Leading the Marist Brothers tradition in Catholic secondary schools today

TARA QUINNEY

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Educational Leadership and Management Unitec Institute of Technology

2018
DECLARATION

Name of candidate: Tara QUINNEY

This Thesis entitled: “Leading the Marist Brothers tradition in Catholic secondary schools today” is submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the Unitec Institute of Technology degree of Master of Educational Leadership and Management.

Principal Supervisor: Professor Carol Cardno

Associate Supervisor/s: Martin Bassett

Candidate’s declaration

I confirm that:

• This Thesis/Dissertation/Research Project represents my own work;

• The contribution of supervisors and others to this work was consistent with the Unitec Regulations and Policies.

• Research for this work has been conducted in accordance with the Unitec Research Ethics Committee Policy and Procedures, and has fulfilled any requirements set for this project by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee.

Research Ethics Committee Approval Number: UREC 2017-1024

Candidate Signature:  

Date: 9 May 2018

Student number: 1433662
ABSTRACT

Leadership in all New Zealand secondary schools is a complex role that is constantly reacting to and developing in response to significant changes due to the rate of technology revolutions, government approaches and people and community needs. Catholic secondary schools have the added pressure of living out and sustaining their special Catholic character. This study researches the leadership in Marist Brothers tradition schools as one example of these schools and investigates how this particular charism is upheld and transformed today. With the decline in Marist Brothers teaching and leading in these schools this has led to lay staff taking on the responsibility. There is very little literature on the role of leaders in Marist Brothers tradition secondary schools in continuing and transmitting the charism, particularly in the New Zealand context. The purpose of this study is to explore how schools in the Marist Brothers tradition interpret the charism in New Zealand secondary schools today. Given the focus of this research, an interpretive approach involving an in depth qualitative investigation through face to face semi-structured interviews was enacted. This allowed for a range of perspectives to be explored across four Marist Brothers tradition secondary schools. Interviews allowed for the perceptions of both middle and senior leaders to be shared and analysed. Findings through this study highlighted the pivotal role leaders have in upholding and transforming the Marist Brothers charism in their schools. Formation of their own personal leadership and faith beliefs were critical to their leadership styles in implementing the charism in an authentic way. Some are embracing the new challenge of being open to the Holy Spirit in moving with the times and nurturing the charism without the presence of the declining Marist Brothers while others are still fighting to preserve the traditions through their presence. This study suggests that leader’s knowledge of their own faith and leadership styles as well as the challenges and barriers in implementing the charism inspires them to overcome the issue of the decline and influence of the Marist Brothers in their schools. It is recommended that leaders who have accepted this challenge earlier should share their knowledge with other Marist Brother tradition secondary schools.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis was inspired by the years I have worked with many brilliant adults and students in Marist Brothers tradition secondary schools and in particular the Marist Brothers who continue to involve themselves in the day to day needs of students and staff in these institutions. Long may we lay teachers continue to live by your example and from your knowledge. There would be no inspiration without God and his guiding Spirit and I thank Jesus Christ for making Himself known in my life and for loving me.

The biggest thank you must go to my husband Dean Quinney for his constant support, encouragement and motivation to keep going when I did not feel I could carry on and for enabling me the space and time to complete this thesis.

To my primary supervisor, Professor Carol Cardno, thank you for your wisdom, feedback and honest criticism when it was needed. To my associate supervisor, Martin Bassett, thank you for all of your support in the background. I am grateful to you both for your patience and belief in me and this research project.

To my friends, family members, mentors and work colleagues, thank you for making time to advise me, support me and keep me grounded.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank all of the principal’s and leaders I interviewed in the four schools. You supplied more than just data for my research as every single one of you inspired me with your knowledge and enthusiasm for Marist education.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

In my Master’s degree, I have been provided with an opportunity to undertake a research project and my thesis topic is Leading the Marist Brothers tradition in Catholic secondary schools today. Leadership in educational organisations is a complex and constantly changing concept that has developed over time to fit the needs of local communities, national government policies and the latest professional development trends. I am interested specifically in the leadership within Marist Brothers tradition secondary schools because they have the greater challenge of upholding their traditions while responding to the modern methods and pressures in society that all secondary schools face in New Zealand today. My own educational journey has been influenced by the Catholic school’s model, with all my teaching positions being in Catholic schools. Some of these schools have been Marist Brothers tradition schools and I have been deeply influenced by their charism and founding principles. In my current leadership pathway, it is these values that form the basis of my leadership style, and it is something that must be learned. The Marist Brothers teaching order has mostly retired from working in schools and while there are educational programmes run by them in some regions, their influence will lessen with few younger men joining the brotherhood and lay leaders taking up the challenge of upholding the charism. There is very little literature available on leadership in Marist Brothers tradition secondary schools, there is no manual for principals and other senior leaders so this research is my attempt to fill that gap by investigating the nature of leadership in these schools today.

Background

Founded by St Marcellin Champaganat in early 19th Century France, his order of teaching Brothers has spread around the world and it is to them that we owe the tradition and culture of secondary schools of the Marist charism in New Zealand
These schools are commonly known by the appellation Marist and for example many cities have a Marist College or similar. A Catholic school’s charism is a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church. Charisms are how Catholic schools attempt to integrate faith, life and culture into their educational programmes. These charisms always flow on from the gospel values of Jesus Christ and there are many charismatic flavours usually based on the religious teaching order that founded and originally taught in the school. Gospel values should be evident in the Marist school’s charter, documentation, organisation, curriculum, classrooms and relationships. The Marist charism provides a framework for students and staff to live out the values of Jesus Christ. The Marist Brothers tradition therefore is kept alive through this charism in their schools. Upholding this tradition today in schools includes the implementation of the Religious Education curriculum where students will gain the appropriate knowledge and skills to adequately develop, express and clarify their values and beliefs within the Marist framework. It also includes providing an educational environment where students will develop an ability to express their own values, explore with empathy other peoples’ values, critically analyse values and decisions, and discuss differences arising from conflicting values and how to make ethical decisions and act on them (Wanden, 2012).

The Marist Brothers embraced Vatican II’s call to holiness for all by embracing lay people into their charism very early on. It is this line of thinking that is shaping the Marists’ approach for continuing to offer their distinctive spirituality and educational practice to serve the needs of Catholic education (D’Orsa, 2013). There is a challenge for Catholic schools in the Marist Brothers tradition today to preserve Champagnat’s original dream, its charism in helping to form the faith of both the students and the teachers through its values and in making a difference to teaching and learning, particularly for the marginalised and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Research done by Rossiter (2003) shows that the role of Catholic schools in the Marist Brothers tradition in promoting the Gospel values to bring about spiritual development continues to be a challenge that is not well addressed in a realistic and authentic way. Rossiter (2003) states that if there is a
realistic view of the school’s capacity in this regard, it is more likely to be spiritually effective because the aims can be better translated into practice. This is a major challenge for leaders in these schools as they strive to lead the special Catholic character in a characteristically Marist way while also being modern in their approach to organisational change to achieve excellent student outcomes. It has been argued for those who have chosen to be part of the faith-based organisation, or have been inculcated into faith values through their upbringing within a faith community, that it is reasonable to anticipate a strong expectation that leaders within the organisation will also be committed to the same values (Robertson, 2008). Leaders therefore are challenged to build relationships within their faith community in ways that display the values within the charism by explicitly demonstrating the vision and mission of their school in the midst of the burden of daily routines. In addition to the daily routines within a public school setting, the administrator within a private Christian school is given the task of directing the school community toward a deeper spirituality (Banke, Maldonado, Lacey, & Thompson, 2005) and the same can be said for Catholic secondary schools in the Marist Brothers tradition.

In 1975 the New Zealand government passed the Private Schools Conditional Integration act. This agreement provided full educational funding for Catholic schools, both primary and secondary, that had begun to struggle to fund their schools from Church donations, beneficiaries and voluntary parent fees. The dream of Marcellin to provide a holistic education for all regardless of affordability was no longer seen as feasible. A truly Marist school with an authentic Marist leader will ensure that concern with scholastic results, reputation and income never be obstacles to opening our schools to those less gifted or belonging to economically disadvantaged families (Crowe, 1998). New Zealand law however does not align well with Marcellin’s original dream to provide education and spirituality to the poor. Catholic schools of necessity must charge attendance dues, and do so legally under the terms of the Education Act 1989. This is a legal charge to repay loans for building works and property related costs including insurance.
The decline of religious orders teaching in Catholic schools also contributed to this misalignment (Treston, 1992) as teaching salaries were minimal or non-existent. Without this agreement many Catholic schools would have ceased to exist. Many schools in the Marist Brothers tradition therefore are no longer staffed by this religious order but by lay people. Some of these teachers may be Catholic and Marist but many are not. A Catholic teacher who is committed to upholding the special character of the school is called a “Tagged” teacher. The proportion of tagged positions should be approximately 60% in primary schools and approximately 40% in secondary schools (New Zealand Catholic Education Office, 2016). Many lay staff may not have religious reasons for teaching in a Marist Catholic school or an understanding of the order’s charism and values. Leaders therefore will be greatly challenged by the diverse nature of their staff, the very people they are counting on to uphold and role model the Marist brothers’ charism while being excellent educators. In order to provide truly Catholic education, Boards of Trustees and their staff must also ensure that “the formation given in Catholic schools is, in its academic standards, at least as outstanding as that in other schools in the area”- (Code of Canon Law, Canon 806, p. 2). The Principal is the leader of Catholic character in a Catholic school, supported by a Director of Religious Studies and other senior leaders depending on its size. All staff sign a document agreeing to uphold the Catholic character of the school on employment but many will not have a commitment to the Marist charism or the wider Catholic character and this is a pivotal challenge for all leaders in these schools to bring them on board and role model as well as teach the values. Cardno (2012) emphasises the main work of an educational leader is with teachers and says leaders need to build productive relationships which allow critical problems of practice to be addressed. Leaders, therefore, who are working towards enhancing and implementing the Marist charism in their schools will need to build strong relationships with their staff before they can influence their practice.
RATIONALE FOR THIS STUDY:

Through the literature I have reviewed on the topic of leadership in Marist Brothers schools, I have been both surprised and frustrated at times that there are no clear guidelines or case studies available for school leaders to follow that have displayed how this ethos effects teaching and learning. The ethos of a Marist Brothers school is centred on the person of Jesus Christ, incarnated in the circumstances of the world, in Mary’s way (Marist Brothers, 2017). This means the person of Jesus Christ is presented to students, staff and families and students are encouraged to make the attitudes, teachings, and values of Jesus Christ their own. The tradition of the Marist Brothers teaching order is to do this through the five Marist pillars: Presence, Simplicity, Family Spirit, Love of Work and In the Way of Mary. Institute of the Marist Brothers (2007) says, “We live out this Christian spirituality in a distinctive Marial and apostolic way. It is an incarnated spirituality springing up in Marcellin Champagnat. It developed with the first Brothers who handed it on to us as a precious heritage.” Ethos and charism will be terms used interchangeably throughout this research. Booth, Colomb and Williams (1995) have stated that what sets you apart as a researcher of the highest order is the ability to develop a question into a problem whose solution is significant to your research community. If leaders in secondary schools in the Marist Brothers tradition are to continue to uphold this ethos, they must be looking for ways to link this charism with the teaching and learning of their educational institution. Cardno (2012) states that the core work of educational leaders must lie in influencing teaching and learning, and doing so in ways that positively affect the educational achievement of students. The Marist Brothers tradition would have us believe that it is their charism and ethos founded by Marcellin Champagnat, which is the positive way their school curriculums are implemented to ensure there is an integration of faith, life and culture in a holistic way. Leaders in Catholic character schools seek to influence their colleagues in a way that strengthens the organisation by achieving goals that contribute to its mission and to the growth and development of all involved (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).
This research is relevant to me as an aspiring leader in a Catholic Marist Brothers school. My interest in this topic has developed further as I embarked on my studies in Educational Leadership and Management and when relating theoretical understandings towards my own educational setting I found there was a need to develop this further in a practical sense. There is very little research on what effect values education have on teaching and learning in Catholic schools in general, particularly in the New Zealand context and none on the Marist Brothers values in the schools of their tradition. Teachers, middle leaders and senior leaders in Marist Brothers schools will benefit from this research through understanding how their commitment to the Marist Brothers charism, through their interpretation and implementation of their key leadership actions, contributes to the achievement in their schools. D'Orsa (2013) speaks of some generalised research and programmes available in the Australian context including The *Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project* sponsored by the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and the Catholic University of Leuven and for the past thirty years the Australian Catholic University has provided a principal source of training for people aspiring to leadership in Catholic schools and school systems. Most research therefore is generalised in a wider Catholic educational context and very little literature is available on leadership and its effects in a Marist Brothers tradition school.

The big question for leaders today is, does the original purpose for Marist education two hundred years ago still exist and is it still relevant? Originally, parents would have enrolled their children in Catholic character schools because they wanted an education for them that was faith based and similar to their own upbringing. This research will explore whether these reasons are still relevant to leaders today. The growth of pluralism and the widening of our secular society mean that many of our young people and their parents no longer see themselves as religious. If it is, therefore, the values education they appreciate then how do Marist Brothers tradition schools ensure their charism is kept alive? With most
teachers in these schools being lay people, not Marist Brothers, there is a question also to the authenticity of the charismatic leadership today.

Principals, senior and middle leaders who are interested in developing a deeper understanding of the leadership characteristics of authentic Marist leadership and the challenges involved in implementing the Marist Brothers charism will benefit from this research. Leaders in other secondary schooling settings, particularly in Catholic schools will be able to relate the findings to their own charismatic founders and ethos. Understanding this ethos in a New Zealand context will also be relevant to leaders across state and special character schools. Lay teachers who identify as Marist will also benefit from this research, as it will give them a framework for practising their Marist spirituality as vocational teachers and role models.

RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study is to explore how schools in the Marist Brothers tradition interpret the charism in schools today. This research examines this purpose from the perspective of principals and senior leaders in four Marist Brothers tradition schools.

Research aims

1. To explore what leaders understand about the Marist Brothers charism.
2. To investigate how the Marist Brothers charism is implemented in secondary schools today.
3. To find out what challenges are experienced in implementing the Marist Brothers charism.

Research questions

The research questions informing this study are:

1. What are the understandings of leaders in Marist Brothers secondary schools of the charism?
2. In what ways is this commitment implemented by leaders in Marist Brothers secondary schools?
3. What challenges are experienced in Marist Brothers Secondary schools in implementing the charism?

THESIS ORGANISATION
This thesis consists of five chapters which all contribute to understanding the reality and challenges in leading the Marist Brothers charism in their traditional secondary schools today, in relation to the historical perspective, culture, organisation, leadership and challenges.

