otro*, which is part of the religious content of the weekend experience, transforms the context of the relationship as the *other* is reframed and reprioritized. The relationship with God is concretized in the relationship with the spouse. Faith acquires texture in the day to day living with the other and thus becomes an integral part of problem solving.

In the interviews with the facilitators that work in Camino, the perception of God's presence at a time of dire need is a recurring theme. During grave situations (serious illness, death, and great loss) the perception of God's presence is determinative to effective coping and it is consistently offered by participants as a concrete example of their experience of faith. The perception of the presence of God is particularly experienced through communion with others who empathize with their suffering. In these cases, the perceived presence of God is the ultimate cognitive solution to an irremediable problem.³⁹⁴ Also, the participants of the weekend experience report that they pray often asking for God's help in solving problems of daily life from finding employment to miraculous healings. Independently of whether or not these problems are

³⁹⁴ It is a cognitive solution inasmuch as it offers understanding while it offers nothing to lessen the pain or take away the feelings of suffering. The perceived presence of God provokes a certain understanding that makes sense of an otherwise senseless situation. It is a solution not to the causative problem but to the ensuing problems in its aftermath. Pope Francis writes: "Faith always remains something of a cross; it retains a certain obscurity which does not detract from the firmness of its assent. **Some things are understood and appreciated only from the standpoint of this assent**, which is a sister to love, beyond the range of clear reasons and arguments" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 42). This is the kind of understanding that faith and the perception of God's presence provides in these desperate situations. It is the understanding that gives meaning to Christian joy. Pope Francis writes: "I understand the grief of people who have to endure great suffering, yet slowly but surely we all have to let the joy of faith slowly revive as a quiet yet firm trust, even amid the greatest distress: "My soul is bereft of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is... But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness... It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord" (Lam 3:17, 21-23, 26)" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 6).

truly solved through divine intervention, these prayers of intercession represent a problem solving strategy or at least a way of addressing these issues. Prayer is a uniquely human behavior that persists even among people with a highly compartmentalized belief system.

Neurological Correlates

Despite the fact that existential intelligence “surprisingly”³⁹⁵ meets his criteria for an intelligence,³⁹⁶ Gardner is hesitant about adding it to the list “chiefly from the lack of convincing evidence about brain structures and processes dedicated to this form of computation.”³⁹⁷ Considering that Gardner’s definition of existential intelligence is restricted to asking certain kinds of questions, it is reasonable to speculate that finding specialized neurological circuits for each variety of intellectual curiosity is improbable. However, the concept of faith intelligence as described in this dissertation is more comprehensive and entails practical consequences that do require dedicated neurological structures and processes as the studies of Newberg, d’Aquili, Beauregard, and others demonstrate.³⁹⁸ These studies suggest that the human brain is particularly equipped for “faith computing” from raising fundamental questions about the nature of human existence to figuring out the practical implications for daily life of the encounter with ultimate reality.

³⁹⁵ Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 64.

³⁹⁶ For Gardner, existential intelligence as a form of spiritual intelligence “qualifies well as an intelligence in light of the eight criteria that I have set forth in my writings” (Gardner, “A Case Against Spiritual Intelligence,” 29). Gardner agrees with Emmons, who made a case for spiritual intelligence by addressing the eight criteria (Emmons, “Is Spirituality an Intelligence?,” 3-26) and concludes that spirituality appears to “meet virtually all of the criteria as specified by Gardner” (Ibid., 21) that as far as the eight criteria is concerned something related to realm of faith qualifies as an intelligence. For Gardner the difficulty lies in the definition of spirituality which he construes as limbic (limited to affection – see Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*, 20-21). Consequently, he doubts that spirituality has the required neurological correlates that characterize intelligences.

³⁹⁷ Gardner, “A Case Against Spiritual Intelligence,” 30.

³⁹⁸ In his argument in favor of a spiritual intelligence, Emmons cites the research of Newberg and d’Aquili that “demonstrates that there may exist distinctive neurological systems” that are involved in certain religious experiences. Emmons, “Is Spirituality an Intelligence?” 15. See also Beauregard, *The Spiritual Brain*, 293.

Measuring the life of faith or spirituality in the laboratory is inherently limited since these studies are restricted to a narrow range of spiritual experiences in an unnatural environment. Yet, the fact that these limited studies have yielded results that consistently identify neurological substrates that are unique to these spiritual experiences suggests that there are specialized neurological circuits for these spiritual computations. It makes sense that the distinctiveness of faith experience among experiences and as a uniquely human trait is the product of neurological correlates that are specific to these experiences.

Plurality of Religions

In the last analysis, one of the things that probably bothers Gardner the most and causes his greatest hesitation about the inclusion of a spiritual intelligence in his list of intelligences is the plurality of religions that simultaneously claim a monopoly on the truth.³⁹⁹ He attributes this diversity to affectivity which he considers a defining aspect of spirituality and doubts that such ephemeral emotions are capable of substantiating truth value claims. Hence there are implicit questions in this judgment that must be addressed when considering whether faith is a candidate intelligence in Gardner's MI model. For instance, is faith intelligence sustained by emotions? Can faith make universal truth claim? Is faith the same as spirituality?

It has been established in this work that spiritual experiences are complex neurological processes that involve many brain regions beyond the limbic system.⁴⁰⁰ In fact, both Newberg's and Bearegard's neuroimaging studies failed to find any

³⁹⁹ Gardner says: "In reflecting on the possibility of a spiritual intelligence, I am struck by the problematic nature of the "content" of spiritual intelligence, its possibly defining affective and phenomenological aspects, its often privileged but unsubstantiated claims with respect to truth value, and the need for it to be partially identified through its effect on other people" (Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 19).

⁴⁰⁰ Newberg, *How God Changes your Brain*, 49-52; Bearegard, 60-63; Azari, 43; See also *Fides et Ratio*, 88.

significant limbic involvement at all in the spiritual experiences they studied. Certainly there are emotions that may accompany cognitive experiences but to reduce faith to visceral reactions is simply false. The relationship between faith and love is not based on fleeing feelings. “Love cannot be reduced to an ephemeral emotion. True, it engages our affectivity, but in order to open it to the beloved and thus to blaze a trail leading away from self-centredness and towards another person, in order to build a lasting relationship; love aims at union with the beloved.”⁴⁰¹ Therefore, faith is not an emotion and it is not sustained just affectively.

Regarding the second question, it is again necessary to emphasize the distinction between faith and belief.⁴⁰² Faith, a gift of grace, is about the relationship with God. In essence there can only be one faith that embodies the totality of the human response to the transcendent, however varied and inadequate this response may be.⁴⁰³ On the other hand, belief is the “sum of experience and thought that constitutes the human treasury of wisdom and religious aspiration, which man in his search for truth has conceived and

⁴⁰¹ *Lumen Fidei*, 27. Pope Benedict XVI points out that “in the gradual unfolding of this encounter [with God], it is clearly revealed that love is not merely a sentiment. Sentiments come and go. A sentiment can be a marvelous first spark, but it is not the fullness of love. Earlier we spoke of the process of purification and maturation by which *eros* comes fully into its own, becomes love in the full meaning of the word. It is characteristic of mature love that it calls into play all man's potentialities; it engages the whole man, so to speak. Contact with the visible manifestations of God's love can awaken within us a feeling of joy born of the experience of being loved. But this encounter also engages our will and our intellect” (*Deus Caritas Est*, 17).

⁴⁰² See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dominus Iesus* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2000), 7. Hereinafter cited as *Dominus Iesus*. Pope Francis in *Lumen Fidei*, discussing the bond between faith and truth highlights the attempt of contemporary culture to “sever the bond between religion and truth because it seems to lie at the root of fanaticism, which proves oppressive for anyone who does not share the same beliefs” (*Lumen Fidei*, 25). He then characterizes the question of truth as a question of memory, “deep memory, for it deals with something prior to ourselves and can succeed in uniting us in a way that transcends our petty and limited individual consciousness. It is a question about the origin of all that is, in whose light we can glimpse the goal and thus the meaning of our common path” (Ibid.) – the memory of God.

⁴⁰³ “It should nonetheless be kept in mind that Revelation remains charged with mystery. It is true that Jesus, with his entire life, revealed the countenance of the Father, for he came to teach the secret things of God (*Dei Verbum*, 4). But our vision of the face of God is always fragmentary and impaired by the limits of our understanding. Faith alone makes it possible to penetrate the mystery in a way that allows us to understand it coherently” (*Fides et Ratio*, 13). Faith penetrates the mystery

acted upon in his relationship to God and the Absolute.”⁴⁰⁴ Religious plurality is plurality of belief, a product of the human search for truth within a cultural context and tradition.⁴⁰⁵ Yet, genuine belief, as the articulation of the human encounter with the transcendent, shares a common deeper core.⁴⁰⁶ The truth value claims are founded on faith. “Faith alone makes it possible to penetrate the mystery in a way that allows us to understand it coherently.”⁴⁰⁷

Pope Francis asks whether “Christian faith provide[s] a service to the common good with regard to the right way of understanding truth.”⁴⁰⁸ Or conversely, is the Christian faith another “privileged but unsubstantiated”⁴⁰⁹ claim among many? Through the “discovery of love as a source of knowledge, which is part of the primordial experience of every man and woman,”⁴¹⁰ faith offers “a relational way of viewing the world, which then becomes a form of shared knowledge, vision through the eyes of another and a shared vision of all that exists;”⁴¹¹ hence, the universality of faith.