Chapter One, is an introduction to this research and explains the rationale as to why the leadership in these schools should be investigated and why there is an interest for Catholic educators. It will summarise the research findings and identify gaps in literature. This introductory chapter will look at the study of leaders in Marist Brothers tradition schools and their understandings and practices around implementation of the charism in an authentic way. The research aims and questions are also outlined for this study.

Chapter Two, is the literature review chapter, which analytically reviews the literature available on this research topic. It will focus on leadership in Marist Brothers tradition schools, and the leader’s roles and challenges in implementing the charism. The lack of literature available in a New Zealand context means that international and other Catholic sources are also reviewed.

Chapter Three, is the chapter on methodology and methods and provides an explanation of the rationale that underpins the interpretivist epistemological position taken for this thesis. The data collection method is face to face interviews. This chapter will detail the data gathering methods and data analysis processes.
Chapter Four, is the chapter presenting the findings from four Principals and four senior leaders in Marist Brother tradition secondary schools around New Zealand. These findings are presented in relation to the themes presented in Chapter Two. These new understandings generated from the face to face interviews were analysed along with identification of issues arising.

Chapter Five, is the discussion of the findings presented against a background of the theory and the nature of leadership in the school settings. Also included are conclusions made in relation to the research questions and recommendations arising from the research.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction
The focus of this chapter is to critically review and examine the literature relating to leadership in New Zealand Catholic secondary schools that have adopted a Marist Brothers’ tradition. There is limited research about New Zealand secondary schools so this literature review draws from research conducted nationally as well as internationally, outside education and from other Catholic sources. The literature review is structured to present the concept of a Marist Brothers’ tradition, a history of the perspective and ethos of the Marist Brothers tradition, special character leadership in Catholic schools and challenges in implementing the Marist Brothers tradition.

The concept of the Marist Brothers’ tradition
This research project focuses on how school leaders understand the Marist Brothers’ tradition and how they implement this. The word tradition in this sense means the school was originally founded by the Marist Brothers order and may still be owned by them or they have given over the proprietorship to the local diocese to govern. All Catholic secondary schools in New Zealand of the Marist Brothers tradition are state-integrated schools. This means they are part of the network of over 330 former private schools that are now part of the state education system (New Zealand Catholic Education Office, 2016). Schollum (2012) states that overall the Marist Brothers started twenty two schools in New Zealand but over time it became apparent that they could no longer sustain the funding required to continue running and most merged into the state system in the 1970’s. The schools guiding influence remain Marist and emphasises its founding story as still being significant to the community. At the heart of the tradition is the notion of charism which encompasses the spirituality of a religious tradition and the understanding of it. McQuade (as cited in Schollum, 2012) describes the charisms of the different religious orders and now of our schools as different expressions of being Catholic.
The word charism comes from the Greek term "kharis" meaning “favour.” “grace,” or “gift from the gods.” MacMahon (1999) says charism in this context can be defined as a “Holy Spirit” inspired gift. It should be noted that the term charism is used interchangeably with the descriptor: Marist Brothers tradition. The Marist Brothers charism originates from the founder of the religious orders story, in this case Marcellin Champagnat. The founder of the Marist Brothers, Marcellin Champagnat, had a dream in post-revolutionary France to educate young people who were ignorant of the Christian faith and those in rural areas too poor to pay for any education at all. The legacy of this religious teaching order is “the many thousands of Marists who followed these founders in responding to the Gospel of Jesus in a distinctively Marist way have created ‘Marist education’ and they continue to create it” (D’Orsa, 2013, p. 180). This legacy began with Marcellin Champagnat’s aim that education be for the “good of society” as quoted in his letter 9 February 1825 (Champagnat in Sester, 1985 Letter 273). The emphasis was on the education of the whole child regardless of socio-economic background and was to include civics, morals and religion, and this focus on a holistic education for all has not changed in Marist Brothers tradition schools in nearly 200 years. Bergeret (2000) says the aim of Marcellin Champagnat is not hindered by the social or family situation and poverty in all its forms, abandoned children, orphans of the country side and of the towns, and these things should not put off the Marist Brothers. The literature also suggests however that we must be careful with the term charism. Green (2014) warns that charism has come to mean little more than a distinctive pedagogical style that is for some a cult-like attachment to a particular founder or foundress.

All Catholic schools are based on the Gospel values of Jesus Christ and “in providing a Catholic education the Marist school seeks to integrate faith, life and culture” (Marist Brothers, 2017, p. 1). Values are identified in the life of Jesus Christ as told in the Gospels and through reflection of the Catholic Church’s teachings of scripture and Tradition. In the Marist Brothers tradition these values are interpreted and envisioned through the Marist Pillars. The pillars of the Marist charism provide
a framework to live out the values of Jesus Christ and have their basis in the elements of Marist spirituality. The Marist pillars are: In the way of Mary, Family Spirit, Love of Work, Presence and Simplicity. Crowe (1998) says, “The ‘Golden Rule’ for Marist educators is the intuition that ‘to bring up children properly, we must love them and love them all equally,’ a quote often said to have originated from St Marcellin Champagnat’s own lips. From this principle flow the particular characteristics of our style of education: Presence, Simplicity, Family Spirit, Love of Work, In Mary’s Way” (p. 124). The Marist charism is a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church and its foremost goal is to make Jesus Christ loved and known. These values were traditionally known well by all students attending Catholic schools. Treston (2017) says traditionally the majority of children enrolling in Catholic schools were drawn from liturgically affiliated Catholics whose values were broadly aligned to the professed values of the Church.

Originally it was the Marist Brothers who taught and led in these schools and I will discuss their history further in the next section. Today however there are very few teaching Brothers left and all leaders are now lay people. Bellefiore (2014) quotes the 1993 General Chapter by the Superior General of Marist Brothers when they decreed that lay people were to be welcomed and encouraged to work closely with the Brothers and were thanked for their efforts in contributing to the Marist works in education. Catholic schools in general have changed significantly since the state integrated schools act 1975, allowing them to be supported by the state system, the decline of the religious teaching orders and increase in lay Catholic teachers as well as the inclusion of non-Catholic teaching staff. Treston (2017) emphasises these changes further by stating that a contemporary Catholic school is vastly different from a Catholic school 50 years ago in such features as Catholic identity, technology, curriculum, religiosity, government, accountability, ethnic composition and levels of social cohesion and now what constitutes an authentic Catholic school is a critical question.
Leadership, therefore, in Marist Brothers tradition schools needs to be charismatic, visionary and empowering to carry through Champagnat’s original aim through so much change in contemporary times. This is often referred to as transformational leadership (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999). This leadership type is based on relationships formed by leaders with their staff that empower all and needs mutual trust for change and development to thrive. Cardno (2012) says in schools, increasing levels of trust between adults can shift the climate and create opportunities for organisational change and learning. With this trust comes an increasing commitment to the organisations goals and objectives and in a Catholic school. McMahon (1999) maintains, this transformation is the work of the Holy Spirit and the contemporary leader is the servant of this process. With all leaders and most teachers in Catholic schools now being Lay teachers, it is their mission to show spiritual leadership in a servant orientated way by evangelising staff and students, and Crowe (1998) asserts this by saying there is only spiritual leadership, all else is management. In a Marist Brothers tradition school this means leaders must uphold Marcellin Champagnat’s original aim for education in that it must be for the “good of society.” Bellefiore (2014) suggests the lay Marist Leader should also exhibit compassion and develop good school initiatives to enhance inclusivity and educate in and for solidarity, reaching out to the marginalised and the religiously illiterate youth, just as Marcellin did in France.

**Historical perspective and ethos of the Marist Brothers tradition**

For nearly 200 years, the Marist Brothers have been teaching in Catholic schools fulfilling Champagnat’s initial mission “to provide Christian education to poor children in the rural areas” (Consigli, 2009, p. 28). This mission has spread all around the world with a clear foothold in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific. Furet (1989) states Marcellin’s mission was not to provide only a secular education, as he recognised that other people were already providing that, he also knew that a recitation of catechism would not be enough. Instead, Champagnat strived “to instruct them in their duty, to teach them to practise it, to give them a
Christian spirit and attitudes and to form them to religious habits and the virtues possessed by a good Christian and a good citizen” (Furet 1989, p. 535). Marcellin Champagnat’s aim of education for the “good of society” is the foundation and core of the Marist Brothers tradition and helps form the charism in New Zealand schools today. Green (2014) sees the potential evangelising benefits of belonging to a spiritual tradition like the Marist Brothers because it suits school communities and their present secular realities as it can provide a graced and updated way of giving compelling life to the Gospel the way Marcellin Champagnat did 200 years ago. Today is a different context but the goal of sharing the Good News with young people who may be spiritually poor is still relevant. As the literature contains gaps in how this original idea of teaching good Christians and good citizens is implemented in New Zealand secondary schools today, this ensures the need for further research.

Marcellin Champagnat was born just after the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 and grew up in rural France with very little education of his own. After his time at the seminary in Lyons, he helped establish the Society of Mary. Sester (1985) says that from the start, Marcellin expressed his conviction that the Society should include teaching brothers to work with children deprived of a Christian education in remote rural areas because others were not going to them. Schools at the time varied in their approaches and Marcellin’s own distressing experience as a child at school according to McMahon (1988) led him to oppose schools conducted by untrained teachers, because of the inefficient teaching and the rough methods they employed. In the two centuries since St Marcellin began his work, a tradition and a culture have grown up, a distinctive educational style that is essentially no different from what it was at its foundation. This is summed up well by Grace (2010) who says the primary objective of Marist education is evangelisation, ‘to make Jesus Christ known and loved’. “The primary objective of Marist education is evangelisation, to ‘bring Christ-life to birth’ in young people” (Marist Brothers, 2007, #26). These values must be drawn from the gospel, Catholic tradition and Catholic social teaching (Engebretson, 2014). Values are the
hopes that the community have for their children and hold themselves, even if they are not upheld. Values are subjective; they are based on personal preference and choice, including in the way in which they are defined (New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference, 2014).

After a journey of nearly a year, the first Marists from France arrived in New Zealand in the Hokianga in January 1838 (Jennings, 2011). The first Marist Brothers did not establish schools straight away and instead concentrated on translating catechism for Maori, printing Bibles, making wine for Masses and growing food for the early mission. Bishop Pompallier however began educating the Maori and the first Catholic school was opened in 1840. It was not until 1876 that the school ministry of the Marist Brothers began and then quickly spread to other areas of New Zealand. The two newly formed New Zealand Catholic dioceses of Auckland and Wellington were keen to provide a Catholic education for young people, both Maori and Pakeha, and made requests to several overseas Religious Orders with the Marist Brothers in particular responding to the call by founding several primary schools and boy’s secondary schools. Schollum (2012) names three brothers, Sisimund, Papininen and Edwin, who arrived in Wellington on 15 May 1876 and began teaching on 3 July. Providing a place in a Catholic school for every Catholic child was the ideal for all involved (New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (2014). These first Catholic schools were only able to thrive and exist due to the selfless vocation of these religious orders who received very little payment for their work particularly as these first schools were funded solely by the Catholic Church and its congregations. It was through the leadership of people like Marcellin Champagnat that people flocked to the orders like the Little Brothers of Mary to become teachers of the young in his way. The institute had been born into poverty. McMahon (1988) says Marcellin encouraged the Brothers to maintain in themselves a great spirit of poverty and detachment. Many people including the Brothers, those educated by the Brothers and those seeing themselves as Marist have had a part in carrying on the tradition in their own lives and within education. Turu (2014) states that each generation of Marists has done
its best to keep the flame of Champagnat’s charism alive as a gift for the Church and the world until the present day. It is a heritage rich with values, ways of living and a tradition that will be continued to be passed down.

In 1975, the New Zealand government passed the Private Schools Conditional Integration act. This agreement provided full educational funding for Catholic schools, both primary and secondary, that had begun to struggle to fund their schools from Church donations, beneficiaries and voluntary parent fees. The dream of Marcellin to provide a holistic education for all regardless of affordability was no longer seen as feasible. A truly Marist school with an authentic Marist leader will ensure that concern with scholastic results, reputation and income never be obstacles to opening our schools to those less gifted or belonging to economically disadvantaged families (Crowe, 1998). New Zealand law however does not align well with Marcellin’s original dream to provide education and spirituality to the poor. Catholic schools of necessity must charge attendance dues, and do so legally under the provisions of the Education Act 1989. The decline of religious orders teaching in Catholic schools also contributed to this decline (Treston, 1992) as teaching salaries were minimal or non-existent. Without this agreement, many Catholic schools would have ceased to exist. Many schools in the Marist Brothers tradition therefore are no longer staffed by this religious order but by lay people. Some of these teachers may be Catholic and Marist but many are not. A Catholic teacher that is committed to upholding the special character of the school is called a “Tagged” teacher. The proportion of tagged positions should be approximately 60% in primary schools and approximately 40% in secondary schools (New Zealand Catholic Education Office, 2016). New Zealand does not currently have up to date data on how many of these tagged teachers are active in their faith but Costelloe (2017) has some statistics for Australian secondary Catholic schools stating that 61% of teachers identify as Catholic with 25% participating regularly in worship with 94% supporting a Catholic identity. Some lay staff may not have religious reasons for teaching in a Marist Catholic school or an understanding of the orders charism and values but are expected to commit to
supporting it. In New Zealand, thirteen secondary schools share in the Marist Brothers’ charism and tradition. These schools, in their attempt to bring a human face to the Christian faith in the New Zealand culture, have become known for their emphasis on a holistic education, for their closeness to the communities they serve, and for the strong spirit which exists within them. This theme relates to the research questions because school leaders will need to have knowledge of their charisms background, history and philosophy to be able to articulate their vision and if they are to implement it in the school culture and curriculum.

Today there are three Marist Brothers secondary schools in Auckland with Marist Brother ownership as well as an alternative learning centre and nine secondary schools that are diocesan owned with Marist Brother traditions. Of the latter, six of these are now co-educational having amalgamated with the local Catholic female secondary school over time, therefore having a dual charism. With the decline of the teaching Brothers it became politic and was seen as a responsible move to hand over most of the Marist Brothers tradition schools over to the diocese to govern. Green (2014) describes this move as a re-imagining of the order to become more inclusive by seeking ways in which a wider group of people can share co-responsibility for the spiritual families they have become and for the work of the Church in schools.

**Special Character leadership in Catholic schools**

Catholic schools in New Zealand were the earliest educational institutions after the first European immigrants arrived. They can trace their foundations back to the Rule of Benedict in 530AD when Benedictine Monasteries educated their first entrants. Klaaser, Renner & Reuter (2001) suppose the Rule was written in the sixth century as a guide to monastics living in community to support their efforts to live the gospel and believe that it provides educational institutions with a foundational set of values in Catholic schools today. For many centuries in Europe, Catholic schools were the only schools. Lynch (2012) describes the establishment
of Church schools for Maori children and children of the first colonists. The Education Act of 1877 went on to establish secular, free education alongside schools with a religious influence. This meant the government would no longer fund religious schools in New Zealand. Gospel based values are likely to stand in contradiction to the secular values of society and this is what stands Catholic schools apart from state schools. In The Catholic Education of School-Age Children (CESAC) the Bishops say, on p. 16, “Values are subjective; they are based on personal preference and choice, including in the way in which they are defined.” (p. 16.) They also say, “Many of the values [Catholic] schools define as being important are, in reality, the values of a “good person” rather than expressions of Catholic identity.” (p. 15).

Marcellin was a leader for his times. McMahon (1999) describes Marcellin Champagnat as being recognised as a charismatic and transformational leader. His legacy was in setting up schools, Brothers to staff them who must promise to ‘love them all and love them equally’ before being able to teach them, and then he trusted these leaders to implement his vision. In so doing, Marcellin facilitated the transformation of these leaders and asked them to do the same for others (McMahon, 1999). Of all the leadership styles that can be favoured or implemented by a leader and there are many, McMahon (1999) favours transformational and charismatic styles as most complementary to the Marist Catholic Principal. McMahon based his findings on Marcellin’s leadership style on the stories of his life, which is qualitative, but also on statistical results in rural France showing the rise in literacy. This theme of special character leadership relates to the research questions in analysing the commitment of leaders to the charism today.

Effective leadership influences the culture of a school because it is accountable for the managing and leading the school culture, for setting the tone. The leader’s role is to reconcile conflicting demands and desires to achieve what is best for the organisation and for the individuals in it (Cardno, 2012). The Catholic secondary school leader in a Marist tradition is also responsible for upholding the Catholic
character and the charism. In times of change and improvement, the challenge is to sustain tradition and identity while enhancing the vitality and capacity of Marist education in the 21st century. Green (2014) describes this challenge for leadership in the Australian context as leaders needing to be agents of evangelisation, the depth of spirituality in those who teach and work in these schools and the degree of their ecclesial involvement. For leaders in a Marist Brothers Catholic secondary school setting they need look no further than the founder himself, Marcellin Champagnat for inspiration. Marcellin was a leader for his times. Elkin, Jackson & Inkson (2008) state that the appropriate form of leadership varies according to the situation. The leadership style regardless must support the schools vision and charism.

Transformational leadership is an example of a form of educational leadership and is typically an action and vision of the one leader at the top, the principal. Louis and Kruse (as cited in Mulford, Silins & Leithwood, 2004) found that one element of transformational leadership, the intellectual vision of the principal, was a powerful stimulus for collective learning in their school. The principal in this instance would also be solely accountable for the actions and outcomes. If the staff are inspired enough to follow this approach it can be highly successful. Elkin et al, (2008) say it involves individuals being induced to transcend their own immediate self-interest in the interests of achieving higher goals. In the Marist tradition, D’Orsa (2013) says the vitality and capacity of Marist education will depend entirely on the vitality and capacity of Marist educators, individually and collectively. What is true therefore of Marist teachers is even more so for Marist leaders. This means school leaders in the Marist Brothers tradition must have the intellectual knowledge, qualifications, skills and personality that will inspire their staff and students in the beliefs and vision of Marcellin Champagnat. Costelloe (2017) takes this further by stating for the Catholic school to achieve its objectives, it needs people who are committed to the faith-filled vision, confident in their understanding of the Christian faith and eager to do their best to help their students grow in their own understanding of the presence of God at work in their lives.
Transformational leadership has four components according to Hughes, Ginnett and Curphy (1999). These are setting a vision, sharing a vision, personalising leadership and empowering others. Marcellin Champagnat set his vision for schools for the poor rural young people in reaction to the very low-level levels of literacy and Christian formation. He then shared this vision with his ‘Little Brothers’ who went out to live out this vision. Principal’s share their vision and the school charism through stories and symbols of the Marist tradition at such events as school assemblies, Masses and parent evenings. Public occasions provide an excellent opportunity for good quality sharing by a Marist leader of his or her vision (McMahon, 1999). The personalised style of the leader nurtures its staff and spends time with them in sharing the vision. Transformational leaders are intensely relational and expressive (Hughes et al, 1999) and this is how they personalize learning. School principals and other leaders can also relate to others in their wider school community by reminding everyone they meet of Marcellin’s vision for today. Lastly, transformational leaders are passionate about empowering others. Marcellin put this principle into practice from the start. At the time of his death in 1840, Marcellin had founded 53 establishments and 180 Brothers were teaching some 7000 students (McMahon, 1999).

Charismatic leadership inspires teachers to follow with enthusiasm and dedication and in a Marist Brothers tradition school, this will happen, if the leader is truly ‘Marist.’ D’Orsa (2013) describes it as if the principal and leadership team are not Marist in heart, mind and spirit, it is unlikely that the institution will be able to be coherently or effectively Marist in its identity and mission. This is the charismatic way to induct new Lay teachers in Marist education, to be a solid role model in the footsteps of Marcellin. The education and formation of teachers in Catholic schools are critical in ensuring that the formation offered to students is authentically Christian and Catholic. (New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference, 2014). It is the principal and senior leaders who ensure that this happens and so they should be most successful if they are also authentically Christian and Catholic in the
Marist tradition both spiritually and culturally. A leader will build a Marist community, inspire and accompany others who see themselves as Marist spiritual and apostolic companions of one another, articulate a Marist vision and perspective, and induct new members into the Marist way (D’Orsa, 2013).

A leadership challenge for Catholic schools therefore can be in the appointing or professionally developing a Catholic secondary school principal and other senior leaders in a Marist setting. Leaders need to be authentic and completely honest in the applications for a position like this. The leader today must commit to an educational community in which faith, hope and love are lived and communicated and adapt Marcellin’s approach to educating children and youth, in the way of Mary (Crowe, 1998). In New Zealand, all principals of Catholic schools must be Catholic as per the Private schools Conditional Integration Act 1975. The Board of Trustees Handbook for Catholic schools (2016) also states, “The principal takes up an important religious and pastoral responsibility in the Catholic community. The person appointed must therefore be a fully committed Catholic, committed to Catholic religious practices and to leadership of Catholic education.” The challenge lies then in the appointing and checking of referees for these positions to ensure the top Marist candidates. Qualifications and upskilling of teachers and leaders in Catholic schools is a priority for the New Zealand Catholic Education Office and their survey results every few years show that the uptake is low. Masterates in Educational Leadership and in Religious Education were the qualifications most commonly mentioned, but only a very small proportion of teachers have completed or are undertaking study towards these qualifications (New Zealand Catholic Education Office, 2014). A further challenge may be in how the Board of Trustees engages in the appointment process and if these rules and ideals are prioritised over other educational strengths and priorities and avoid being elitist in other areas. A truly Marist school with an authentic Marist leader will ensure that concern with scholastic results, reputation and income never be obstacles to opening our schools to those less gifted or belonging to economically disadvantaged families (Crowe, 1998). New Zealand law however does not align well with Marcellin’s
original dream to provide education and spirituality to the poor. Catholic schools of necessity must charge attendance dues, and do so legally under the provisions of the Integration Act. A survey in the Auckland Diocese in 2007 found that 20% of parents consider the dues unfair, 30% view the dues as too high, and 14% report that they have been unable to pay every term. The survey concluded that 15-25% of families face affordability issues. However, these figures only relate to families who have children in a Catholic school; it does not include families for whom attendance dues may have been a deterrent to sending their children to a Catholic school (New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference, 2014). My study is seeking to understand what effect this special character leadership has on the interpretation of the Marist charism in these schools. The next section will look at the challenges leaders face in implementing this charism.

Challenges in implementing the Marist Brothers tradition

In a Marist Catholic secondary school, the role and commitment of its leaders is an important component in sustaining and strengthening the culture and charismatic identity of the institution. Catholic secondary schools have no issues attracting competent teachers who are willing to support the schools character and charism. Engebretson (2014) says far fewer are prepared to create and animate the ethos instead of just supporting it. With the decline of the Marist Brothers teaching order currently still teaching in secondary schools it has become the vocation and responsibility of the Marist Lay teacher to uphold, further strengthen and invigorate the schools. If a teacher has a true Marist commitment to the mission then as D’Orsa (2013 describes, Marist education is what Marist educators do. It is what the Religious Orders vision, going right back to Marcellin Champagnat, stands for. The test for these schools today is to attract and train Lay teachers who can identify with this charism, are authentically Catholic and Marist, are personally fulfilled by it and can pass their passion for God onto the young people. Green (2014) states that one of the biggest challenges facing Catholic schools today is that emerging
middle and senior leaders in our schools have grown up in families that have not been active in practicing their faith in the traditional sense. Their world is secularist, pluralist and relativist. This theme therefore of the challenges experienced by leaders in Marist Brothers tradition schools relates to the research questions in analysing the commitment of leaders in implementing the charism today.

There is a challenge for Catholic schools in the Marist Brothers tradition today to preserve Marcellin Champagnat’s original dream, its charism in helping to form the faith of both the students and the teachers through its values and in making a difference to teaching and learning. Particularly for the marginalised and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Research shows that the role of Catholic schools in the Marist Brothers tradition in promoting the Gospel values to bring about spiritual development continues to be a challenge that is not well addressed in a realistic and authentic way. “If there is a realistic view of the school’s capacity in this regard, it is more likely to be spiritually effective because the aims can be better translated into practice” (Rossiter, 2003, p. 1). In today’s society, the catechizing of students in a Catholic school alongside giving them an excellent academic and holistic education is a great challenge. The world of young Australian people, including younger teachers, is for the most part a post-Christian and post-modern one. D’Orsa (2013) reiterates their world is pluralist, secularist and relativist. This quote while Australian in context can also be applied to students in New Zealand secondary schools.

The original manual for the Little Brothers of Mary teaching in Marcellin’s schools was written in early 19th Century France. In 1853, the Brothers published *The Teachers Guide*, the fruit of their experience and reflections on Marcellin Champagnat’s own educational insights and guidelines (Institute of the Marist Brothers of the Schools, 1998). The contemporary approach for schools of the Marist Brothers tradition follows this example and vision as seen through some of its recommendations. For example, Guide (1853) provides the following rule (as cited in Marist Brothers of the Schools, 1998):
Children are children. There are days, when you have no idea what is making them light-headed and indisposed to work. On such occasions, it is better not to force a showdown, which would only embitter and irritate them; but to be patient and give them serious work to do. By conducting yourself in this manner, you will never compromise your authority. You will be fair and sparing in imposing sanctions, and the pupils will be convinced that they are being punished only out of duty and because they are loved. (pp.60-61)

In any secondary school today in New Zealand, you would find parallels with Marcellin’s teaching and the modern guidelines on restorative practices. The challenges for leaders in Marist Brothers tradition secondary schools therefore would be to gain buy in and commitment from all staff in this approach so it is consistent across the institution and recognised within the community. This is not a punitive disciplinary method and teachers within and new to these schools will need to be made aware of the difference. Our Marist tradition in relation to discipline emphasizes creating an encouraging and friendly environment of calm and order in which students can study well, and preventing problems before they occur (Marist Brothers of the Schools, 1998). To get all teachers in one educational setting to be singing from the same song sheet in regards to the pastoral care system would be a major challenge for senior leaders. The vitality and capacity of Marist education will depend entirely on the vitality and capacity of Marist educators, individually and collectively (D’Orsa, 2013).

Another challenge for senior leaders that is coming through the literature is implementing the school charism and culture in practice through the actions and words of its organisational members alongside financial restrictions. Organisations are complex environments and can become even more complicated the larger they grow or the larger their influence grows. Therefore, the role of leaders and managers in an organisation can be extremely pivotal in the success of the
organisations outcomes. Leaders need to exert power and influence over their workers and in the case of schools, the students, parents and wider community. There is a lot at stake for senior leaders and in many cases, their performance is accountable to many people and job security more risky than it is for the staff working for them. In some organisations, the risks are very high; Bolman and Deal (1997) assert that the costs of misreading a situation can be dire, for example in an airplane, business or government. Some writers would also suggest that in a school situation there is even more on the line because it is vast populations of impressionable minds that are learning to be productive citizens they are responsible for. In a Marist Brothers tradition secondary school, much like other schools, they are the future of our society. Marcellin’s original dream was to provide an education for the rural poor. In our changing society it is now the urban poor that are most at risk and where most of these schools reside, no longer with boarding hostels for rural students. McCloskey (2011) says research since the 1980’s has shown that Catholic schools do a stellar job of education the urban poor. Catholic schools up until 1975 were funded through direct donations and the teaching Priests, Brothers and Nuns were not paid. It can be argued that Catholic schools are better resourced today through the state system but they need to rely on Catholic school’s boards to fund the upkeep and construction of their buildings. This puts them on the back foot financially but overall they are achieving better than their state counterparts and in some places are achieving better than their private counterparts. In Auckland, 75.6 per cent of students leaving Catholic schools attained University Entrance in 2013, as opposed to 52.5 per cent from state schools. (NZQA statistics).

There is no straightforward approach to change and Fullan (2001) describes the transformation process as not being possible without accompanying messiness. In any school, there are many stakeholders and change is rarely embraced by the majority, particularly if they feel threatened. One way to implement the charism for leaders will be to bring teachers together to learn about and form their own Marist identity. D’Orsa (2013) says for such spiritual capital to be accumulated, formation-
both initial and ongoing—cannot be haphazard or left to chance. A Marist Brothers tradition secondary school is one that teaches Marist spirituality so therefore it can be learned by its teachers. One way that leaders can therefore approach the challenge of organisational change in regards to the charism for teachers understanding and commitment is to provide formation and professional development through prayer and retreat opportunities, study of Marist spirituality and pedagogy and opportunities for social activity through sharing of Eucharist, faith sharing and social justice.

The culture of an organisation mirrors its ethos. The ethos will be obvious from a schools vision and mission statement but the culture occurs in the way a school operates day to day. If leaders are attempting to implement change around this culture, many barriers can arise from the organisational members. According to McLeod (2003), culture exists where groups exist and it serves as the social “glue” that binds people together. In educational organisations, depending on size, groups and sub-groups will naturally form around people who have similar goals, beliefs and values. In a secondary school setting teachers in the same department may form a group because they teach the same subject and feel an affiliation with each other, having experienced similar training, learning and teaching capabilities. Engebretson (2014) states that the culture and cultural witness of Catholic schools and their teachers is even more so important because it gives young people permission to inherit their Catholic culture and to be a part of its future. The challenge is to help young people identify the culture of their school so that they become the good citizens reflected in it. Rossiter (2003) therefore says its purpose is to help pupils learn how to become well-informed, critical thinkers, capable of looking discerningly at contemporary spiritual and moral issues.