Finally, spirituality and faith are not synonyms. In the Catholic tradition, spirituality is an expression mode of faith. Thus, the literature speaks of Ignatian, Franciscan, Dominican or Charismatic spirituality, for example, that emphasize particular devotions, prayer style, and doctrines. Faith is a grace-induced human response to the encounter with God. Faith precedes articulation and expression modes, although

⁴⁰⁴ *Dominus Iesus*, 7.

⁴⁰⁵ See *Fides et Ratio*, 31.

⁴⁰⁶ Regarding other religious beliefs Vatican II declares that the “Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men. Indeed, she proclaims, and ever must proclaim Christ “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6), in whom men may find the fullness of religious life, in whom God has reconciled all things to Himself” (*Nostra Aetate*, 2).

⁴⁰⁷ *Fides et Ratio*, 13.

⁴⁰⁸ *Lumen Fidei*, 26.

⁴⁰⁹ Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 19.

⁴¹⁰ *Lumen Fidei*, 28.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*

oftentimes the encounter with God occurs in the context of the expression of articulated faith. Gardner's understanding of spirituality is not only different from this conception of faith but it is different from the Christian understanding of spirituality.⁴¹²

Conclusion

Gardner's success in conceptualizing anew the intelligence construct affords the opportunity to recover the more comprehensive pre-Renaissance understanding of the concept which grasps God as intelligence and the human intellect as the determining attribute of the *imago Dei*. Deeming faith an intelligence among other human faculties opens up the possibility of the public recovery and legitimization of the human search for answers to questions of ultimate concern and its living implications. The post-Renaissance humanization of the intelligence construct stripped the conception of the human intellect of its most defining characteristic: its capacity to relate to the transcendental. The competences of the spiritual brain were conceptually privatized and displaced.

This chapter illustrates how the language and concept of faith intelligence offer a correction to faith displacement through a conversation that takes place in a context that is informed by the prevalent scientific worldview. The reconceptualization of the intelligence construct creates the context that makes this conversation possible. It

⁴¹² For Gardner, spirituality first "entails a certain set of visceral reactions – for example, a feeling that one is in touch with a higher being or "at one" with the world." As discussed earlier, Gardner simplifies and erroneously reduces spirituality to the limbic system. Second, Gardner continues, "spirituality is indissociable from a belief in religion and God generally, or even from allegiance to a particular faith or sect: "Only a real Jew/Catholic/Muslim/Protestant is a spiritual being" is the explicit or implicit message" (Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*, 20). This is a contradiction of his "visceral view" since having beliefs is not associated with the limbic system but the ventromedial prefrontal cortex (Sam Harris, Sameer Sheth, and Mark S. Cohen, "Functional Neuroimaging of Belief, Disbelief, and Uncertainty," *Annals of Neurology*, 63, no. 2 (2008): 141-147). True, spirituality may be associated with religion and belief in God (as a consequence of faith) but it is not as excluding of other spiritualities as Gardner believes (See *Redemptoris Missio*, 10).

transforms the perception of the relationship between faith and reason from possibly discordant to clearly complementary. In this conversation, faith ceases to be about proofs (or lack thereof) and it is reconceived as relational. The yearning for God which is innate to the spiritual brain is understood not in terms of an encounter with measurable empirical reality but with the transcendent in a continuous encounter-metanoia dynamic.

The different intelligences, according to Gardner's theory, correlate to relatively autonomous neurological substrates. Yet the theory of multiple intelligences has not thus far identified these neurological substrates through neuroimaging or other means. Rather, inclusion of candidate intelligences is based on eight selection criteria developed by Gardner and his team. On the other hand, the Brodmann areas identified by Beauregard's study of the Carmelite nuns as well as the areas identified by Newberg's study of the Franciscan nuns suggest that there are autonomous neurological substrates that do correlate with at least some spiritual experiences. Furthermore, the fifty percent overlap between the Brodmann areas identified by the P-FIT study and by Beauregard's study also suggest a correlation between intelligence and certain spiritual experiences.

Nonetheless, Gardner's reluctance to fully accept a spiritual intelligence is not founded in either lack of evidence for neurological correlates or failure to meet his eight criteria. Ultimately, the question of full inclusion for Gardner rests on whether the concept of spirituality (or existential intelligence) can be articulated using modern language like "compute" and "problem solving." Faith intelligence involves computations (connecting one thing with another) and problem-solving, and at the same time, it is much more than that. It opens the possibility in a unique way among the intelligences, of fully realizing our humanity.

Chapter Five

A BRAIN-AWARE MARRIAGE PREPARATION CURRICULUM

All ecclesial structures and all pastoral plans of dioceses, parishes, religious communities, movements, and any Church institution must be imbued with this firm missionary decision. No community should excuse itself from entering decidedly with all its might into the ongoing processes of missionary renewal and from giving up outdated structures that are no longer helpful for handing on the faith.

—The Aparecida Document⁴¹³

Introduction

One of the most salient characteristics of the evangelization process is the necessity to constantly evaluate and renew the means of transmitting the faith in order to be effective and at the same time faithful to the unchanging message of the gospel.⁴¹⁴ In a world of “rapid changes”⁴¹⁵ methodological plasticity and innovation are a must. Consequently, the Camino movement is called to consider anew its curriculum, particularly in light of the church’s demand for a pastoral conversion.⁴¹⁶ The reprioritization of the movement’s missionary duty requires restructuring the weekend experience in such a way that every presentation is ultimately oriented toward evangelization, including the topics that are more specific to marital relationships.

The curriculum update of 2004 took a first step in this direction by removing the over-emphasized divide between the presentations related to the psychology of marriage and those related to faith. Consequently, the religious character of the weekend

⁴¹³ *Aparecida*, 365.

⁴¹⁴ *Evangelii Gaudium*, 41; *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 40; *Lineamenta*, 10; *Aparecida*, 365.

⁴¹⁵ See *Lineamenta*, 1; *Gaudium et Spes*, 4; *Evangelii Gaudium*, 52; *Instrumentum Laboris*, 103. The update and upgrade tactics that drive the technology market provide a good illustration of the value attributed today to innovation. It just takes a few years for technology to become obsolete. For example, the smartphones that were first introduced in the market less than a decade ago now seem bulky and “old” by today’s standards. The same happens with computer hardware and software. And it is not limited to technology. The education system in the United States, the food industry, transportation, to mention just a few examples, have experienced significant changes in the last fifty years.

⁴¹⁶ See *Evangelii Gaudium*, 27; *Aparecida*, 365-372; *Lineamenta*, 2.

experience is now highlighted throughout the two days. Yet, in many of the presentations, the faith component is raised as an appendix to an otherwise seemingly unrelated topic. The reorientation toward mission that the pastoral conversion demands implies a higher degree of cohesion in the curriculum, where faith is the central theme throughout. Each presentation may still focus on particular aspects of marriage life but always within the wider context of the central theme.

The greatest challenge of a cohesive, faith-centered curriculum is relevancy, as discussed in Chapter one. There is the grave danger of reinforcing faith displacement if the faith content is presented using signs that are perceived by the participants as archaic (or to be more semiotically precise, signs that produce interpretants that are construed as irrelevant to everyday life). The proposal to Camino's steering committee is to restructure the weekend experience using the concept and language of faith intelligence in the wider context of a "brain-aware" marriage preparation curriculum.

The Brain-Aware Curriculum

A brain-aware curriculum uses the emerging knowledge about the brain to ground the topics of Camino's weekend experience. Following the foundational premises of Pope John Paul II's theology of the body (human beings are creatures of intelligence and sexuality),⁴¹⁷ the proposed curriculum uses the topic of the brain and its relational capacity as a catalyst to engage the participants in a conversation about faith. This approach frames the discussion about the relationship with God and with others in a

⁴¹⁷ In the creation story in the book of Genesis, the *imago Dei* (created in the image of God) and human sexuality (created male and female) are described as fundamental human characteristics. The theology of the body emphasizes human bodiliness (sexual differences), the call to become "one flesh" (love as a gift of self) and communion with others as a fundamental characteristic of being created in the image of the triune God. Pope John Paul II developed a theology of the body in a series of Wednesday audiences that focused on these characteristics. See John Paul II (pope) and Michael Waldstein, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2006).

context and language that are congruent with the prevailing worldview of the participants. The brain-aware conversation is appealing, modern, and persuasive, hence the content is more likely to be learned and remembered in the future than the current conversation.

The proposed topics are based on the existing curriculum and follow the same general thematic line. The proposed curriculum also incorporates many of the suggestions from the result of the survey done during the first Camino in English.⁴¹⁸ The most significant suggestions from the survey that this proposal incorporates are: increasing the role of the small group discussions, rotating the small groups, increasing the quality of the topics discussed on Sunday, eliminating the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the weekend experience, making topics like abortion and family planning part of other presentations rather than being on their own, and redesigning the sitting arrangement in the conference room.

Structure of the Weekend Experience

The proposed Camino's weekend experience has the same basic time structure as the current one. It is a two day weekend experience. The participants go home on Saturday afternoon and return Sunday morning. All participants are pre-registered, therefore, upon arrival on Saturday morning, they will be able to pick up their registration package (including workbook, name tag, and a copy of the schedule that they received by e-mail)⁴¹⁹ between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.. The name tag includes an identifier of the

⁴¹⁸ The first Camino in English took place on May 17 and 18, 2014. The author and his wife participated as Assistant Coordinators and performed an open survey towards the end of the weekend experience. The survey asked four open questions: 1) What did you like? 2) What needs improvement? 3) Did language play a role in choosing this particular weekend experience? 4) Something I learned ... The 68 participants in the survey produced 244 statements that were compiled and analyzed. The author wrote a report to the steering committee based on his analysis.

⁴¹⁹ See Appendix E - Sample Schedule of Proposed Brain-Aware Curriculum.

pre-assigned small group (called the home group).⁴²⁰ Orientation begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. in the conference room. The workshop ends at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday.

On Sunday, breakfast is served from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.. Morning prayers start promptly at 9:00 a.m. in the conference room. Both days include a hot lunch. The weekend experience ends with the celebration of the Eucharist from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday. The participants' parents and friends, as well as all members of the Camino movement, are invited to participate. The attendance certificates are given to the participants at the end of the mass. After the mass there is a twenty-minute period for saying good-bye and straightening up the conference room.

Organization of the Conference Room

Currently, the conference room is organized using approximately fifteen round tables distributed throughout the room. Unfortunately, in the current distribution, about half of the attendees end up with their backs towards the podium and the screen. For the proposed weekend experience, the room is to be organized in a traditional classroom style using rectangular tables and all chairs facing the front. The participant couples may or may not sit with other members of their home group. Some small group discussions will occur in random small groups rather than in the home groups. One or two facilitating couples may join the small group at times. For some small group discussions the participants may stand rather than sit in a circle.

⁴²⁰ See Appendix F – Sample Registration Receipt and Name Tag.

Characteristics of the Presentations

In the proposed curriculum, presentations are to be dynamic and participatory. The presenters and the participants engage in constant dialogue throughout the presentations. The presenters prompt the participants for their experiences and encourage questions and brief comments. The content is presented using simple language in a humorous style, like an intelligent, adult conversation. The multimedia presentations include slide shows, and short films, but the participants' attention is primarily focused on the presenters. The slides' content is written in simple language and the sources are fully documented in the workbook. At the beginning of each presentation, the presenters introduce the topic of discussion and clearly state the objectives of the presentation.

At the conclusion of each presentation, the participants break into small groups and prepare a summary of the main ideas that were discussed. After a few minutes of discussion, each small group presents the top three concepts to the plenary. The presenters record these ideas in the easel pads and post them around the conference room. The presenters may briefly clarify any confusion or answer questions as they write down the small groups' reports. The posted papers show the continuity of the discussion throughout the two days and they become a point of reference as new topics are discussed.

The presenters are thoroughly familiar with the content they are presenting. It may be the case that they are not experts in the field, but they do master the part of the subject that they are presenting. They have read and studied the background material, and they have received at least forty-five hours of professional training on the subject

they are presenting.⁴²¹ Preferably, the presenters are couples who do their presentations together. In addition to the technical material, they also share their personal testimonies that serve to illustrate some of the concepts they are presenting. The personal testimonies of the facilitating couples about their lived experience are a key ingredient to the success of their presentations and the weekend experience as a whole.

Characteristics of the Facilitating Team

The facilitating team in charge of the weekend experience of Camino consists of married couples most of whom have been married for decades. The greatest advantage of having a large facilitating team (twelve to fifteen couples) is the testimony they provide individually and collectively. Presently, the number of facilitating couples is based on the distribution of the tables to which the participants are assigned. The current rule is that there must be at least one facilitating couple per table. The facilitators stay with the same group of participants throughout the entire time. In the proposed weekend experience, the facilitating couples are not assigned to specific tables or small groups. Instead, they “float” around the conference room making sure that the small groups understand their assignments and answering any questions they may have. They are to interact with different groups during the weekend. Therefore, the number of facilitating couples is more flexible in the proposed program.

Presently, some presentations are done by facilitators who do not stay for the whole weekend. They come, give their presentation, and then leave. In the proposed curriculum, the preferred strategy is for the certified team members to present the entire content. In every team there are two or more facilitating couples who are certified by the

⁴²¹ This is the equivalent of a three credit course. It includes writing a paper on a particular subject matter that the student wants to specialize in, as well as passing a certification exam.

Camino movement after completing the required training. The certified facilitators take turns presenting the material. During their presentation, they may call on other facilitators (including non-certified ones) to share their personal experiences as appropriate. But there is a competent team in charge of content and that ensures flow, continuity, and full coverage of the material. The facilitators who do not directly participate in the presentations are still very involved in the small group discussions and in the overall organization of the weekend experience.

The proposed weekend experience retains the current practice of assigning functional responsibilities (kitchen, bathrooms, bell, coffee, and others) to all team members. However, the roles of the coordinators and assistant coordinators (*bases*) are different. In the present format, the coordinating team works mostly in the background, securing the smooth functioning of the supporting activities such as ordering lunch, keeping track of time, managing unforeseen events, and supervising the entire operation. Yet, the interaction of the coordinating team with the participants is mostly limited to opening the weekend, introducing the presenters, and handing-out the certificates of attendance.⁴²² In the proposed weekend experience, the coordinating team consists of the certified facilitators who are in charge of content. The coordinating team constantly interacts with the participants and makes all the necessary decisions and adjustments according to the demands of the curriculum they are presenting. The coordinating team delegates all supporting activities to the rest of the team members.

Putting together large facilitating teams for each weekend experience requires couples who know many other couples they might recruit. Each year the steering

⁴²² Sometimes members of the coordinating team may do a presentation if there is no one else to do it. They must also be ready to substitute anyone who is not able to do their presentation for whatever reason.

committee preselects a group of experienced couples to be the coordinators and assistant coordinators of the upcoming weekend experiences. These couples are in charge of recruiting their own teams; hence their networking skills are the primary selection criterion. The recommended strategy is to begin certification training for the current coordinators and assistant coordinators. The proposed curriculum can be implemented in phases, offering one or two weekend experiences the first year, and increasing the number of experiences as there are more certified facilitators capable of recruiting their team.

Content of the Proposed Brain-Aware Curriculum

The proposed brain-aware curriculum consists of twelve major presentations that incorporate most of the ideas presented in the current curriculum. *Faith Intelligence and Marriage* is the overarching theme which is introduced at the beginning of the weekend experience and developed throughout. The content is explicitly religious. The weekend experience is a gathering of couples who want to celebrate a sacramental marriage in the Catholic Church. The underlying assumption must be that the participants are couples in a relationship with God, called to deepen their faith as they prepare themselves to be a domestic church that fully lives out their baptismal commitment. This underlying assumption creates an environment that is more conducive to a positive religious experience.

Welcome and Orientation

Beyond the practical matters, the most significant part of this presentation is the mingling dynamic. First, each couple will identify one other couple that they do not know. The two couples will then introduce themselves and share their expectations for

the weekend experience. Then those two couples will join another two couples that they do not know. This time around, each couple will introduce the couple that they just met including their expectation for the weekend. Finally, they will repeat the second part with new couples (new groups of eight people). At the end, in the plenary session, the participants will just say out loud some of the expectations that they heard from others and liked. The facilitators come to the front of the conference room and introduce themselves very briefly. This ice breaking dynamic creates a participatory environment and sets the tone for the rest of the weekend experience.

Morning Prayer

One of the fundamental characteristics of faith intelligence is the ability to recognize the constant presence of God. The morning prayer liturgy is the first opportunity during the weekend experience to become attuned to God's presence. It is done after the mingling dynamic to highlight the sense of community in prayer. During the liturgy the participants will offer their expectations, pray for one another, and ask for the gift of the intellect. It is very important for the participants to be involved in the liturgy as much as possible. During the registration process, the participants indicate their level of participation in the church (youth group, Catholic school, and other activities). This information is used to quickly identify participants that are more likely to get involved and invite them when they arrive on Saturday to do something in the liturgy.

The morning prayer also helps to transition from the excitement of the ice breaking dynamic to a listening-reflective mood without losing the sense of community and the level of comfort created by the first dynamic. Additionally, the morning prayer introduces the concept and language of faith intelligence in a very natural way. The term

may catch some by surprise and spark their interest early on in the program. Finally, beginning the weekend experience with a well-planned liturgy makes explicit the religious nature of the program.

The Twelve Presentations

After they have introduced themselves to each other and having prayed together as a church community, the participants are ready to start the topic discussions. Everyone is sitting in the tables facing the front and they have their workbook out. The facilitators are scattered around the conference room, sitting among the participants and making sure that everyone has their workbook. The subsequent descriptions of the twelve topics give a brief summary of the content the way it is currently presented in Camino and a synopsis of the proposed presentation.