In a Marist Brothers Catholic secondary school the role and commitment of its teachers is an important component in sustaining and strengthening the culture and charismatic identity of the institution. Catholic secondary schools have no issues attracting competent teachers who are willing to support the school’s character and
charism. Far fewer are prepared to create and animate the ethos instead of just supporting it (Engebretson, 2014). With the decline of the Marist Brothers teaching order currently still teaching in secondary schools it has become the vocation and responsibility of the Marist Lay teacher to uphold, further strengthen and invigorate the schools. Marist education is what Marist educators do (D'Orsa, 2013). It is what the Religious orders vision, going right back to Marcellin Champagnat, stands for. The test for these schools today is to attract and train Lay teachers who can identify with this charism, are authentically Catholic and Marist, are personally fulfilled by it and can pass their passion for God onto the young people. The teacher is never isolated from the culture, but holding to the distinctiveness of his or her religion seeks to understand the culture and learns to work within it (Engebretson, 2014).

This formation of Lay Marist teachers needs careful managing. Teachers that are Catholic may join a school of a Marist tradition but it will be their personal choice as to whether they feel ‘Marist.’ Over time, lay staff may experience their identification and affiliation with the charism as ‘feeling at home’ (Hilton, 1998). Formation programmes therefore must not be left to chance with the hope that the school culture will permeate the teacher, formal training is needed and the Marist Brothers order in New Zealand provides opportunities for this for all new and existing staff through weeklong retreats, conferences and assemblies as well as professional development courses within the schools. Some Marist Brothers are still affiliated with the schools in New Zealand and many work collaboratively with Lay teachers to ensure the schools ethos is maintained. This now shared vision is articulated in Crowe (1998) when he says in welcoming Laypeople to the 1993 General Chapter, the Superior General, speaking for all the Brothers, thanked them personally for their closeness to the Brothers and for their contribution to Marist mission. Charism therefore can be an opportunity for change as well as maintaining tradition within the culture. D'Orsa (2013) however cautions against a sense of tribalism and cultism around a Marist identity and Marcellin. It is important that formation be Christocentric and always needs to lead from and to Jesus.
It is difficult to find concrete guidelines of what a teacher or student needs to commit to in a Marist secondary school outside of the five Marist Pillars. Many schools have included in their guiding principles interpretations of the pillars but clear directives were rare and none was evident in school policy. An example of this was one Marist Brother’s college where the five pillars were referred to as ‘characteristics’ that inform the culture of the school. For example, “Presence” (Green, 2017) give descriptors, which said things like: “We know each one individually, we are attentive and welcoming, we seek relationship founded on love.” (Green, 2017, p. 1). When you have a mix of non-Catholic staff, Lay Catholics with and without a Marist formation and many students that are un-Churched, the de-coding of this charismatic culture is indeed challenging. In Australia, where the Marist Brothers educational network is much bigger, stronger and more affluent, one secondary schools policy included very clear goals that all teachers were expected to meet and included the following examples: “be suitable, competent, trained teachers committed to the goals of Marist education in the Catholic tradition; be committed to regular ongoing professional development; actively contribute to the religious and liturgical life of the College and the spiritual formation of the students.” (Green, 2017, p. 3).

What is found on these school websites, in their charters and policies is very subjective and would fall under ontology when looking at methodology. Questions of social ontology are concerned with the nature of social entities (Bryman, 2012) and the perceptions and actors of social actors. It could be said that the culture of a Marist Catholic secondary school is so strongly instilled that people perceive it to be a certain way and that the culture exists regardless of the people working in it. Turu (2015) cautions all Marists when he says we exist solely and exclusively to participate in the mission of God and not to seek our own survival. To further investigate the culture of Marist secondary schools and how this effects teaching and learning outcomes for Catholic students including their spiritual growth, qualitative research would need to take place in a range of schools that would include interviews for leaders based on their perceptions rather than any empirical
evidence. The next step would then be to match the Marist characteristics being espoused in the school’s vision, mission statement and policies. These are the relevant gaps on the historical perspective, ethos, special character leadership and challenges around implementation of the Marist Brothers tradition in the literature available currently. My concern for how leadership in Marist Brothers tradition secondary schools is implemented today has been confirmed in my research across four secondary schools of the Marist Brothers tradition and I will consider the validity of this research to my findings on leadership in these schools.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Introduction
All research must take up an epistemological position. Bryman (2012) states that an epistemological issue concerns the question of what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline. This research is based on the adoption of a subjectivist epistemological position. Epistemology is a theory of knowledge that underpins the research and subjectivism, otherwise known as interpretivism, is the approach that I adopted because it fits with a qualitative methodology (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

The methodology dictates the means by which the data is gathered. The data collection method I used was face to face semi structured interviews to gather qualitative data. These interview transcripts provided a rich description of how leaders interpret and carry out their roles, their perception of their leadership styles and the way they carry out their day to day tasks in a Marist Brothers tradition secondary school.

Research approach
It is important that the chosen epistemological position reflects the researchers understanding of basic issues in education. What constitutes knowledge and reality and how we go about obtaining it is the main focus. Davidson and Tolich (2003) have said that the central concern of epistemology is deciding what counts as legitimate knowledge. We must first begin with an ontological position and establish that there is research evidence available. From this ontological point we can move towards the epistemological position, that is, what we can actually know about this. This is why the methodology is subjective and requiring an interpretivist approach because the knowledge is within the heads of the participants and is
based on their life experience and understanding. In educational research this would involve findings through socially constructed knowledge claims. Cresswell (2002) states that assumptions identified in these works hold that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. What this researcher already knows about the Marist Brothers charism and its implementation in their schools is based on six years of Religious Education and Social Science teaching and middle and senior leadership in three Marist Brothers secondary schools and is mostly observation based. Cohen et al. (2007) state that different people construe their reality in different ways so my research will view the participants’ responses to their interview questions through an interpretive lens.

Methodology

The methodological approach involves the researcher acquiring the knowledge required to answer the research questions and is very much intertwined with epistemology and ontology. These all therefore go on to inform the methods used to collect the data. By linking what the researcher thinks can be studied with what they know about the subject it becomes clearer as to what influence the research can have on the original ontological position. In this case, the need to further investigate the influence of Marist Brothers values on leadership approaches, to preserve the charism in these traditional schools. Crotty (1998) explains the methodological approach by saying that methodology is the “strategy, plan of action, process or design” (p.6) that lies behind the choice and use of particular research methods. The theoretical perspective therefore for this research is interpretivism, sometimes referred to as subjectivism. This is because the researchers’ epistemological position is based on seeking subjective knowledge. What is known about this topic on values is already based on different perspectives and individual meanings and most evidence available includes this reality. The epistemological assumption is consequently that knowledge of the phenomenon being researched is likely to be gained through personal experience. Bryman (2012) describes this knowledge as being gained through a strategy that respects
the differences between people and the objects of natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action. Due to this epistemological position, the methodological approach will employ qualitative research methods in this study.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) refer to qualitative research as a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. This study on the influence of the Marist Brothers charism on leadership and implementation in schools requires a methodology that explores the understandings and concepts that people have about the nature and meaning of religious values in a school setting. This is an area of study that naturally lends itself to qualitative research, as it attempts to uncover the nature of peoples’ experience with a religious phenomenon in an educational setting. Creswell (2002) describes qualitative research as seeking to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the views of participants. This means identifying a culture-sharing group and interviewing them to find out how leaders have developed shared patterns of behaviour over time. The assumption is that when people are interacting they are subconsciously making judgements and assessments to establish their position within the interaction. How they interpret these interactions leads to the construction of their social world (Bryman, 2012). Face to face interviews with a range of senior and middle leaders in Marist Brothers tradition secondary schools could therefore lead to a range of responses based on their worldviews. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) describe this qualitative research approach as a situated activity that locates the observer in the world.

I have used one research method with two different groups. I have used the interview method with eight leaders in Marist Brothers secondary schools in New Zealand. These included principals and senior and middle leaders. This is called a multi-perspective model. The interview method is purposive and matches the methodological approach mentioned above in that the knowledge I am seeking is
in the minds of school leaders and this can be uncovered through interviewing them to discover their opinions.

**Participant selection**

I approached a range of leaders in Marist Brothers tradition schools around New Zealand to participate in interviews. Having taught in three of these secondary schools, these three were deleted from the sample list, as it is unethical to interview in an educational setting you have worked in or are currently working in. This left ten schools to approach. I wanted to ensure that included in the sample was a range of socio-economic, co-educational and single sex schools as well as schools that had small and large school rolls. I personally contacted the principals of six appropriate schools to give them information on the research project and ask for permission to interview them as well as one other senior or middle leader within their institution who has some influence on the Catholic character and implementation of the Marist charism. Four Principals and four senior or middle leaders from the four schools approached consented to be interviewed. It was important to have perspectives of principals as well as middle leaders as it was a heterogeneous sample. Therefore, the two perspectives are identified as middle or senior leaders and principals in the findings chapter as many leaders in Catholic schools take on responsibility for and nurture the charism in their organisations. Schools were approached confidentially and given organisational consent letters so they could contemplate their decisions and decide by returning the forms of consent. I also made it clear that there would be no negative consequences if they chose to decline or withdraw later. Face to face interviews were conducted in the participants’ educational institutions. Semi-structured interviews were used because I would only get one chance to interview these leaders and questions and instructions needed to be prepared ahead of time.
Research method: Face to face interviews

There is no one perfect way to carry out qualitative research but my study includes an interactive process through face to face interviews. The research questions involved finding out from senior and middle leaders in Marist Brothers secondary schools what they understand about the charism and how they express this commitment in their schools, so the ideal method was one to one interviewing. This data gathering method was time consuming but the value gained in so many direct interactions is significant to this research. The methodological approach explained here will most benefit from the use of face to face interviews. Tong, Sainsbury and Craig (2007) describe semi-structured interviews as a method that explores the experiences of participants and the meanings they attribute to them. Therefore, open ended questions were asked to encourage participants to share their views on the topic.

As mentioned above qualitative research methods are time consuming, particularly the interview method. Hinds (2000) says that for every one hour spent interviewing you can expect to spend ten hours processing the data. For face to face interviews this will depend on the amount of participants. Four schools participated in this research with the Principal from each as well as one senior or middle leader totalling eight participants and interviews. I chose this data gathering method because it is believed that valuable and honest data can be collected in one to one interviews. It was hoped that this method would eliminate any bias that might include ill feeling towards the educational environment or over inflated views that treat the school in a more positive light due to the range of participants. How the interview is conducted will also ensure some objectivity of answers if the interviewer plays a neutral role, never interjecting his or her opinion of a respondent’s answer (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The interviewer however will always be aware that the answers are the subjective views of the participants based on their worldviews and life experience.
The planning of these interviews included some pre-determined questions and rules from the researcher but there was also some flexibility as to how the discussion unfolded. There was however, a need for a fine balance between this flexibility and the selection of questions being asked. Krueger (1994) warns that questions need to be carefully selected and phrased in advance to elicit the maximum amount of information. This means that time and forethought beforehand in developing questions for one to one interviewing was very important.

Krueger (1994) also asserts that successful interviews involve quality questions as these lead to quality answers. He includes as examples several different types of questions, each of which serves a distinct purpose: opening question, introductory questions, transition questions, key questions, ending questions, an all things considered question, summary question and a final question. These all serve to facilitate rich discussions based on human interactions and perspectives. Dichotomous questions are avoided because they lead to closed answers and are not helpful for the researchers’ data collection. If these answers were sought a simple questionnaire would suffice. Lastly Krueger (1994) states that key to an interview being focused is providing participants with consistent and sufficient background information. The purpose of this is to minimise any assumptions participants may bring with them to the interview. It is important too that the participants know what the purpose of the interview is and how the information will be used. The interviews will be successful in gathering rich data if the questions are open ended and an affinity is reached with the participants so they feel comfortable and confident to talk unreservedly (Creswell, 2002). Confidentiality of any findings and data was also observed and ensured.

Interviewing is considered one of the most common and effective means of understanding other human beings (Fontana & Frey, 2005). This qualitative research method is ideal for gathering data on authentic Marist Brothers leadership in secondary schools. It is important that the data gathered in these interview
situations is valid, reliable and trustworthy. To ensure this, preparation and planning were key. Scripting the interview from start to finish, including introductory statements and summary according to Kvale (1996) allows the researcher to be more relaxed and focussed. The interview questions were informed by the literature review and therefore able to be pre-planned. Interviews were voice recorded with the permission of the participant and then transcribed soon after and shared to ensure validity. Krueger (1994) says that quality questions require reflection and feedback. Good questions will not be thought of on the spot. Identification of potential questions from the researcher is the first step in planning and then these went through several drafts before quality questions that capture the intent of the study were formulated. This process must be adhered to if the questions are going to facilitate reliable and valid answers and data. They must be well thought out and considered so that participants' answers are well thought out and considered. The interview schedule was as follows:

1. How do you understand and personally interpret the Marist Brothers tradition?
2. How does your leadership style incorporate the Marist Brothers tradition?
3. What barriers are you aware of that arose as you were developing this leadership style?
4. How did you overcome these barriers and were any of these insurmountable?
5. What professional development has taken place that has benefitted the development of your leadership style?
6. What evidence can you draw on to show that your school upholds the Marist Brothers tradition today?
7. What challenges have you encountered in implementing the Marist Brothers charism in your school?
8. Is there anything else about developing and implementing the Marist Brothers charism in your leadership style that you wish to add?
Validity

Qualitative research can be seen as being less trustworthy and reliable from other “scientific” methods. Quantitative researchers would describe this type of research to be lacking reliability, consistency and inaccurate in its data collection. Davidson and Tolich (2003) disagree and champion qualitative research for its flexibility and understanding of its own social and cultural location. No one method however is completely reliable and valid and Cohen et al (2007) say that threats to validity and reliability can never be erased completely. Validity can be defined as the quality of being logically or factually sound. It is important therefore that all research is trustworthy regardless of the approach it follows. By following the interpretive paradigm this research will enable confidence in the findings as it looks to find the truth in peoples practices and ideas. Klenke, Martin and Wallace (2016) refer to validity in qualitative research as determining the degree to which researchers’ claims about knowledge correspond to reality (or research participants’ constructions of reality). Guba and Lincoln (2005) suggest that no one method or group of methods is capable of providing total certainty so the term validity is often compared with trustworthiness, authenticity, credibility or confidence in qualitative research. According to Given (2008), authenticity involves shifting away from concerns about the reliability and validity to concerns about research that is worthwhile and thinking about its impact on members of the community where the research is being conducted and society at large as being more important.