Brain and Culture

Currently, the first thematic presentation of the weekend (*Who Am I?*) discusses how the experience of growing up (parenting styles, family circumstances, cultural traditions, and other environmental factors) influences each person's character and behavior patterns. This presentation in the proposed brain-aware curriculum discusses how the brain develops by interacting with the environment (the experience of growing up).⁴²³ It presents the concepts of brain-mapping, brain plasticity, and the uniqueness of each individual. This presentation offers a working definition of intelligence that will be used throughout the weekend experience.

The topic is introduced by discussing evolution and the *imago Dei*. The point of divergence in the evolutionary process that gives rise to *Homo sapiens* is the

⁴²³ See Bruce E. Wexler, *Brain and Culture: Neurobiology, Ideology, and Social Change* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).

development of the brain's neocortex.⁴²⁴ One of the most distinctive characteristics of the human brain is faith intelligence, which allows human beings to connect to the creator in whom “we live and move and have our being.”⁴²⁵ The intelligences are necessarily developed within a culture, hence the close relationship between religion and culture.

Sex-Specific Brain Wiring

The current presentation *Man and Woman: Interpersonal Relations* explores how men and women have different psychological needs and ways of satisfying them. The proposed presentation, *Sex-Specific Brain Wiring*, examines the same idea from a neurological perspective: the extensive sex-related differences in behavior are the result of variations in neuroanatomic substrate.⁴²⁶ Participants will see a humorous (non-scientific) clip from Mark Gungor's *Tale of Two Brains*,⁴²⁷ and discuss the importance of taking these differences into account when interpreting each other's behaviors. The presentation emphasizes mutual respect as an effective strategy for dealing with these differences.

The topic is introduced by referencing the book of Genesis and reflecting on the accounts of creation. Human beings are created in the image of God as male and female and become the image and likeness of God “through the communion of persons which

⁴²⁴ See International Theological Commission, *Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004), 62.

⁴²⁵ Acts 17:28. The phrase is also used in the Preface VI of the Sundays in Ordinary Time in the Roman Catholic celebration of the Eucharist. See International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *The Roman Missal*, 3d. ed. (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2010), 582.

⁴²⁶ See Ruben C. Gur, Burce Turetsky, Mie Matsui, Michelle Yan, Warren Bilker, Paul Hughett, and Raquel E. Gur, “Sex Differences in Brain Gray and White Matter in Healthy Young Adults: Correlations and Cognitive Performance,” *Journal of Neuroscience* 19 (1999): 4065-4072.

⁴²⁷ Mark Gungor, *Tale of Two Brains: Unlocking the Secrets to Life, Love, and Marriage*, DVD (Green Bay, WI: Laugh Your Way America, 2008).

man and woman form.”⁴²⁸ It is the body that reveals and manifests humanity and it is in bodiliness the humans are similar to God.⁴²⁹ The mutually enriching somatic constitution of human beings as male and female is not limited to the duality of the reproductive system and the discrete anatomy of its organs. The brain is the central constituent of sexual biology and while male and female brains are similar in general appearance they are structurally and functionally different.⁴³⁰

Awareness of the sex-related differences may produce the right disposition for understanding each other better. Ultimately, these differences are enriching each other and it is through the union and communion of these differences that the new “us” emerges. Being truly human is only possible through relating to others, and through that relating to others, relating to God. Marriage offers a unique opportunity for an intimate union and communion like no other. It is in that intimacy that the domestic church comes to be.

The Brain in Love

The current presentation about *Developmental Stages of Relationships* distinguishes Passion, Discovery, Power Struggle, and Commitment as four phases that, in general, lasting relationships experience. Emphasis is given to the understanding of true love as an act of the will (rather than just an emotion) that leads to a permanent commitment. The proposed presentation, *The Brain in Love*, uses the same four stages except that it offers a neurological perspective instead. The fundamental premise of the

⁴²⁸ See John Paul II (pope), “Anche Attraverso la Comunione delle Persone l’Uomo Diventa Immagine di Dio,” Vatican City, on November 14, 1979, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/audiences/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19791114.html, accessed August 12, 2014. See also *Familiaris Consortio*, 11 (love and communion), and *Gaudium et Spes*, 12 (interpersonal communion).

⁴²⁹ This is the core concept of Pope John Paul II’s theology of the body.

⁴³⁰ Mark F. Bear, Barry W. Connors, and Michael A. Paradiso, *Neuroscience: Exploring the Brain* (Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2007), 546-562.

proposed presentation is that “a relationship is a physiologic process”⁴³¹ in which the limbic system⁴³² plays the central role. In the initial stage of Passion, attraction and “falling in love” are governed by a limbic hijacking of the brain. Chemical changes in the brain⁴³³ produce a sort of temporary insanity that characterizes this stage. The limbic hijacking tapers gradually and by twelve to eighteen months into the relationship it subsides. As the chemical overload wanes, the prefrontal cortex springs into action and the couples begin to acquire a more realistic assessment of each other; the stage of Discovery begins. However, the fresh awareness of their differences causes the amygdala to intervene again and make an effort to “correct” the differences bringing on the Power Struggle stage.

These last two stages, Discovery and Power Struggle, are likely to dominate the relationship for a long time, and in many cases they last to the end of the relationship. In the meantime, as the couple experiences life together, their brain mappings increasingly include each other and the reality of the “us” grows. True love is the prefrontal decision to choose that “us” for its own sake. It is to prize the shared history that makes the other a very important part of who they are. In the stage of Commitment there is harmony between the prefrontal cortex’s decision to choose the other and the resulting limbic emotions of appreciative satisfaction for the “us” that the couple has created together.

The topic is introduced by referencing the previous presentation: The creation of the “us” is a movement towards being God’s image. The concept of the trinity is

⁴³¹ Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini, and Richard Lannon, *A General Theory of Love* (New York: Random House, 2000), 81.

⁴³² The limbic system consists of a group of neurological structures that are involved in processing and regulating emotions, memory, sexual arousal, and other brain functions. It includes the amygdala, hippocampus, and hypothalamus. See Michael Lewis, Jeannette M. Jones, and Lisa F. Barrett, *Handbook of Emotions* (New York: Guilford Press, 2008), 159-172.

⁴³³ See Larry Young and Brian Alexander, *The Chemistry Between Us: Love, Sex, and the Science of Attraction* (New York: Penguin, 2012), 33-57.

traditionally articulated in theological language using a filial image (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). But the Trinitarian dynamic can also be expressed using the metaphor of sacramental marriage. Husband and wife become “one flesh” (the “us”) hence becoming a Trinitarian reality that engenders and expresses the Trinity.⁴³⁴ Relationships, including the relationship with God, parents, friends, and spouse experience discrete developmental stages. Becoming aware of these stages enables growth.

The Symbolic Brain

The *Communications Techniques* presentation that is currently offered during the weekend experience introduces the participants to effective communication techniques like *active listening* and *respectful dialogue*. In the proposed curriculum, the presentation *The Symbolic Brain* examines the brain’s faculty of representing perceptions symbolically. Symbols are inherently multivalent since their meanings are formed as the result of the brain’s interaction with the environment. Consequently, there are several layers of meaning to most texts which makes hermeneutics or interpretation the most challenging aspect of communication.

Emotions play a significant role in the art of interpretation; sometimes facilitating it and other times interfering with how a text is construed. Effective communication requires creating and controlling the appropriate emotional context in order to produce a more accurate understanding. The development of emotional intelligence in marriage

⁴³⁴ In his General Audience of April 2, 2014, Pope Francis said that “when a man and woman celebrate the Sacrament of Matrimony God as it were “is mirrored” in them; he impresses in them his own features and the indelible character of his love. Marriage is the icon of God’s love for us. Indeed, God is communion too: the three Persons of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit live eternally in perfect unity. And this is precisely the mystery of Matrimony: God makes of the two spouses one single life” (Francis (pope), “Catecheses on the Sacraments: Matrimony.” Vatican City, on 2 April 2014. http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140402_udienza-generale.html, accessed August 10, 2014). See also The General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, *The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization: Instrumentum Laboris* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2014), 35 (hereafter cited as *Instrumentum Laboris Familia*).

involves four primary abilities: the ability to perceive emotion, the ability to use emotion to facilitate thought, the ability to understand emotions, and the ability to manage emotions.⁴³⁵ “Emotional intelligence in marriage involves the frequent expression of positive emotions and a willingness to engage with one’s partner in a climate of trust and affection.”⁴³⁶ Discussion of the Johari Window Model⁴³⁷ as well as communication techniques such as *active listening* and *respectful dialogue* are examples of how to create and control the appropriate emotional context for effective communication. During the presentation the participant couples do an exercise in which they act out scripted examples of these techniques.

The topic is introduced by reflecting on the uniting role of communication. Revelation is a form of communication. God reveals himself to his creatures through the whole of creation and most specifically through Jesus Christ. God continues to communicate with humanity today through his Spirit present in the Church particularly in Scripture and Tradition. Human beings, endowed with intelligence, communicate back to God through the gift of faith in its many expressions including prayer and the celebration of the sacraments. The ultimate effect of this divine communication is apotheosis, union with God.

⁴³⁵ Julie Fitness, “The Emotionally Intelligent Marriage” in *Emotional Intelligence in Everyday Life*, 2d. ed., eds. Joseph Ciarrochi, Joseph P. Forgas, and John D. Mayer (New York: Psychology Press, 2006), 130-135. The concept of emotional intelligence was originally developed by Daniel Goleman. See Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More than IQ* (New York: Bantam Books, 2005).

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, 135.

⁴³⁷ See Joseph Luft, *Of Human Interaction* (Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield, 1969).

Time, Sex, and Money

The content of all the presentations after the 2004 curriculum revision was founded on a study conducted at Creighton University about areas of conflict during the first seven years of marriage. The study was published with the title of this newly proposed presentation. As the title indicates, the study concluded that most of the identified conflicts revolve around these three areas: time, sex, and money. Currently in Camino, in the presentation called “Conflict Resolution,” the participants play a Family Feud game in which they attempt to guess the top fifteen key areas of contention among married couples. Insisting that conflict is a normal part of the development of the relationship, the existing presentation highlights the rules for fighting fair.

There are separate presentations for money (Family Economy) and sex (Love, Sex, and Intimacy) in today’s curriculum. The presentation about money focuses on characteristic attitudes toward money and the importance of a joined, planned economy. The main focus of the presentation about sex is the spiritual value of intimacy. In the proposed curriculum these three topics are consolidated into one presentation. Referring back to The Brain in Love, the Discovery and Power Struggle stages are characterized by the brain’s effort to “correct” environmentally acquired traits as the couple tries to adjust to sharing life together. The conflicts, summarized as time, sex, and money, emerge during these two stages.

In the proposed presentation, the different attitudes toward money are used as an example of how to deal effectively with conflict as the couple works towards the stage of “Commitment.” The ensuing guidelines are then applied to time and sex – the value of prioritizing time spent together (qualitative and quantitative) in order to develop shared

brain mappings. This includes planned time for intimacy. Semiotically, sex has the unique potential to represent and actualize the bond that keeps the relationship alive.

The topic is introduced with a brief reflection about prayer as a family.⁴³⁸ Prayer is an effective way of bringing Christ to the center of the family. The values, criteria, attitude, and priorities of Jesus that are found in the Gospel serve as a guide to meet the challenges of family life. Practicing prayer as a couple fosters intimacy and promotes a nourishing “familial culture of prayer.”⁴³⁹ Praying together as a couple and as a family can help develop gratitude, humility, trust, hope, faith, and love for others. Yet, developing the habit of prayer requires planning and structuring time for it.

Faith Intelligence

In the current format, the presentations about the sacraments (Baptism and Marriage on Saturday; Reconciliation and the Eucharist on Sunday) deliver the core religious content of the weekend experience. Besides a general description of these four sacraments, the presentation emphasizes a particular theological understanding of the *fundamental option* concept from moral theology applied to baptism.⁴⁴⁰ The fundamental option is described as the choice to live for others – hence the Camino’s motto: *lo importante es el otro*.⁴⁴¹

In the proposed curriculum, the conversation about the sacraments happens in the context of faith intelligence and it takes place throughout six discrete presentations (*Faith*

⁴³⁸ See *Instrumentum Laboris Familia*, 41-42.

⁴³⁹ *Instrumentum Laboris Familia*, 42.

⁴⁴⁰ *Fundamental option* is understood as “a fundamental choice which qualifies the moral life and engages freedom on a radical level before God” (John Paul II (pope), *Veritatis Splendor* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), 66). In the Camino presentation, the concept is discussed in the context of baptism – sanctifying grace enables the baptized to make this fundamental choice (CCC, 1265-1266).

⁴⁴¹ Literally "the important thing is the other" or perhaps a better translation would be "the other is what's really important" in the sense of putting the other person first. Translation by author. See Chapter one for a detailed explanation of the phrase.

Intelligence – which offers an introduction, “The Brain and the Experience of God,” “Disciples and Missionaries: The Sacrament of Baptism,” “The Sacrament of Marriage,” and “Understanding the Eucharist”). The sacraments are a celebration of faith, a tangible way of relating to God. Some sacraments, like baptism and marriage, are also rites of passage that mark significant moments of transition in people’s lives and in their faith journey. Baptism celebrates becoming church, being disciples and missionaries.⁴⁴² Marriage celebrates the creation of a domestic church, a “school of humanity, love and hope for society ... the privileged place in which Christ reveals the mystery and vocation of the person.”⁴⁴³

The challenge in Camino is not so much to help the participants acquire a basic understanding of the sacraments but to incite in them the desire to develop their faith intelligence. Their celebration of marriage is an auspicious moment to begin a process of faith maturity. In their desire for a sacramental celebration of their wedding, they are being called (hence it is a vocation) to deepen their relationship with God and to live out their baptismal commitment. They are already taking the first step. It is important to insist in this presentation that faith intelligence is a gift, a grace that is freely given to those who seek God.⁴⁴⁴ It is not a matter of believing without proof, as discussed earlier, but an intentional movement toward a deeper relationship with God.

The topic is introduced with a discussion of the theory of multiple intelligences.

The current reformulation of the intelligence construct beyond the psychometrics of

⁴⁴² “Being Church means being God’s people, in accordance with the great plan of his fatherly love. This means that we are to be God’s leaven in the midst of humanity. It means proclaiming and bringing God’s salvation into our world, which often goes astray and needs to be encouraged, given hope and strengthened on the way. The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 114). See also CCC, 1655-1658.

⁴⁴³ *Instrumentum Laboris Familia*, 31.

⁴⁴⁴ Matthew 7: 7. See also *Dei Verbum*, 5.

academic performance in logic, math, and language, provides an opportunity to recover and recreate a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of intelligence that includes the most fundamental aspects of human existence: our relationship with the transcendent. Just like the other intelligences in Gardner's model, it is profitable to invest in the development of the gift of faith intelligence in order to become truly human. Developing faith intelligence affects life as a whole and has profound implications for daily living.

The Brain and the Experience of God

This is the first presentation on Sunday. It recaps some of the main ideas from Saturday and it serves as an introduction to the conversation about the sacraments that follows. Applying the concepts of The Symbolic Brain to faith, this presentation discusses the sacraments as signs that represent and actualize in the brain the transcendent. In this sense, Jesus Christ is the sacrament of God – Christ makes God present in human history in a tangible way. The church is the sacrament of Christ that continues his presence in human history.

The Homo sapiens brain with its neocortex naturally seeks ultimate meaning and is capable of perceiving and relating to the transcendent sacramentally. Rituals play a very significant role in creating and maintaining this relationship with the transcendent. The rituals communicate meaning and actualize it. The same way that creating a relationship between a man and a woman requires rituals, faith requires them too. In order to produce its effect on the brain, rituals require full engagement. Independently of the gift of grace, aloof bystanders profit little from the ritual unless they actively participate in it.

Disciples and Missionaries: The Sacrament of Baptism

The proposed curriculum keeps the *fundamental option* concept of the current presentation, including Camino's motto, but focuses more on the baptismal commitment to be disciples and missionaries, particularly within the domestic church. During this presentation the participants discuss the meaning of their baptismal vows and are invited to renew them.⁴⁴⁵ Emphasis is given to the meaning of being church, the mission to evangelize and the constant need to be evangelized.⁴⁴⁶ The participants are reminded that joined to the Christ (the anointed) in baptism, the baptized (also the anointed) share in his mission as priest, prophet, and king (the anointed figures of Hebrew Scriptures). This mission acquires a particular significance as they form a new domestic church.

The Sacrament of Marriage

The proposed curriculum retains the detailed review of the marriage vows. The presentation includes a discussion about the intelligence behind the promise of fidelity and permanence as a necessary condition for true intimacy. Opening up and revealing oneself to someone is risky. It makes the person vulnerable to judgment, rejection, and humiliation. A subconscious defense mechanism in the limbic system protects human beings from these vulnerabilities resulting in a natural unwillingness to open up about the most personal feelings, thoughts, memories, and so on. Yet, true intimacy is only achieved by creating the necessary trust that permits a profound and risky sharing at the most personal level. When the subconscious mind perceives that the relationship is tentative and that exclusivity is unlikely it will protect the individual against the risk of getting hurt. On the other hand, when the vows of exclusivity and permanence are

⁴⁴⁵ The rite for the renewal of the baptismal vows includes sprinkling themselves with holy water. If there is a deacon or priest available for the ceremony, the water is blessed during the ceremony.

⁴⁴⁶ See *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 15.

perceived as genuine there is a greater willingness to open up to the other and create a stronger bond.

Continuing the discussion from “The Brain in Love” from Saturday morning, this presentation of the proposed curriculum insists on the understanding of true love as characterized by cognitive commitment (parietal-frontal) rather than feelings (limbic). Man and woman “are no longer two, but one flesh”⁴⁴⁷ thus “through this union they experience the meaning of their oneness and attain to it with growing perfection day by day. As a mutual gift of two persons, this intimate union and the good of the children impose total fidelity on the spouses and argue for an unbreakable oneness between them.”⁴⁴⁸ The Sacrament of Marriage celebrates love and commitment as a journey of continuous growth and development.