Researcher bias is one of the main factors affecting the validity of qualitative research. Interviewers must be aware of all factors affecting their views on the outcomes they are looking for in an interview situation. Johnson (1997) says the problem of researcher bias is frequently an issue because qualitative research is open ended and less structured than quantitative research. The researchers’ life experience, gender, age, ideological context and personal attributes can all lead to bias in the research. Klenke et al. (2016) say researchers have to be able to “bracket” personal values and prior knowledge of a substantive field by identifying
the positions from which they speak. This is sometimes referred to as reflexivity. The term reflexivity is used by Bryman (2012) to describe the researcher’s awareness of these concepts, their own values and biases and a realisation of the potential impact and influence on their research methods and findings. To ensure self-awareness of my personal biases I stuck solely to the interview questions and made no comments or leading statements during the interviews, and limited my expectations. Reflexivity is conceptualised as a conscious act, is one that demands the researcher situates himself/herself within the social and cultural context, and is willing to openly confront the self as the field work proceeds (Kacen & Chaitin, 2006). I kept a journal throughout the data gathering process to enhance reflexivity. One method researchers employ is negative case sampling to ensure against bias. Johnson (1997) says this means that they attempt carefully and purposively to search for examples that disconfirm their expectations and explanations about what they are studying. This method ensures more credible results as it makes it difficult to ignore important information. There is also a perception of a power imbalance between the interviewer and interviewee and this can reside with either party. Cohen et al (2007) say the notion of power is significant in the interview situation, for the interview is not simply a data collection situation but a social and frequently a political situation. A prolonged and respectful engagement with participants will help to negate the power imbalance, which in turn may influence the data.

During the interviews, the participants described their answers to the questions in a way that leaves what they say open to interpretation by the researcher which can compromise validity. All interviews were voice recorded, transcribed and then sent back to the participants for checking and then either agreeing or disagreeing with what was said by signing the transcript or not. There are three main types of validity methods used by qualitative researchers that can ensure confidence in the research process. These are called descriptive validity, interpretive validity and theoretical validity.
Description validity is a major factor in all qualitative research. Researchers enter the world of those being researched and ask key questions to gain responses from the participants that will give rich and involved answers from their points of view. Johnson (1997) refers to descriptive validity as the factual accuracy of the account as reported by the researcher. Transcribing and sending the interview results to the participant for checking can ensure descriptive validity is taking place. Having another researcher or the supervisor check the recordings against the transcript will also ensure this level of credibility.

Interpretive validity requires the researcher to go into the minds of the participants. Denzin et al (2005) describe this method as being guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied. The goal of the researcher is to accurately communicate the meaning of the participants in their findings. A strategy identified by Johnson (1997) to help with interpretive validity is participant feedback. This is where the participants' are invited to give feedback and discussion of the researchers’ interpretations and conclusions for verification and insight. Inaccuracies and any areas of miscommunication can be rectified here.

The third type of validity in qualitative research is called theoretical validity. A conscientious qualitative researcher moves back and forth between design features, data collection and interpretation to ensure congruence among question formulation, extant literature, selection of research participants, data collection strategies and analysis (Klenke et al., 2016). This requires constant checking and comparison making throughout the research process. One strategy for this is given by Johnson (1997) called extended fieldwork. This involves collecting data over a long period of time within the same settings. In my case in only using one method of interviewing this was not possible, but by sharing findings and checking transcripts, open communication between researcher and participants was maintained to ensure a degree of theoretical validity. Another strategy that could
be employed is pattern making which includes predicting a series of results that form a “pattern” and then determining the degree to which the actual results fit the predicted pattern (Johnson, 1997).

Another method that can be used in qualitative research to ensure validity is triangulation. Cohen et al (2007) define triangulation as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour. This research did not use this mixed method approach as it is of a small scale and is not essential for all types of qualitative research as Klenke et al (2016) describe when they say theoretically, these efforts bolster reliability and validity. They go on to say the absence of corroborate efforts through triangulation and the production of similar findings does provide grounds for refutation as different methods used in qualitative research furnish parallel data sets, each affording only a partial picture of the phenomenon under investigation. This research does however include several semi-structured interviews with a range of participants to gain many perspectives and information. Keeves (1997) says the different perspectives obtained provide confirmation and thus strength to the findings and relationships recorded. Not all of these available qualitative strategies around validity need be employed however, as this is a small scale study based on the findings in four schools. It is not a wide generalised study of leadership in all Marist brothers’ secondary schools in New Zealand. The aim of this study is to provide a detailed and rich account of what the participants in each of the four schools expressed (Davidson & Tolich, 2003). To ensure validity in my research however, I used the following methods as mentioned earlier: bracketing, reflexivity, negative case sampling, transcript checking, sharing findings with participants and encouraging feedback and pattern making. The number of participants and range in backgrounds and job titles to some degree helped ensure a version of triangulation through the different views that were gathered and compared.
Making Meaning of the data

Once the interviews have taken place, transcribed and sent to the participants for verification the next step is analysing the data. Qualitative research provides a large amount of data and in this research, this data is in the form of transcripts. The challenge is then to put this information gathered into a form that can be understood and clarified. Pope, Mays and Ziebland, (2000) have suggested that the data are preserved in their textual form and “indexed” to generate or develop analytical categories and theoretical explanations. It is the job of the researcher to identify patterns and themes within the data to make sense of it. Data will need to be read and reread several times to make these identifications. Pope et al. (2000) describe the themes and categories being identified as centering on particular phrases, incidents, or types of behaviour.

Large amounts of detailed data were gathered in the eight interviews and the analysis took an inductive approach. Lofland, Snow, Anderson and Lofland, (2006) describe this approach as data based in that the analysis is driven by the data themselves. This approach also puts the researcher at the heart of the analysis. Lofland et al. (2006) say that the researchers are the central agents in the analysis process. The researcher must be the person who conducts the interviews and then analyses the data. No one else can take on this role for them. Pope et al. (2000) put this data analysis process into a five step process: familiarisation, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting, mapping and interpretation.

Familiarisation has the researcher immersing themselves in the data by listening to interviews, reading transcripts and reading any notes taken. Identifying a thematic framework involves identifying all the key issues, concepts, and themes by which the data can be examined and referenced. The researcher must make links to the aims of their research and the findings and deciding what needs to be prioritised as well as identifying any patterns that emerge. This initial process began during the interviews with listening to what the interviewees were saying.
and categorizing these responses in my head. Indexing is the outcome of the previous step as the data then needs to be labelled in manageable chunks. The indexing involves coding. Coding entails closely examining interview transcripts to organise and sort the data into significant concepts and categories that make it meaningful (Cohen et al., 2007). A thematic framework is applied to the data in textual form by annotating the transcripts with numerical codes from the index, usually supported by short text descriptors to elaborate the index heading. Three themes were already identified from the literature review so coding included identifying and labelling these themes as they arose. Charting has the researcher rearranging the data according to the thematic framework to which they relate and forming charts around these themes. Mapping and interpretation is then the final step in the data analysis process and includes as Pope et al. (2000) describe, using the charts to define concepts, map the range and nature of phenomena, create typologies and find associations between themes with a view to providing explanations for the findings. Along with these steps I also used a memoing strategy through a journal I kept throughout the research steps. Lofland et al. (2006) say it is extremely important to get in the habit of writing down your ideas about your various coding categories and their interconnections. Memoing helped me to reflect on the process and the findings in a meaningful way as well as help keep track of the large amounts of data.

Ethical issues

Gaining the trust of participants in an interpretive study is very important so covert models do not align well. Wilkinson (2001) would agree with this assertion when she says that the core idea of research ethics is that one cannot justify imposing burdens on subjects simply by appealing either to gains to others or to the service of some abstract goal, like the promotion of knowledge. Therefore, an overt research approach was taken up in the face to face interviews. Wilkinson (2001) goes on to say that informed consent is vital in regards to research ethics. This consent must be voluntary and informed. Voluntary means that participants cannot
be coerced and informed means they must know the relevant information about the research project. Cohen et al. (2007) assert however that there are some instances when covert observations are beneficial and these mostly include situations where individuals would change their natural behaviour if they knew they were being watched. Covert research overcomes this problem of reactivity. Due to the small scale of my research and my methods employed to ensure validity, this will not be an issue. Fontana and Frey (2005) say the three most important ethical considerations are informed consent, right to privacy and protection from harm. These three factors were key to my interviewing procedure.

Potential participants were approached for voluntary consent so there was no coercion. Their informed consent was sought and they had the opportunity to withdraw at any point for any reason. All data gathered is confidential and no participants or their educational institutions will be identified. Before interviews took place, personal conversations were held with all participants outlining the interview process. Information sheets (see Appendix 1) were also provided with opportunities for participants to ask any questions. This process was formalised with participants signing consent forms (see Appendix 2). The data was kept secure during the research process by being stored appropriately.

Another possible ethical dilemma is the issue of confidentiality. This is particularly critical once it became time to share the data. The secondary schooling community in New Zealand is small and the schools with Catholic Marist Brothers traditions are even smaller. Participants in the researchers own school may also be concerned that even though the name of the school and all participants are confidential it could be deduced as to what school is being referred to. Cohen et al. (2007) also see research as being non-interventionist. I have also secured the confidentiality of all participants by coding them P1, L2, P3, L4, P5, L6, P7 and L8 in no particular order. Their educational institutions are also never referred to or named.
Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined and explained the methodology, namely the subjectivist epistemological position I have taken in this qualitative research. My research follows an interpretive approach and the data collection method will be through face to face interviews. My data analysis process has been described through a five step process and validity, triangulation and ethical issues have been discussed in relation to this research.

The following chapter will discuss the important findings from the data collected from the interviews across the four schools involved in this research.
CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS

Introduction
The purpose of this research was to investigate leadership issues within Catholic secondary schools of the Marist Brothers tradition in response to the challenge of upholding and growing this charism in a modern day educational environment. Leaders are tasked with preserving their founder, St Marcellin Champagnat's original dream to establish schools for young people who were marginalized both spiritually and financially as well as ensuring excellent student outcomes both in the sacred and academically today. Gathering data from eight leaders, half of whom are principals and half of whom are senior or middle leaders, within four schools allowed me to compare perspectives of each. Analysing the data allowed me to identify similarities, differences, aspects I had not considered and validation of certain assumptions gained through the literature review. The way in which the literature review of this topic was structured provided a background but it was the data that emerged in my interviews that suggested four new major themes. Although eight interview questions were put forward to all participants, I have decided to present four themes in my findings instead of the responses to the eight questions because there were unique discoveries within this research that came through exposing perspectives that are more important. The four major themes are organised under the following four headings: Formation of personal faith beliefs; Formation of personal leadership beliefs; Implementing the Marist Brothers charism authentically; Challenges and barriers to the implementation.

Formation of personal faith beliefs includes the following sub-themes:
- Foundation of faith beliefs
- Transmission of faith in practice

Formation of personal leadership beliefs includes the following sub-themes:
- Foundation of leadership beliefs
- Further growth of the Marist Brothers charism

Implementing the Marist Brothers charism authentically includes the following sub-themes:

- Environmental and physical leadership practices
- Social and political leadership practices

Challenges and barriers to the implementation includes the following sub-themes:

- The changing charism dynamic
- Restriction of resources
- Combatting challenges

Research participants

Four principals and four senior or middle leaders participated in this research through semi-structured interviews. Participation in this research project was voluntary and permission was sought from each educational institution. Participants were given a copy of the information sheet and the consent form before interviews were begun. These interviews were voice recorded, transcribed and shared with the participants for checking. The participants were a range of female and male with various leadership expertise and years served but all had experience in leading the Marist charism within their schools. Principals are identified as P and middle or senior leaders are identified as L in the findings.

Formation of personal faith beliefs

Foundation of faith beliefs

All of the participant’s mentioned the founding story of St Marcellin Champagnat as a source of their formation of their faith beliefs. Most were raised Catholic and
had their own personal beliefs previous to teaching and leading in a Marist Brothers secondary school, three in particular increased their personal commitment to the Marist Brothers charism by travelling to Champagnat’s birth place and L’ Hermitage in France to more fully understand and live the charism. For example:

   P1: To visit L’ Hermitage, I stayed for two or three days, and sort of went around all of the places where Marcellin had been, up to the village of La’ Valla and where he started and all of those things had a really big impact on me and I think it gave me a much deeper understanding of the Marist charism.

   P3: I’ve twice been to L’ Hermitage, I’ve twice been to L’Valla, I’ve twice walked in his footsteps. My interpretation changed from my induction at Mittagong in Australia to being very, very accurate in a more astute, around what it was that Champagnat, and I was reminded what Champagnat wanted us to do and be. And essentially, it’s all about to make Jesus known and loved.

Some participant’s also referred to their own experiences as young people in Marist Brothers education as influences on their personal faith beliefs or to their early years in teaching. For example:

   P1: I was a past pupil of the Marist Brothers, that had the biggest impact on me. Just first-hand witnessing their dedication, their service, their generosity.

   P7: The Marist’s were school men because they were called the Fratres Maristae a Scholis, FMS, that was the Marist Brothers of the school. The Marist Brothers of the schools were located and attached to schools so they found their identity in teaching. So that goes back to my comment I made before, teach them Frere and they will come, because if you be true to yourself, people will come and listen, so teachers will attract people.
Despite the different backgrounds and experiences of all of the leaders interviewed all expressed knowledge of the foundation story and the importance of knowing and understanding it as part of their own faith commitment. For example:

L2: We’ve got a very much, this sense of mission….we know that the way of Marcellin was very much helping the marginalised, the people who were living on the fringes of society.

L4: Marcellin looked after those most in need. I think St Marcellin, what I like about him is that, he wanted his students to go to school and some of them were still involved in work on the farm, for instance, helping out with the hay or whatever they did, so he took them when they were free, so he was very flexible.

L6: It all goes back to Marcellin Champagnat and his vision for education and the idea that it is Catholic education for the poor and that doesn’t necessarily, I mean in Marcellin’s time it certainly meant the financially poor, but I don’t know that these days it always means that. Sometimes I think there are lots of types of poverty and we meet a lot of them here and those need to be filled as well.

In conclusion, participant’s overall agreed that having personal experience and knowledge of the Marist Brother’s foundation story was key to their own faith formation and personal commitment to their beliefs. No participant communicated that the story could be known and transmitted without true dedication personally.

**Transmission of faith in practice**

Participants’ responses to how they transmit their faith in practice emphasised the Marist pillars as the practical expressions of St Marcellin Champagnat and the Marist Brothers and most related these as a guide to their transmission in a school setting. For example:
P5: I see it as being based on the five pillars, and so making sure we embed those to uphold the traditions that they have had. And I guess a lot of it is about simplicity, humility and you know, people of prayer, action and compassion. Those pillars underpin everything that we do.