How to Make your Kids Smarter

The presentation “Responsible Parenthood” offered in the current curriculum focuses on the parental responsibility to educate and evangelize their children. It also includes an introduction to Natural Family Planning. The participants are asked to list and prioritize the needs and requirements for children’s adequate development. The proposed curriculum retains the need analysis dynamic except that needs are grouped relative to multiple intelligences. The discussion addresses how these needs change as the child grows up and elicits from the participants different ideas on how to meet those changing needs. The presentation focuses on faith development through early childhood and the critical role of faith intelligence relative the other intelligences.

⁴⁴⁷ Matthew 19:6; Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31.

⁴⁴⁸ *Gaudium et Spes*, 48.

The proposed presentation is introduced with a short film about the beauty of life from conception to natural death. The film shows the development of the embryo in the mother's womb, childbirth, and growing up in an interdependent web of relationships with others on whom life depends. The film ends with an invitation to celebrate life and to be open to life at all time. The available resources for dealing with abortion issues and natural family planning are pointed out to the participants but are not discussed at length in the proposed curriculum.

Shared Brain Mappings: Making History Together

In the current curriculum, the last presentation the weekend experience is done by an older couple who has been married for several decades. In their presentation they share the value of staying together despite the vicissitudes of life. Faithful to their love and commitment, they experienced the good and bad times (they share the specific anecdotes) and now are happy that they have spent a lifetime together. The current presentation is fifteen minutes long.

In the proposed curriculum, the time for this presentation is extended to forty-five minutes. It is still presented by a couple who has been married for many years. They share some their life experiences with the participants as it is done now. As discussed earlier in *Time, Sex, and Money*, spending time together and building intimacy is the key to creating shared brain mappings, the "us" of the relationship. A lasting relationship requires love and respect. In this context, the presenters talk about the cycle of domestic violence as an example of a totally unacceptable and destructive behavior that is

incompatible with a healthy marriage.⁴⁴⁹ Information about where to get help is given to the participants.

Understanding the Eucharist

In the current curriculum the Sacrament of the Eucharist is discussed on Sunday afternoon together with the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Yet, more emphasis is placed on Reconciliation because, as discussed earlier, the number of participants who go to confession is generally construed as a measurement of the success or failure of the entire weekend experience. Also, a low level of participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation may be blamed on the presenter's inability to properly motivate the participants; hence there is pressure to insist on the value of celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation. At the same time, there are many distractions during this presentation⁴⁵⁰ thus making it more difficult to get the participants' full attention. The topic focuses on the Eucharist as a source of nutrition for the soul; and frequent communion is equated with spiritual growth. The participants are encouraged to participate in weekly mass at their parish. While the weekend experience ends with a celebration of the Eucharist (in the same conference room where all the presentations are given) during the presentation no reference is made to that celebration.

In the proposed curriculum, the need to transform the conference room into a worship place is used as a teaching moment. For example, the presenter talks about the altar in the Judeo-Christian tradition before asking for volunteers to move it to the center

⁴⁴⁹ The conversation about domestic violence is required by the Archdiocese of Miami. There are no studies about the incidence rate of domestic violence among the participants in the Camino weekend experience. However, there are no indications that domestic violence may be a problem that affects them.

⁴⁵⁰ During the presentation people are constantly getting up and standing in line while waiting their turn to talk to the priest. The priests are scattered around an internal yard adjacent to the conference room. As the participants go in and out to see the priests they open and close the conference room doors. The participants remain quiet for the most part, but the constant movement of people in and out and around the room is very distracting for everyone.

of the room. Similarly, the presenter discusses the meaning of Scripture before assigning the readings, and talks about the consecration before selecting a couple to bring the offerings. The main idea of the presentation is to discover the deeper meaning of the rituals of the mass and why ritual is important to the brain.⁴⁵¹ In this context, the meaning of worship is presented as distinct from entertainment. The participants are encouraged to find a community of friends to worship together.

Conclusion

The positive feedback and experience of using the concept and language of faith intelligence suggests that the proposed brain-aware curriculum is an effective evangelization tool to fully engage the participants in a dynamic discussion about faith. Heeding the church's call for a new evangelization requires a pastoral conversion in the Camino movement that prioritizes mission. The revision of the weekend experience's curriculum is a crucial step in this direction. Therefore, the first recommendation to the steering committee is to make the revision of the curriculum the main focus and priority of a new pastoral plan.

Producing a new pastoral plan will give the Camino movement a valuable opportunity to reorient itself toward mission as its first priority. More than rewriting the movement's mission statement, the call to a pastoral conversion requires a reorientation of Camino's pastoral thinking and vision. The process of creating and implementing a new pastoral plan will ensure that the church-mandated pastoral conversion is appropriated by the couples who work in the movement rather than just being an inconsequential statement in the manual. The implementation of a revised curriculum

⁴⁵¹ "In order for human ritual to be effective in engaging all parts of the brain and body, it must merge behaviors with ideas; it's this synthesis of rhythm and meaning that makes a ritual powerful" (Newberg, *Why God Won't Go Away*, 90).

will be more effective if it is construed as a practical response to the call to a pastoral conversion.

The development of an effective pastoral plan requires time and effort. Adding this task to the already crowded agenda of the steering committee's ordinary meetings is counterproductive. The best solution is to appoint a pastoral team and charge them with the task of writing the pastoral plan. The steering committee could then work with the pastoral team to revise and approve the plan they propose. It is recommended to include in the appointed pastoral team key leaders of the movement, particularly those who have been working in Camino for many years. At least one couple from the steering committee should also be part of the pastoral team to serve as a continuous liaison between the steering committee and the pastoral team.

This investigation should serve the pastoral team as part of the theoretical and referential framework for developing an effective pastoral plan. However, it is imperative to assure the participation of as many facilitating couples as possible in the development of the new pastoral plan. It is recommended that the pastoral team organize several workshops to present the church's challenge to a pastoral conversion and to collect feedback from the facilitators. It is also recommended that during the workshops the pastoral team present the thick description of Camino from chapter three not only to test its accuracy but also to bring to the forefront of the movement's collective consciousness the history and ideas that have shaped it. This awareness will facilitate the refocusing of the movement's mission.

It is important to include in the planning process long-standing members of the movement that are known for their opposition to change. These are couples with a vested

interest in the movement who also have a strong following among the facilitators.

Attempts to circumvent them will cause unhelpful division and discord in the movement that will have an adverse effect in the implementation of the pastoral plan. Including them in a process of consultation and giving them an opportunity to be represented in the pastoral team will help assure the overall success of the pastoral plan. Despite their reluctance to change, these couples have much to contribute to the process. Through the years, they have seen the changes in the population that the movement serves and they are seriously committed to preparing them for a Christ-centered marriage. It will be helpful to remind them that serving the needs of different populations requires adapting strategies to the new realities.

The proposed brain-aware curriculum needs to be pilot-tested, evaluated, and adjusted as needed. Since the implementation of the proposed curriculum requires training the facilitators, the pastoral team may consider an implementation in phases over an extended period of time. The twelve presentations recommended in this investigation need to be developed further and in greater detail. This is best accomplished with the participation of the facilitators as they complete their training, and in further consultation with experts in the field. There is no need to switch to the new curriculum in a rush. Allowing the required time for maturation will ensure the effectiveness of the new curriculum.

It is important to be aware that this pastoral process is cyclical and continuous. It is not a once and for all adjustment and then it is done. Instead, the process requires periodic evaluation (every three to five years) and then it needs to be repeated. Otherwise, the pastoral responses are at risk of being out of synch with the needs and

reality of the people the movement serves. For instance, the recommended brain-aware curriculum is a good evangelization strategy today but that may not be the case a few years down the road. The leaders of the movement must remain attentive to the changing circumstances of the population it serves and be ready to make the necessary adjustments in order to be faithful to the unchanging Gospel mandate to evangelize.

Appendix A:

Protocol for the Interviews of the Facilitators of the Camino Movement

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the interviews is to obtain information about the history, theology, and meanings of the Camino movement.

INTERVIEW TYPE

The interviews are semistructured, in-depth, individual interviews with facilitators that exercise a leadership role in the Camino movement. The interviews are to follow a casual conversational style in which questions are asked spontaneously in the natural flow of the conversation. Nevertheless, there is a preselected list of topics that serve the interviewer as a general guide to the conversation. The expectation is that the informants will address at least some of the topics in the list without any prompting (as these topics naturally come-up in conversation) or as answers to standard neutral follow-up promptings (i.e., “Tell me more about that”).

SELECTION CRITERIA

The informants were selected based on their involvement and experience working in the Camino movement. A minimum of five years of experience serving in Camino as well as having being coordinators or assistant coordinators (bases) was required.

TIME AND PLACE

The interviews do not have a prescribed exact duration. Informants are asked to schedule approximately two hours for the interview. The interviews are conducted at the informant’s home. The informants are asked if they are willing to remain available for further conversation through e-mail or text in the event that new questions or ideas come up.