P7: Quite a strong sense of presence, the other one is love of work, now that is the gift, it is also a gift of the Church, work. So when Champagnat made nails for L’Hermitage he made them out of his own hands, you know, he got a bit of iron and made some nails, cut the wood…..so the gift the Brothers left to education was that they were men committed and they worked hard.

L8: I think my strongest interpretation is, I know the background story, I know who he is, I know what he did, I think for me I interpret it more through the pillars. I love simplicity, I think hard work, anyone who works in a Marist school works hard.

This transmission of personal faith was also evident in the actions participants took personally in their institutions to share not only their own faith, as they understand it but the wider vision of their school’s charism. For example:

P1: Last weekend we just had a big reunion to celebrate 200 years of the Marist Brothers and it’s just about constantly explaining to our community why this is important and talking to the kids about why it is important.

L4: I consider that the students who are having difficulties accessing the curriculum are those most in need because that usually comes along with some kind of family problem or behaviour problem.

L8: We’re role models, we do what we say, we live them, it’s not superficial and on the outside. You know, for the love of work, we’re the only ones here at 6 ‘o’ clock at night, still here, after the sports teams have gone, after the kids are gone.
In conclusion, the Marist pillars, particularly of “Love of Work” and “Presence” guided all of the participants in the way they transmitted their personal faith within their school communities. Pillars that are both a spiritual philosophy as well as practical expressions that are role modelled to their staff, parents and most importantly their students.

**Key findings**

With the decline of and almost non-existence of Marist Brothers teaching in these schools, the vocation and formation of the lay teacher is essential to the continued growth and implementation of the charism that began with St Marcellin Champagnat and his teaching brothers. Leaders have identified the importance of their own vocation and ongoing formation. All expressed ways they have continued to transform their faith and values in regards to their leadership and none indicated that this journey would ever reach a finite point. For many, visiting the foundation place of the Marist Brothers in France was a key signpost on this journey. The way they expressed this transformation was through the Marist pillars. All leaders were knowledgeable about them and easily expressed the meanings of these and what they meant to them personally. Most of the leaders went further to say the pillars could not just be named and labelled in a school but most be role modelled and lived by all.

**Formation of personal leadership beliefs**

*Foundation of leadership beliefs*

Participants were clearly aware of how their personal leadership beliefs came to be and all expressed that they are still on a journey of forming their leadership beliefs regardless of how long they had been in leadership positions. Almost all participants had formed leadership beliefs that were intertwined with their faith beliefs around the charism. For example:
L4: I am a Marist person and I always will be I think, because it has infected me.

P7: You transform the charism or you transmit the charism, you transform your pain or you transmit your pain. You transform your guilt or you transmit your guilt, you transform your practice or you transmit your practice.

L8: I could teach an RE class but to stand up in front of all of them they might see right through me, sometimes where I know my headmaster and other DP they stand up like they, they just, they deliver it like they were meant to deliver it, they were born to deliver it. Where I’ve got to learn to be more confident and talking about, probably religion, in front of lots of people.

There were a range of responses in regards to how Marist Brothers had influenced their leadership beliefs and this was due to how much of a personal relationship they had had with them in their school settings. Some still had Marist Brothers living and or teaching on their site and for these participants the Brothers had either a very strong inspiration or were a barrier. For example:

P3: I have had a mentor in Brother […] since I arrived here. So, if I was ever unsure whether, I was really leading, understanding the charism correctly, I only had to go down the road and knock on Brothers door.

P5: The Brothers not being able to articulate the pillars doesn’t help, so even the Brothers were very dismissive. Oh you don’t need to know that, they couldn’t articulate what it meant, yeah it’s just how they live rather than actually forming thoughts about it and that’s probably the same across the country. Very critical of every bit of interpretation.

In conclusion, all participants reported being personally influenced by their faith, the story of St Marcellin Champagnat and the Marist pillars as a foundation of their leadership beliefs. There was no separation of secular and faith leadership practices and styles. They were intertwined and still growing regardless of age and experience. Evidence from the interviews showed that the Marist Brothers values were lived and role modelled by the leaders.
Further growth of the Marist Brothers charism

Despite the decline of the Marist Brothers having a teaching presence in most of the secondary schools in their tradition, participants were of the view that they still very much have an influence and sway over the continuing growth of the charism within schools. For example:

P1: I never think about them as classroom teachers, I think about them as people who really cared about students and I think about them more as coaches and mentors and taking kids on outdoor tramps, coaching football teams, cricket teams, but they were primarily teachers, but I don’t think about them in their teaching role, I think about what they did and how they served us.

L2: So those are the two that are actually in the school virtually all the time so everyone knows what a Marist Brother is, because we’ve seen these guys and they just happen to be people, especially Brother […] who are very, very good at getting alongside kids, and you’ll always find them in the yard at lunchtime, alongside the kids, talking to them, just being there and being that presence.

L4: I first came here and I knew nothing about him and I asked Brother […] what’s that statue out there in the quad and the next day he came back to me with a book.

Only two interviewees felt the charism could continue to grow and develop without the presence of the Marist Brothers and were already open to and relishing this challenge. For example:

P3: But are you proud of what comes through the gate and are you confident that what goes out of the gate at the end of the day actually has gained experience of knowing and loving Jesus or of being confident in his skin, being confident to stand up to all sorts of situations now and in the future, in society where they will have a moral, Marist conscience and be able to make the right decisions and then right down to the basics, are they going
to be a good husband and father, because it's highly unlikely they are going to be a Marist Brother. Are they going to be a good person in the community? What are they going to give? Are they going to have Marist hearts?

P7: It’s a dynamic thing, it’s actually an evolving tradition, it’s not about upholding it, but how are you contributing to this stream, this big river which the Marist Brothers tradition, how are you contributing to this stream? Not upholding it, upholding it is dead in the water, so, how am I evolving, how does this school, how does myself, how does the staff contribute to the gifts of charism? If it doesn’t change it dies. Now implicit in your statement there is the word, the charism will die out because it is held by the Brothers who are dying. Actually no, the charism of the Brothers has to be set free. Not to be upheld but to be changed, to be moved around, to find new expressions.

In conclusion, there were mixed views on how the Marist Brothers charism can and should further grow within the leader’s further formation of their leadership beliefs. Some participants are relying on the presence of the Marist Brothers within their school communities to light the way forward while a few are planning for a future when they are all gone, where the charism can continue to grow, evolve and transform.

Key Findings

It is still too early to surmise the future of the charism being upheld or continuing to grow in Marist Brothers secondary schools after there are no more Brothers left as a physical and intellectual presence. The evidence from the interviews would show us that some leaders rely very heavily on the fact that they still have Brothers living onsite, nearby or teaching in the schools and that their sense of identity may leave with them. It is a fact that one day soon there will be no Marist Brothers left in New Zealand. Some leaders are already planning for this through looking at new ways to grow the charism and they have an innate understanding that the charism
is in fact not something that needs to be upheld up on a pedestal but charism is something that is always changing and leaders must grow alongside and with it.

Implementing the Marist Brothers charism authentically

Environmental and physical leadership practices

Most leaders emphasised the need for physical and environmental symbols, statues and pictures around their schools to promote the charism. There was a need for all members of the community to see physically the schools point of difference as opposed to a state school or a Catholic school with a different charism. There was a strong belief that these physical and environmental visuals would reinforce understanding and commitment to the charism by all members of their school community and almost all wanted to see further improvements and growth in this area. For example:

P1: I’ve got great ideas to do it better in terms of having visible or physical symbols around the school

L2: If you look out, down the other end of our school we have a brand new block and it’s called the Marist Block. Out in front of it there is actually a big statue of Marcellin Champagnat. Over the top of that, there is a whole memorial arch that’s actually been put there and it’s got plaques underneath it of when the Marist Brothers came onto this site.

P5: See some of the practical things we have done is we’ve renamed all of our buildings, Marist names like Fouviere, Hermitage, Montagne, La Valla and Benedict.

These visual touchstones around each of the participants’ schools were a priority for most and they were always looking for new ways to improve in this area and were in the future plans for building development. Alongside these physical representations then grew the environmental actions from staff and students to
highlight the charism further. This is done through assemblies, student organisation into house and tutor groups and other celebrations. For example:

**P1:** But currently what we do is we, within our structures, we have four houses and one of our houses is called Champagnat and when we have our assemblies, each of the four houses has a term leading the assembly, so when Champagnat, when it’s their turn to lead the assembly, they will talk to the school about Marcellin Champagnat and how significant he is, so that’s important.

**P5:** And then we also get our prefects when they go on prefect camp to also define what the pillars mean and then we come and do the five and then come and focus on the year and what does it mean and how are we going to show it in action and then they come up with their actions for the year.

**L6:** The Masses, the assemblies, they all have very much the Catholic tradition and the Marist tradition in that, that’s partly why I deliver assembly now because that’s to ensure the charism is very much to the front.

**P7:** Well I have a gathering each day, assembly each day, beginning of the day. Very traditional Marist tradition. Gather, pray, give the orders for the day, get out and teach, simple. Gather, so we gather as a school every morning, 8.41. Come in in silence, sit down, say a prayer, we have the Gospel, we have a little reading, a homily from the boss, head boy says some words, and DP’s, it’s all in a space of a quarter of an hour, now, that’s a very Marist thing because it’s saying we are all in this together.

In conclusion, the physical and environmental visuals and actions were seen as important leadership practices in keeping the Marist charism alive and known in schools. All leaders clearly articulated their role and responsibility in leading this and recognised that for the charism to be alive and known all of the community needed to participate in and be present in the development of these processes. Having the physical and environmental hallmarks around the school enables
school culture in a Marist way to be spread by those who have been there a while and learnt by any new comers. This continuity of practice was evident in all participants’ leadership practice and something they saw as caring for and nurturing for the future not to own it for themselves for a short period of time.

**Social and political leadership practices**

Participant’s responses demonstrated a deep personal conviction that their leadership was pivotal to how the school community engaged in and helped to keep the Marist Brothers charism alive and growing in the educational institutions. They recognised that they lead but that it takes the understanding and commitment of all of the people involved for the spirit and culture of the school to continue to be learnt, transmitted and uplifted. Many of the leaders saw professional development practices for staff as being political leadership practices that enhanced the building up of knowledge of the Marist Brothers Charism. For example:

*L2: …..have all been on the Way of Marcellin courses up in Auckland. We send usually one to two teachers every year for the last 15 years…….So it comes from the top down and there is a whole group of people who have now been through the course, probably 10, 12 people in the school. But we can’t rest on our laurels because we have five, six, seven who have actually moved on.*

*L4: Well every year I go along to Longbay and do a little presentation to the people there. And the Marist Institute has been wonderful to me, they’ve sent me to Fiji, to Sydney and to Melbourne, I’ve been to Melbourne, Sydney several times to attend conferences there. The last one of any note was Footsteps 2.*

The current professional development courses were praised by most of the leaders for being essential mechanisms for new and existing staff to deepen their understanding of the Marist Brothers charism but a need for a more visionary and future focused direction was also evident. For example:
P3: We’ve got to broaden our minds. We’ve got to open our minds up to the realms of what’s possible. If we settle for what we think is appropriate today, it will get worn, outdated and redundant. We’ve actually got to think how does the context make Jesus known and loved work now, in 2025, in 2030, 35? So we have to be visionary and smart, rather than just accepting, just keep trundling out because we have to be very, very careful that we don’t allow institutionalised people to guide us, influence us and strangle us all in the same way.

P7: From the Marist Brothers point of view, the charism, they are so busy locking it up and putting on padlocks and trying to put words around it, they’ve actually forgot about transforming it…..The moment the charism is liberated you will find new expressions of the charism and those new expressions are the new wine that goes into old wine skins.

Most participants also identified the importance of pastoral activities and actions from students as being the key social leadership practices that embedded the Marist Brothers charism within the schools. It was important that students took on leadership roles and furthered their own understanding to widen the knowledge of the whole school body. This was often guided by senior leaders and staff but it was the emphasis on a holistic education in these schools that sought to deepen the influence the Marist Brothers charism had on students so they would take these teachings on into their future lives. For example:

P3: This for our students is their parish community. We have to make it vibrant but most importantly we have to make it convincing. Adolescent New Zealanders are very transient and if you are not authentic, you will lose them.

P5: I think that if you were to talk to our kids they would tell you that the two most important things to them are family spirit and simplicity and you can see it in action in the kids, our kids are so humble and very much a family looking after each other…..They’ll organise rosary in Mary’s months.
L8: They are genuinely good students. They love their families, they love their school, they love God…..You know, we had a group go for a run the other day and this lady was mowing her lawns and one of them just jumped the fence and said sorry Sir, I'll be late and went and mowed her lawns. You couldn't ask and you can't teach that. That is just genuinely what they do.

In conclusion, for the Marist Brothers charism to be implemented authentically in secondary schools, firstly there needs to be a physical presence on site so that the environment feels and looks different from other schools, this serves as the foundation for any new arrivals. Secondly, there needs to be an honest and academic knowledge of the charism being expressed by leaders and staff constantly and this needs to be supported by solid professional development and the continuing transformation and vision into the future. And lastly this must be transmitted by students in a genuine way that follows them into adulthood.

**Key findings**

Leaders expressed a strong need for physical symbols and traditions that keep the schools culture alive. It was through the building of these things that most saw as being the most important way to inform students of the charism which then leads to forming their own understanding. The ultimate goal once students had left school and were embarking out into their own journeys was for their faith in Jesus Christ to be continually transformed using the charism as a guide. No leader spoke of the school curriculum or the subjects taught as being a conduit to this faith formation. Academic excellence was seen as being important but was not the most important part of their schools mission. The mission voiced by St Marcellin Champagnat to make Jesus Christ loved and known.
Challenges and barriers to the implementation

The changing charism dynamic

All leaders had experienced barriers and challenges to the implementation of the Marist Brothers charism in their schools. Many expressed the fact that there is no rulebook to follow and all relied in some way on the past traditions and the influence the teaching Brothers had in their schools. There was tension between upholding and maintaining the Marist Brothers charism and developing new forms of understanding and transmission. Some leaders felt it is the Marist Brothers themselves that schools need as a presence and guide to the implementation of the charism in their schools and without them holding on to this charism would be a greater challenge. For example:

P1: For some time, there had been no Brothers here.....So having the presence of the Brothers is really important.

L2: Probably the main barrier was that for a number of years the Marist Brothers were very thin on the ground.

L6: But a lot of it is just over the years of working alongside people like Brother [...] who you know, live it all the time and have lived it for a long time. The fact that the Brothers used to be very much in the schools so that, you know, that constant example.

Some leaders expressed the reality of the fact that eventually there will be no Marist Brothers left in schools or with a connection to the schools any longer but did not see their lack of presence as a barrier. It is a collective responsibility to further grow and transmit the charism in their schools and this will continue to be a challenge and it is a great responsibility as a leader to bring others along with them on the journey. For example:

P5: The pillars weren’t really articulated by the Brother’s. So we’ve had to define them for ourselves and each year we go back and look at them and
say what else does this mean, what does this mean for staff, what does it mean for students, for the community.

P3: Challenges always come from people…..people who don’t really understand the day to day job of a principal leading a Catholic school, of the DRS leading a Catholic school, of the staff, so importantly, leading their classes in a Catholic school, tagged teachers leading a Catholic school. People get in the way of common sense, rationale and the obvious factors that strengthen our charism and strengthen our underpinning values, which we can call pillars.

P7: So the barriers I would have developed in my style would be barriers of people, they knock you out of shape, a school community is a very, very empowered community, they want your pound of flesh, that whole accountability. I always believed in accountability but I never saw it in those lines. I saw it in terms of you have to do your best for the people you serve.

In conclusion, the changing charism dynamic as expressed by the participant’s is clearly reliant on the people within the school community and does not necessarily need to be led by the surviving Marist Brothers. Their influence is strong in most of the participant’s schools but leaders value the contributions of all of their staff and community members in upholding and transmitting the Marist Brothers charism. People therefore in these schools are its greatest gift and its greatest challenge.

**Restriction of resources**

A barrier that was common to most of the interviewees was the lack of resourcing to implement the full vision for the charism within their schools. This included the costs associated on sending all staff members to the professional development courses available in both Auckland and Australia, in making the charism more visible environmentally and in producing curriculum materials. Many of the
participants felt the charism could grow more fully if it was more visible in these ways. For example:

P1: Each year I have tried to send two staff to the Champagnat in the Pacific course but I didn’t this year because the two staff I wanted to send couldn’t make it for different reasons but next year we are going to continue with that but I think again that commitment shows that you know, we want all of our staff go through that programme to have a deep understanding of what the Marist charisms are.

P5: Not enough money….and then we’ve got badges all over the school so with our pillars and they’re translated into Maori as well but that was all expensive.

L6: Sometimes I think, there is a financial barrier at times too, like we’ve had a lot of work to try to get four kids to Australia these holidays but they are going.

In conclusion, the restriction of resources is a barrier and challenge for almost every school in New Zealand, special character secondary schools with a charism to uphold however have the added pressure of trying to fund staff professional development and the maintenance and production of physical signs and symbols. For these leaders interviewed it was important that the Marist Brothers charism was felt and seen by all members of the community when they arrive on the premises and this could be an expensive task.

**Combatting challenges**

While most leaders were able to articulate the many barriers and challenges they face day to day as leaders in Marist Brother tradition secondary schools all were positive and excited about the future of their institutions. Many had projects in place or beginning that were finding new ways to promote the charism without spending
money and engaging the people within their schools as the resources to implement the charism. For example:

L2: When they come back from the Way of Marcellin Champagnat experiences…..we need to properly develop a stronger system to actually say, ok you’ve been on that, these are our expectations of you to go further forward and to do other things. We’ve tried to get them to actually have a number of lay Marist meetings and that has happened. The last two or three that we sent away, they sort of had social events here where we have had the Marist Brothers come in and they’ve actually talked about their experiences and feedback to the whole group of people who have been away as Marist’s. But that’s not closed and exclusive, anyone else who wants to come along and hear about it is always welcome and they do.

L4: I don’t think any barrier is ever insurmountable. I think increased information has helped people to know more about the nature of behaviour and more about St Marcellin, he’s just as alive now as he was perhaps when I first came here.

P5: So, the barriers were implementing the pillars….I don’t really think there were barriers, it was more probably about bringing them to life and everyone getting the same understanding of them, so you know in assembly we talk about the pillars a lot, try and relate things back to that.

L6: I don’t think any are insurmountable, we’ve just got to work harder I think….so yeah, just other people, hard work, kids, getting the kids involved, it helps.

In conclusion, there were a range of challenges and barriers in implementing the charism across the participants in schools that were similar, time, money and resourcing being common threads. No leader thought any barrier was insurmountable however and many already had strategies in place to combat these challenges and all saw the people within their organisation as their greatest asset in this.
Key Findings

The ideas and opinions put forth in these interviews around challenges and barriers were surprisingly optimistic. There is a sense that they are all in this together within their schools and if you don’t focus too much on the lack of financial resourcing there are people within these secondary schools who can be called on to contribute in other ways. All leaders would like to see more resourcing for their schools so that the charism can be seen to be more obvious and understood by all who walk in the gate but they are accepting of what is possible. This attitude does not stop them from wanting more and many have plans for improvement going forward and this will take time. They are confident in what they are doing is based on many years of good practice and there are no urgent needs.

Consolidated key findings

Marist Brothers secondary schools are on the cusp of irreversible change with the decline of the Marist Brothers in New Zealand. Generations of wisdom, experience and the physical presence of the brothers will soon be gone. Leaders in these schools have the challenge of upholding and growing the charism. They will tasked with finding that fine balance between preserving tradition and being open to the Holy Spirit in moving with the times and nurturing the charism in how it may change and continue to grow in the future. Ongoing professional development run by lay people that focusses on St Marcellin Champagnat’s key mission to make Jesus Christ loved and known for young people is essential to the continued growth of the charism. Leaders will need to be humble and open to the learning and training that is available to them and the danger will be in ignoring these opportunities and managing their schools in isolation.
Summary

This chapter has presented the data collected through face to face semi structured interviews about leaders beliefs, values and experiences in regards to leading in a Marist Brothers tradition secondary school. There were four main themes that emerged from the data in these interviews and these were: Formation of personal faith beliefs; Formation of personal leadership beliefs; Implementing the Marist Brothers charism authentically; Challenges and barriers to the implementation. The next chapter will explore these themes in more detail and link them to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings and new understandings outlined in Chapter Four in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two on leading in a Marist Brothers tradition secondary school. This is evidenced in the ways middle and senior leaders have experienced, understood and implemented the charism of their founder, St Marcellin Champagnat, in the decisions made about the direction in which they lead their schools.

The research questions for this study were to investigate:

1. What are the understandings of leaders in Marist Brothers secondary schools of the charism?
2. In what ways is this commitment implemented by leaders in Marist Brothers secondary schools?
3. What challenges are experienced in Marist Brothers secondary schools in implementing the charism?

Through the synthesis of writing up and discussing these new findings against a background of theory, implications for practice became clear so that conclusions are drawn from this process and recommendations put forward for interested audiences. The findings of this investigation are discussed under three main headings: Faith formation and understandings of leaders; Authentic implementation of the Marist Brothers charism by leaders; Challenges and barriers in implementing the Marist Brothers charism. This chapter will conclude with a commentary on the conclusions and recommendations from this research.
Faith formation and understandings of leaders

The first issue for leaders in Marist Brothers secondary schools is how their own faith was formed to develop their understanding of the charism and the findings of my study show that this begins for all participants with the founder of the Marist Brothers teaching order, St Marcellin Champagnat, and his aim of providing an education for the ‘good of society’. Consigli (2009) describes Champagnat’s initial mission as to provide Christian education to poor people in the rural areas and the Marist Brothers have continued this mission for 200 years in a way that is still relevant for these schools today. This has mostly been achieved in a consistent form since the early 19th century, beginning in France and spreading around the world. The only significant change in schools has been in the move from religious Marist brothers teaching and leading in these schools to almost all teachers now being Lay Catholics or non-Catholics with no Marist Brothers left at all in Catholic secondary schools in New Zealand as middle or senior leaders. Bellefiore (2014) quotes the 1993 General Chapter by the Superior General of Marist Brothers when they decreed that lay people were to be welcomed and encouraged to work closely with the Brothers and were thanked for their efforts in contributing to the Marist works in education.

Senior and middle leaders in this study, all of whom are lay Catholics, recognise that knowing and understanding the founding story of St Marcellin Champagnat is essential to the formation of their leadership styles. Some of the participating leaders described their visits to the birthplace of St Marcellin Champagnat at L'Hermitage and L’Valla as having a significant impact on their understanding and formation. They also perceived that their faith formation and interpretation had developed significantly from their initial induction as new leaders to their position as experienced leaders today.

These recognitions align with the literature on the historical perspective and ethos of the Marist Brothers tradition showing that in the two centuries since St Marcellin
began his work, a tradition and a culture have grown up reflecting a distinctive educational style that is essentially no different from what it was at its foundation. This is summed up well by Grace (2010) who says the primary objective of Marist education is evangelisation, ‘to make Jesus Christ known and loved’. A quote that many of the leaders expressed as essential to their own leadership styles and ethos.

Whilst not all the leaders interviewed could profess an experience of embarking on a journey to Champagnat’s homeland they found other ways to form their own understandings through professional development and some were previous pupils themselves of Marist Brothers secondary schools so saw that experience as also having an influence on their leadership. Some leaders expressed the impact Marist Brothers had on them as young students and it was their dedication to the values of service, generosity, hard work and simplicity that they experienced first-hand. These experiences led these leaders to also value these qualities and strive to role model them in their own schools.

It can be inferred from the literature and the participants’ perceptions that knowing the background story of St Marcellin Champagnat is essential to increase understanding of the charism through the leaders own personal experience, commitment and participation in professional development courses or pilgrimages, and this contributed to being an effective and authentic leader in a Marist Brothers secondary school. With all leaders and most teachers in Catholic schools now being Lay Catholics, it is their mission to show spiritual leadership in a servant orientated way by evangelising staff and students and Crowe (1998) asserts this by saying there is only spiritual leadership, all else is management. In a Marist Brothers tradition school this means leaders must uphold Marcellin Champagnat’s original aim for education in that it must be for the ‘good of society’. It is not enough just to know the story but the leaders in my study recognised they must walk the talk and in Champagnat’s case it is to walk in his footsteps.
In the findings of my research, all leaders expressed a deep commitment to being Marist, not just a Catholic with a commitment to the Marist charism. One participant referred to himself as a “Marist person” indicating the strength of this commitment.

I wonder if my research had delved deeper and interviewed recently employed teachers in these schools whether a more universal commitment to Catholic Gospel values would be evident without a charismatic understanding or following. All Catholic schools are based on the Gospel values of Jesus Christ and “in providing a Catholic education the Marist school seeks to integrate faith, life and culture (Marist Brothers, 2017 p. 1). Values are identified in the life of Jesus Christ as told in the Gospels and through reflection of the Catholic Church’s scripture and tradition. In the Marist Brothers tradition these values are interpreted and envisioned through the Marist Pillars. The pillars of the Marist charism provide a framework to live out the values of Jesus Christ and have their basis in the elements of Marist spirituality. Green (2014) warns that for some charism has come to mean little more than a distinctive pedagogical style that is for some a cult-like attachment to a particular founder or foundress. For those emerging leaders coming through without a Marist education of their own or professional development in the Marist Brothers tradition the charism may not be perceived or seen as significant to the wider teachings of the Catholic Church and the Marist distinctive style of leadership may disappear.

The impact of the teaching Brothers on the leaders as a significant presence in their schools varied significantly in my research findings with some leaders professing their pivotal existence as being essential to the continuation and growth of the charism in their schools. Other leaders expressed their presence as a thing of the past and no longer necessary to the continual transmission of the charism in their schools.
Despite the differing views expressed by the participants in my research findings about the importance of a Marist Brothers presence continuing in these schools it is a fact that within the next 20 years none will remain. The challenge therefore for leaders could be to find other ways to understand the charism, look for authentic Lay Marist mentors and find new ways to transmit and transform the Marist charism within their communities. McMahon (1988) says Marcellin encouraged the Brothers to maintain in themselves a great spirit of poverty and detachment. Many people including the Brothers, those educated by the Brothers and those seeing themselves as Marist have had a part in carrying on the tradition in their own lives and within education. Turu (2014) states that each generation of Marist’s has done its best to keep the flame of Champagnat’s charism alive as a gift for the Church and the world until the present day. It is a heritage rich with values, ways of living and a tradition that will be continued to be passed down.

The findings of my study suggest that the way in which leaders have formed their personal faith beliefs is complimentary to the formation of their leadership styles. Leadership therefore in Marist Brothers tradition schools needs to be charismatic, visionary and empowering to carry through Champagnat’s original aim through so much change in contemporary times. This is often referred to in the literature as transformational leadership (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999). The leaders who are already looking to a future without Marist Brothers have a visionary approach. They are looking to the future and do not see the charism as something that is static and to be preserved. They recognize the charism as always evolving and changing to meet the current needs of the people in the schools and the community. The charism is fluid and ever changing.

Champagnat Marists District of the Pacific, through Champagnat Partnership coordinator Daniel Dungey, runs several faith formation courses for students and teachers in different venues throughout the country today. This position was established in 2008 and was at first facilitated by the late Alan Parker to support
Marist founded schools across New Zealand and the Pacific to reclaim or learn more about their charism. Its original goal was to employ a lay Marist leader to facilitate partnership between Lay Marist’s and the Marist Brothers and promote the vocation of Lay Champagnat Marists. Current staff programmes include an induction course for teachers new to a Marist Brothers college and a three day live in programme exploring Marist charism, identity, pedagogy and spirituality for teachers. As new and emerging leaders may not have a Marist educational background, mentorship from Marist Brothers or extensive professional development, a next step in focus could be for a new middle and senior leaders’ course in leading the charism in their schools.

From my findings, I conclude that all leaders found it imperative to know the founding story of St. Marcellin Champagnat and strive to live out the Marist charism’s values in their personal leadership styles. This was consistent with the literature on the concept, history and ethos of the Marist Brothers in secondary schools that to know this story is to Make Jesus known and loved’. A key implication of this findings is that further professional development in how to lead in a Marist Brothers school in the way of Champagnat should be investigated and developed in New Zealand.

**Authentic implementation of the Marist Brothers charism by leaders**

The findings of my study reveal that physical and environmental aspects and symbols in schools were identified by half of the leaders interviewed as being important in upholding and identifying the Marist Brothers charism in their schools. They want the symbols of the charism like the pillars and statues of St. Marcellin Champagnat to be visible upon entry and throughout their institutions. This shows newcomers and those familiar to the charism that this is a place of God and it is upheld and present within their walls. Some were influenced by the Marist Brothers schools overseas and in Australia that have buildings, stain glassed windows and statues much older than anything found in New Zealand.
None of the literature I studied commented on this feature of Catholic schools in decorating their schools in signs, statues, pictures or symbols of having any impact and in fact Bellefiore (2014) stresses that the Lay Marist Leader should exhibit compassion and develop good school initiatives to enhance inclusivity and educate in and for solidarity, reaching out to the marginalised and the religiously illiterate youth. It is what you do and how you lead that is important not icons of what it means to be Catholic and Marist but to actually walk the talk in action.