INTRODUCTORY SCRIPT

The purpose of this part of the interview is to assure the informants about the privacy and confidentiality of the interview. Also, the interviewer must make it clear that the informants’ participation is voluntary and that they will not be compensated monetarily for their participation. At the end of the introduction the interviewer asks the informant to read and sign the Consent Form. Sample script:

Thank you for your time and for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your input is very valuable. This interview will be just like a conversation between us, except that you will do most of the talking. I will ask some general questions and you take it from there. Everything you say will be kept anonymous and confidential. Your real name will not be used in any of the research records or reports. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to answer any question you do not wish to answer, or completely withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or reprisal. Please take your time to read the Consent Form and sign it if you agree.

OPENING SCRIPT

The purpose of this part of the interview is to create a rapport with the informant and establish a comfortable atmosphere conducive to dialogue. The topic is their history with Camino. Sample script: "Let's begin. Tell me about Camino."

Topic Questions

"How long have you been helping in Camino?"

"How often do you participate? Why?"

"What topics have you presented? Why those topics?"

"Are there other topics that you would like to present? Why?"

"Why do you work in Camino?"

HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT

Some of the selected informants have been part of the Camino movement for many years. The purpose of this part of the interview is to obtain historical information. Sample script: "Think of the time when Camino started. What was going on back then with you? Why did you get involved?"

Topic Questions:

"Explain the Cursillo roots of Camino."

"How were the talks selected and why? What was the strategy?"

"How was Camino different from Cursillo when it started?"

"What were the participants like?"

"Why the religious talks? How did the participants react to the religious talks?"

“Has anything changed through the years? How? Why?”

CAMINO TODAY

The purpose of this part of the interview is to get the informant’s assessment of the movement. Sample script: “Why Camino today? What do you think is the most important thing that Camino offers?”

Topic Questions:

“What works in Camino? Why?”

“What doesn’t work in Camino? Why?”

“What do you think are the most important needs of the participants?”

“Is Camino addressing those needs?” “How?” or “Why not?”

“What would you change?”

THEOLOGY OF THE MOVEMENT

The purpose of this part of the interview is to gain knowledge about the religious ideas that inform the facilitators. Sample script: “Camino’s manual describes Camino as an evangelization movement. What does that mean?”

Topic Questions:

“What does it mean to evangelize? How does Camino do that or why not?”

“Have you heard about the church’s call to a new evangelization?” (If they haven’t heard then explain it briefly and get reaction – “what do you think? Tell me about Camino and the new evangelization?”)

“What is the most important religious idea that is discussed in Camino?”

“How does the religious content of Camino affect the participants?”

“Would you change the religious content?” “Why or why not?”

“Describe the spirituality of the facilitators. What do you think are their dominant beliefs?” (Suggest dividing them into groups or categories if the informant thinks it is necessary).

PARTICIPANTS OF THE MOVEMENT

The purpose of this part of the interview is to understand the facilitators' perception of the participants. Sample script: "Who are the participants? Describe them."

Topic Questions:

"What is the religious background of the participants in general?" ("Do they believe in God? Do they participate in the life of the Church? Why or why not?")

"Why do you think they want to get married in the Church? List at least three possible reasons."

"How do you think that they perceive the church in general? Why?"

"Are they open to a process of continuous conversion? Why or why not?"

"What do you think motivates them? What are the important things in life for them? Why?"

CLOSING REMARKS

Thank you very much for taking the time to do this interview. Your ideas and opinions are a great help for this study. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the number or e-mail in your copy of the Consent Form. If the informant expressed willingness to be contacted by e-mail or text: you said that you do not mind if I contact you by e-mail or text in case that I have additional questions or need clarification. If you change your mind and prefer that I do not just let me know now or later. Thank you again for all your help!

Appendix B:

Protocol for the Interviews of the Participants of the Camino Movement

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the interviews is to obtain information about the participants' perception of Camino, particularly the movement's methodology, theology, and meaning. Also, the objective of the interviews is to understand the participants' religious perspectives and their possible interest in continuing to develop their faith.

INTERVIEW TYPE

The interviews are semistructured, in-depth, individual interviews with participants of the weekend experience. The interviews are to follow a casual conversational style in which questions are asked spontaneously in the natural flow of the conversation. Nevertheless, there is a preselected list of topics that serve the interviewer as a general guide to the conversation. The expectation is that the informants will address at least some of the topics in the list without any prompting (as these topics naturally come-up in conversation) or as answers to standard neutral follow-up promptings (i.e., "Tell me more about that").

SELECTION CRITERIA

The informants are selected by the table facilitators based on the informants' level of participation in their small group and their willingness to be interviewed. The informants must be Catholics marrying Catholics. The interviewees are selected on Sunday morning of the weekend experience and they are either interviewed that same day in the afternoon or at a later time in their house.

TIME AND PLACE

Interviews During the Weekend Experience

The interviews during the weekend experience are to be done on Sunday, during the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation which lasts about one hour. These interviews are done in a separate classroom on campus. The informants are told that the interview will last less than one hour. The informants are asked if they are willing to remain available for further conversation through e-mail or text in the event that new questions or ideas come up.

Interviews at Home

The interviews do not have a prescribed exact duration. Informants are asked to schedule approximately two hours for the interview. The interviews are conducted at the informant's home. The informants are asked if they are willing to remain available for further conversation through e-mail or text in the event that new questions or ideas come up.

INTRODUCTORY SCRIPT

The purpose of this part is to assure the informants about the privacy and confidentiality of the interview. Also, the interviewer must make it clear that the informants' participation is voluntary and that they will not be compensated monetarily for their participation. At the end of the introduction the interviewer asks the informant to read and sign the Consent Form. Sample script:

Thank you for your time and for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your input is very valuable. This interview will be just like a conversation between us, except that you will do most of the talking. I will ask some general questions and you take it from there. Everything you say will be kept anonymous and confidential. Your real name will not be used in any of the research records or reports. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to answer any question you do not wish to answer, or completely withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or reprisal. Please take your time to read the Consent Form and sign it if you agree.

OPENING SCRIPT

The purpose of this part of the interview is to create a rapport with the informant and establish a comfortable atmosphere conducive to dialogue. The topic is their wedding. Sample script: "Let's begin. Tell me about the wedding."

Topic Questions:

"How long have you and your (future) spouse been together?"

"What are you most excited about (or were most excited about) during the wedding planning?"

"Tell me about your decision to get married. Why now?"

"Tell me about your experience at the church where you are getting married (or got married). Is that church your parish? Why did you choose that church?"

"Why did you choose Camino for your marriage prep?"

“What expectations did you have about Camino? What did you think it was going to be about?”

GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF CAMINO

The purpose of this part of the interview is to understand the participant’s perception of the weekend experience particularly the content’s relevance and the effectiveness of the methodology. Sample script: “Tell about your experience of Camino. What is good and helpful? What needs improvement?”

Topic Questions:

“Is the content of the presentations relevant to your relationship?”

“Is there anything that you find particularly helpful? If there are things that you find helpful, can you list them in order of importance? (List the top three).”

“What is your perception of the method that Camino uses? Here it may be necessary to clarify the meaning of method. For example, point out that non-expert couples present research-based material, the two-day format, the talks followed by small-group discussion, etc.”

“Is there a particular idea that sticks out in your mind? Why?”

“Can you give a summary in general of what you remember about the different topics?”

“Are there topics that were not discussed and that you would have liked for Camino to include? “

“Are there topics that were discussed that should not have been discussed? Why?”

THEOLOGY OF CAMINO

The purpose of this part of the interview is to gain insight into the participants’ perception of the religious content of the weekend experience. Sample script: “Why a Catholic wedding?”

Topic Questions:

“What do you think of the conversation about God in Camino?”

“How would you characterize the conversation about faith in today’s world?”

“What do you think are the facilitators of Camino religious beliefs? List top three.”

“How would you characterize personal faith development for you and your peers? Why?”

If the informant is exposed to a conversation about faith intelligence, then this sample script applies: *Tell me about the topic of faith intelligence in Camino.*

Topic Questions about Faith Intelligence:

“What is faith intelligence about? How would you explain it in your own words?”

“How would you characterize the conversation about faith intelligence? Why? Give specific details.”

“Think of your peers. How would they react to a conversation about faith intelligence? Why?”

MEANING OF THE CAMINO EXPERIENCE

The main purpose of this last part of the interview is to give the participant an opportunity to add his/her own ideas to the conversation. Sample script: “How would you summarize your experience of Camino?”

Topic Questions:

“Would you recommend Camino to a friend? Why?”

“If there was a Camino Part II that was not required for anything, just for the sake of the experience itself, would you come? Why?”

If yes – “What would the content of a Camino Part II be like?”

If no – “What kind of an experience do you think would be helpful to your relationship?”

CLOSING REMARKS

Thank you very much for taking the time to do this interview. Your ideas and opinions are a great help for this study. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the number or e-mail in your copy of the Consent Form. If the informant expressed willingness to be contacted by e-mail or text: you said that you do not mind if I contact you by e-mail or text in case that I have additional questions or need clarification. If you change your mind and prefer that I do not just let me know now or later. Thank you again for all your help!

**Appendix C:
Consent Form**

You have been invited to participate in a research study about the New Evangelization and the Camino Movement. This research project is being conducted by Marzo Artime, a doctoral candidate at St. Thomas University. This research is part of his doctoral dissertation.

Your participation is anonymous and confidential, and your real name will not be used in the research notes, reports, or any other presentation or publication resulting from this work. Should it become necessary to use your name, your consent will be requested beforehand, separately from this consent. Without such permission, your name will not be given. All research records (notes, audio, and video) will be stored securely and only I and my dissertation committee will have access to the records. Upon the completion of this study, I will continue to maintain and protect the data.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your participation at any time and to refuse to participate without penalty or reprisal. If you choose to participate, please sign this form below. By signing, you are indicating that you are over 18 years of age and therefore of a legal age to participate.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about participating in this study, now or later, you may contact me, the interviewer, Marzo Artime at (305) 228-1277 or martime@stu.edu, or my doctoral advisor, Dr. Bryan Froehle, at (305) 628-6636 or froehleb@stu.edu.

Marzo Artime, Interviewer

Date

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I freely agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Printed Name of Interviewee

Interviewee's Signature

Date

Appendix D: Focus Group Meetings

SESSION ONE

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of the three session focus groups is to present, test and explore the usefulness of the language and concept of “faith intelligence” among high priority target groups of the new evangelization identified in *Ubicumque et Semper*.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

The specific objective of session one is to introduce the Catholic Church’s call to a new evangelization and identify particular challenges of evangelizing in the context of today’s scientific worldview.

SCHEDULE

7:30 pm – 8:00 pm		Registration. Sign Consent form.
8:00 pm – 9:00 pm		Presentation: The Challenge of the New Evangelization
	5 min	Welcome to the Focus Group and Explanation of the Purpose of the Study
	10 min	Participants Introduce Themselves to the Group
	15 min	Opening Prayer and Retelling of Acts 2:1-46
	10 min	What is the New Evangelization?
	15 min	The Scientific Worldview and the Science-Faith Schism
	5 min	The Challenge – Identify Ways to Evangelize Today
9:00 pm – 9:20 pm	20 min	Small Group Discussion (4 small groups)
9:20 pm – 10:00 pm		Plenary Session
	15 min	Each Group Presents Their Ideas
	20 min	Conversation
	5 min	Closing Prayer

MATERIALS

Bible, recording equipment, consent forms, easel pads, markers, refreshments.

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

SESSION TWO

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of the three session focus groups is to present, test and explore the usefulness of the language and concept of “faith intelligence” among high priority target groups of the new evangelization identified in *Ubicumque et Semper*.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

The specific objective of session two is to introduce the language and concept of faith intelligence as a strategy for evangelizing in the context of today’s scientific worldview.

SCHEDULE

7:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Welcome, Summary of Last Session, and Opening Prayer
8:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Presentation: Faith Intelligence
	10 min Define Faith (4 small groups)
	10 min Define Intelligence (same small groups)
	10 min Groups Reports
	30 min The Catholic Church’s Understanding of Faith (inter-audience dialogue)
9:00 pm – 9:20 pm	20 min Small Group Discussion (4 small groups)
9:20 pm – 10:00 pm	Plenary Session
	15 min Each Group Presents Their Ideas
	20 min Conversation
	5 min Closing Prayer

MATERIALS

Bible, recording equipment, easel pads from last session, easel pads, markers, refreshments.

FOCUS GROUPS MEETINGS

SESSION THREE

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of the three session focus groups is to present, test and explore the usefulness of the language and concept of “faith intelligence” among high priority target groups of the new evangelization identified in *Ubicumque et Semper*.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

The specific objective of session three is to get a feedback of a sample conversation about faith in the context of faith intelligence.

SCHEDULE

7:30 pm – 8:00 pm Welcome, Summary of Last Two Sessions, and Opening Prayer

8:00 pm – 9:00 pm Presentation: Faith Intelligence (Part II)

5 min Review definition of Intelligence

25 min History of the Intelligence Construct

30 min Neurological Foundations of Faith

9:00 pm – 9:20 pm 20 min Small Group Discussion (4 small groups)

9:20 pm – 10:00 pm Plenary Session

15 min Each Group Presents Their Ideas

20 min Conversation

5 min Closing Prayer

MATERIALS

Bible, recording equipment, pads from previous sessions, easel pads, markers, refreshments.

Appendix E: Sample Schedule of Proposed Brain-Aware Curriculum

Saturday Schedule



Weekend Schedule

SOUTHEAST PASTORAL
INSTITUTE (SEPI)
7700 SW 56th ST, MIAMI, FL

SATURDAY

8AM – 9AM

REGISTRATION

Pickup Registration Package at the registration table. Meet and greet at the Conference Room.

9AM – 9:45AM

WELCOME AND ORIENTATION

Meet the facilitators, general orientation, schedule, practical matters, mingling dynamic.

9:45AM – 10AM

MORNING PRAYER

Liturgy with songs, Scripture readings, short meditation, and prayers.

10AM – 10:30AM

BRAIN AND CULTURE

Our brains develop through interaction with the environment. We come to our relationships with a personal history and its resulting personal culture.

10:30AM – 11PM

SEX-SPECIFIC BRAIN WIRING

Review of research that suggests that male and female brains are wired differently. Understanding these differences can help us build stronger relationships.

11:00 – 11:30PM

THE BRAIN IN LOVE

Review of the electrochemical processes of "falling in love" through the different stages of development of the relationship.

11:30 – 12:30PM

SUMMARY OF MAIN IDEAS

Home groups select and present the main ideas of the morning presentations.

12:30PM – 1:30PM

LUNCH BREAK

Hot lunch is served at the Conference Room. Home groups eat together.

1:30PM – 2:15PM

THE SYMBOLIC BRAIN

Review of symbolic representation of experiences in the brain and the process of semiosis. The amygdala hijack. How to communicate effectively.

2:15PM – 2:45PM

TIME, SEX, AND MONEY

Review of a study done by Creighton University about areas of conflict during the first five years of marriage. Discussion focuses on applying the concepts discussed during the day to these areas of conflict (i.e., attitudes toward money, the sexual brain, prioritizing the relationship).

2:45PM – 3PM

BREAK

Coffee and sodas are served in the back room.

3PM – 4PM

FAITH INTELLIGENCE

Review of faith as a human intelligence. The experience of encounter with God and its consequences for daily living.

4PM – 4:45PM

SUMMARY OF MAIN IDEAS

Home groups select and present the main ideas of the afternoon presentations

4:45PM – 5PM

GROUP PICTURE

All participants take a group picture.

Sample Schedule of Proposed Brain-Aware Curriculum

Sunday Schedule



Weekend Schedule

SOUTHEAST PASTORAL
INSTITUTE (SEPI)
7700 SW 56th ST, MIAMI, FL

SUNDAY

8:15AM – 9AM

BREAKFAST

Continental breakfast is served in the back room.

9AM – 9:15AM

MORNING PRAYER

Liturgy with songs, Scripture readings, short meditation, and prayers.

9:15AM – 10AM

THE BRAIN AND THE EXPERIENCE OF GOD

A review of how the human brain creates and maintains relationships through rituals. The presentation focuses on relating to the sacred in the celebration of the sacraments; Jesus the Christ as the sacrament of God, the Church (specially the domestic church) as a sacrament of Christ.

10AM – 10:30AM

DISCIPLES AND MISSIONARIES: THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

A review of the meaning of baptism and the development of faith intelligence. The presentation focuses on our baptismal commitment to be disciples and missionaries, particularly within the domestic church.

10:30AM – 10:45AM

BREAK

Coffee and sodas are served in the back room.

10:45AM – 11:30AM

THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

A presentation about the theology of the Sacrament of Marriage. Review of the meaning of the wedding vows.

11:30PM – 12:30PM

SUMMARY OF MAIN IDEAS

Home groups select and present the main ideas of the morning presentations.

12:30PM – 1:30PM

LUNCH BREAK

Hot lunch is served at the Conference Room. Home groups eat together.

1:30PM – 2:15PM

HOW TO MAKE YOUR KIDS SMARTER

Review of the beauty of giving life and the responsibility of parenthood. How to raise healthy children.

2:15PM – 3PM

SHARED BRAIN MAPPINGS: MAKING HISTORY TOGETHER

A presentation about the value of staying together as a couple for life. The presentation also explores the dangers to a successful married life including infidelity, and domestic violence.

3PM – 3:15PM

BREAK

Coffee and sodas are served in the Conference Room (the back room is not available during this break).

3:15PM – 4PM

UNDERSTANDING THE EUCHARIST

A review of the meaning the Eucharist as a communal liturgical celebration. The presentation focuses on the value of worshiping. A review of symbolic elements of the ritual (liturgy of the word, breaking of the bread, communion, etc.). The conference room is transformed into a worship area during this presentation.

4PM – 5PM

COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY



Home groups select and present the main ideas of the entire weekend and talk about how talking about these concepts affected them. The parents participating in the *Parents and Friends* conference can join this presentation during the plenary session.

5PM – 6PM

CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

Celebration of the Sunday mass in the Conference Room.

Appendix F: Sample Registration Receipt and Name Tag

	Camino #912 Saturday, April 4 and Sunday, April 5 7700 SW 56th ST, MIAMI, FL 33165
<h1>Jane Doe</h1>	
Groom: John Doe Parish: Sts. Peter and Paul Wedding Date: June 21	HOME GROUP 3
Registration Number: 912525 	

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