Therefore, the main key idea that arose about the authentic leadership implementation of the Marist Brothers charism that stands out in my findings and is supported by the literature is the participants deep personal conviction that their leadership style directly impacted on whether their educational institution was authentically Marist. This was agreed to by all leaders in my study as having an impact of the faith formation of their students as Catholics in a distinctively Marist way. D'Orsa (2013) states that the many thousands of followers who have followed St Marcellin Champagnat's have created ‘Marist education’ and continue to create it. Some of the leaders emphasized the growth and transformation of the charism as being important going forward and say it is not about preserving it. It was expressed that the Marist Brothers themselves have locked up the charism and put words around it and that there is a danger in leaders following their lead. It was seen as much more important to find new and more modern expressions of the charism and reinvigorate past models.

To adapt in such a wide changing educational environment school leaders must also adjust to new ways of doing things and increase their commitment to the organisation’s goals and objectives and in a Catholic school. McMahon (1999) maintains this transformation is the work of the Holy Spirit and the contemporary leader is the servant of this process. In contrast, some leaders are concerned about the decline of the presence of Marist Brothers in secondary schools and see them as paramount to upholding the charism in their schools. The importance of...
the Marist Brothers being present in schools was highlighted by several of the participants in terms of spiritual leadership being visible. They have identified this lack of their presence as being a key reason for the charism to not be as visible as it could be.

The literature supports to some extent that with the decline in the Marist Brothers teaching in the secondary schools there has been a decline in meeting the educational aim of Champagnat to provide education and spirituality to the poor. Catholic schools of necessity must now charge attendance dues, and do so legally under the provisions of the Integration Act of 1975. Treston (1997) also asserts that the decline of religious orders teaching in Catholic schools also contributed to this decline as teaching salaries were minimal or non-existent. Without this agreement, many Catholic schools would have ceased to exist. There is also literature and I believe in the future there will be more literature that will outline the current realities in schools staffed by Lay Catholics. Catholic schools in general have changed significantly since 1975. Treston (2017) emphasises these changes further by stating that a contemporary Catholic school is vastly different from a Catholic school 50 years ago in such features as Catholic identity, technology, curriculum, religiosity, government, accountability, ethnic composition and levels of social cohesion and now what constitutes an authentic Catholic school is a critical question.

All of the leaders expressed their leadership style in relation to their faith. For them the secular aspects of leadership and their faith was intertwined. McMahon (1999) describes this style as transformational leadership and states that these Catholic leaders are guided by the Holy Spirit in their work as servants first. It is the leaders personal leadership style that can influence how much a school is “Marist” in that students’ commitment to Christian and Marist values is evident and whether they are given opportunities for social action. Bellefiore (2014) suggests the lay Marist Leader should also exhibit compassion and develop good school initiatives to enhance inclusivity and educate in and for solidarity, reaching out to the
marginalised and the religiously illiterate youth, just as Marcellin did in France. Leaders have many opportunities in place in their schools to facilitate solidarity programmes within schools and across the Pacific. For example leading school wide assemblies, attending prefect camps, leading liturgies and visiting Pacific Marist schools. Champagnat Marists District of the Pacific, led by Daniel Dungey also runs an annual Marist Youth Leadership camp for senior leaders in Marist Brothers tradition schools in New Zealand that is mostly well attended. It is a challenge for leaders to provide what other schools would call “extra-curricula” activities within the curriculum but for a Marist Brothers school this is all part of what is a holistic education, championed originally by their founder, St Marcellin Champagnat. Green (2014) describes this challenge for leadership in the Australian context as leaders needing to be agents of evangelisation, the depth of spirituality in those who teach and work in these schools and the degree of their ecclesial involvement. A strongly supported finding in my study was the belief that leading from the front is a personal leadership conviction for all leaders interviewed. However, as this was a small scale investigation the next research step could be to survey the commitment of all leaders in Marist Brothers tradition schools and to explore a Marist Leaders network that meets regularly to advocate for Champagnat's original aim of providing education that is ‘good for society’, especially the marginalised. In today's society this means providing an excellent education with all of the up to date resourcing available despite the schools decile or position in socio-economic status. Schools could come together to serve all of their students equally in Marcellin’s spirit and share resources.

It is important that students experience the Marist Brothers charism through honest and academic learning so that it can be transmitted by them as adults into the future. An implication for leaders today from these findings is that an honest commitment to role modelling the Marist Pillars through the Catholic Gospel values and providing real opportunities to be involved in and experience Marist solidarity and social action programmes that reach out to young people who are less fortunate. This is prioritised by leaders that have a personal leadership style that
is developed around the significance of the Marist Brothers charism above management tasks.

**Challenges and barriers**

Challenges and barriers identified by the leaders included not having Marist Brothers as a teaching presence in schools anymore, people working within the institutions, community needs, restriction of resources and lack of finance. The findings from this study confirm the experiences of leaders in relation to challenges and barriers in implementing the Marist Brothers charism as being mostly issues that can be overcome. As already mentioned for some leaders the decline of the presence of Marist Brothers in schools is an impending concern that is not going to resolve itself with more young Brothers joining the teaching order.

For other leaders interviewed this is a barrier that has already been accepted and new ideas and ways of going forward are being articulated and actioned.

It has become the vocation and responsibility of the Marist Lay teacher to uphold, further strengthen and invigorate the schools. Engebretson (2014) says far fewer are prepared to create and animate the ethos instead of just supporting it. A very real challenge for leaders today in Marist Brothers secondary schools is to attract and nurture teachers who are dedicated to the Marist story and are willing to upskill themselves in this mission as teachers and as people. 40% of all teaching staff in Catholic secondary schools must be Catholic, all teachers must agree to support the schools ethos but there is no real concrete mechanism for ensuring staff make an actual commitment to the Marist mission or any other charism.

A continuing challenge that has also emerged in connection to recruiting authentic Marist teaching staff is the growing changes in society in relation to religion. New Zealand society is becoming increasingly secular and a risk for Catholic schools
today is that parents are no longer enrolling their children for the “Marist values” or religious education. Fuller and Johnson (2013) describe this tension as the risk of Catholic schools identity being sidelined in the pursuit of academic excellence. This is a very real barrier for leaders in Marist Brothers secondary schools today as not only is the recruitment of committed Catholic teachers a challenge but also the recruitment of committed Catholic families in enrolling their students. Green (2014) states that one of the biggest challenges facing Catholic schools today is that emerging middle and senior leaders in our schools have grown up in families that have not been active in practicing their faith in the traditional sense. Their world is secularist, pluralist and relativist. The same can now be safely said of the children attending the schools.

The second issue that was seen as a barrier to implementing the Marist Brothers charism is the restriction of resources. There was pressure evident in the interviews with most of the leaders that the added burden of trying to fund staff professional development and the maintenance and production of physical signs and symbols was a challenge. For these principals and leaders interviewed it was important that the Marist Brothers charism was felt and seen by all members of the community when they arrive on the premises and this could be an expensive task.

For most leaders however a more pressing financial concern was the cost of professional development opportunities for both teachers and students and the outcome would be that choices would need to be made and attendance restricted. For example, Marcellin’s original dream was to provide an education for the rural poor. In our changing society it is now the urban poor that are most at risk and where most of these schools reside, no longer with boarding hostels for rural students. McCloskey (2011) says research since the 1980’s has shown that Catholic schools do a stellar job of educating the urban poor. Catholic schools up until 1975 were funded through direct donations and the teaching Priests, Brothers and Nuns were not paid. It can be argued that Catholic schools are better
resourced today through the state system but they need to rely on Catholic schools boards and parent donations to fund the upkeep and construction of their buildings. This puts them on the back foot financially but overall they are achieving better than their state counterparts and in some places are achieving better than their private counterparts. In Auckland, 75.6 per cent of students leaving Catholic schools attained University Entrance in 2013, as opposed to 52.5 per cent from state schools. (NZQA statistics).

Leaders perceived that there were a range of challenges and barriers in implementing the charism and these included people, time, money and resourcing as being common threads. No principal or leader thought any barrier was insurmountable however and many already had strategies in place to combat these challenges and all saw the people within their organisation as their greatest asset in this.

The literature did not show that the restriction of resources or finances is a barrier to implementing the Marist Brothers charism in schools as an issue, with spiritual and human capital being seen as having a much greater impact on the transmission of the charism within schools. Engebretson (2014) states that the culture and cultural witness of Catholic schools and their teachers is even more so important because it gives young people permission to inherit their Catholic culture and to be a part of its future.

Overall, the findings of this study show that the transformation of the Marist charism is allowing secondary schools to transmit their values, pillars and actions through changing times in ways that would not have been imagined by the teaching Marist Brothers of the past. Some leaders have expressed the importance of allowing the charism to transform, not preserve or uphold it, so that it will survive and continue to be a guiding light and beacon of hope for the students in their schools. No barrier or challenge is seen as insurmountable and all leaders expressed a degree of responsibility and courage in this. There are several
implications for practice that can be identified as a consequence of reflecting on these findings and considering how they are reflected in the literature. I have elaborated on these implications in the next section.

Conclusions

Sharing the Charism

The Marist Brothers charism was generally alive in schools where participants were interviewed. Knowing the founders story was seen as essential to the leadership and role modelling of middle and senior leaders. There were opportunities for the re-telling of this story in the educational institutions but there is a word of caution about not just focusing on the Marist charism so it does not breed a cult like following and Marcellins teaching “To make Jesus Christ known and loved” must always be at the forefront. This means the entire founding story must be communicated and transmitted with no omissions to suit certain purposes.

I conclude that Marist Brothers tradition schools should continue to share and retell the founding story often in many different ways to keep the charism alive and for leaders to role model this often. This can be expressed in many different ways in a school. School assemblies and prayer time could include liturgy and role play of the Marcellin story. The Principals address at these times can include references to the life and times of Marcellin and how he sought to bring young people to Jesus Christ. Special celebrations and feast days should be emphasised in the school, students wearing colours and symbols that represent the story and going out in the community to share these celebrations. Students have a legitimate role in serving Jesus Christ and their school communities by involving themselves in social justice projects that benefit the marginalized in their society and across the Pacific. There is an opportunity for senior student leaders to attend a leadership camp with students from other Marist Brothers tradition secondary schools. Leaders can support these students by encouraging them to continue sharing what they have learnt back in their schools with their whole community through showing solidarity.
and organizing events that showcase their personal commitment to being “Young Marists” and reaching out to the poor amongst them.

**Professional Development**

Teaching staff and leaders have access to solid professional development opportunities in New Zealand run by Champagnat Marists District of the Pacific and many leaders have made a commitment to sending staff on these programmes. Almost all leaders interviewed had attended these courses either here and/or in Australia. Some leaders had even travelled to the birthplace of St Marcellin Champagnat in France and this had been a pivotal moment in their lives that had strongly influenced their leadership styles. A continuing challenge for schools is to further develop the charism in their schools by having these expert teachers share this knowledge with staff and students and adopt and lead new programmes within their schools. Regular meeting times could be developed in these schools alongside pastoral and curriculum responsibilities to champion its importance. The more staff that know and love the story of Marcellin the more students will be influenced by his teachings and this will be reflected in local communities. The Marist rugby clubs around New Zealand are a good example of the charism being carried on outside of school and is an opportunity to play a sport as well as come together socially with the commonality of being influenced by the Marist charism at some point in their lives.

**Recommendations**

The conclusions of this research suggest that there are several issues that might continue to challenge leaders in Marist Brothers tradition secondary schools in New Zealand. The following recommendations are addressed to current leaders at both middle and senior leadership levels in Catholic school settings.
1. Further faith formation and professional development opportunities on the Marist charism should be investigated for senior leaders in schools.

2. Leaders should take the lead in developing formation and professional development programmes for new and existing staff members within their schools.

3. A Marist Brothers Principals network be reinvigorated and meet regularly to focus on solidarity projects across New Zealand and the Pacific which could be extended to include senior and middle leaders.

4. A sponsorship and/or scholarship programme should be developed and implemented across New Zealand to promote the attendance of Catholic students from poorer backgrounds in Marist Brothers schools.

5. Schools with Marist Brothers still present and on staff should record their legacies for future preservation and as a means to keep the story alive.
REFERENCES


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Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975


APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Information Sheet Participant

My name is Tara Quinney. I am currently enrolled in the Master of Educational Leadership and Management degree in the Education department at Unitec New Zealand and seek your help in meeting the requirements of research for a Thesis course which forms a substantial part of this degree.

The aim of my project is to investigate how leaders today in New Zealand secondary schools of the Marist Brothers tradition uphold and develop their understanding of the charism.

I request your participation in the following way:

By participating in a face to face interview in your educational setting that will be recorded and transcribed for this research document taking no more than one hour.

Neither you nor your organisation will be identified in the Thesis. The results of the research activity will not be seen by any other person in your organisation without the prior agreement of everyone involved. You are free to ask me not to use any of the information you have given, and you can, if you wish, ask to see the Thesis before it is submitted for examination.

I hope that you find this invitation to be of interest. If you have any queries about this research, you may contact my principal supervisor at Unitec New Zealand.

My supervisor is Professor Carol Cardno, phone 815-4321 ext. 8406 or email ccardno@unitec.ac.nz

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: UREC 2017-1024
This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from May 22 2017 to May 22 2018. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 8551). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix 2: Consent Form Participant

Participant Consent Form

Research Project Title: Leading the Marist Brothers tradition in New Zealand secondary schools

I have had the research project explained to me and I have read and understand the information sheet given to me.

I understand that I don't have to be part of this research project should I choose not to participate and may withdraw at any time prior to the completion of the research project.

I understand that everything I say is confidential and none of the information I give will identify me and that the only persons who will know what I have said will be the researchers and their supervisor. I also understand that all the information that I give will be stored securely on a computer at Unitec for a period of 10 years.

I understand that my discussion with the researcher will be taped and transcribed.

I understand that I can see the finished research document.

I have had time to consider everything and I give my consent to be a part of this project.

Participant Name: ........................................................................................................

Participant Signature: .................. Date: ......................

Project Researcher: .................. Date: ......................

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: UREC 2017-1024
This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from May 22 2017 to May 22 2018. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 8551). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Full name of author: Tara Lee Quinney

ORCID number (Optional): ...............................................

Full title of thesis/dissertation/research project ('the work'):
“Leading the Marist Brothers tradition in New Zealand secondary schools”

Practice Pathway: Postgraduate

Degree: Master of Educational Leadership and Management

Year of presentation: 2018

Principal Supervisor: Professor Carol Cardno

Associate Supervisor: Martin Bassett

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Signature of author: ...............................................

Date: 31/05/2018