The role of the imagination in the religious conversion of adolescents attending Catholic secondary schools

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Declaration

This thesis is my own words and no part of it has been submitted for a degree at this, or any other, University. Due acknowledgement is made to the work of others used in this thesis.
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The mission of the Catholic Church is evangelisation, the purpose of which is conversion. At a diocesan level, the mission is carried out through the agencies of family, parish and school. Every Catholic school is mandated to carry out its part in the Church’s mission through its curriculum that incorporates both Religious Education and planned catechetical experiences. This study was devised to find out some students’ perceptions of their faith, the influences that they perceive on changes to their faith, and to describe how the imagination assisted their faith development and religious conversion. Fifteen Catholic secondary school students from four schools in the Archdiocese of Perth, Western Australia were interviewed in their final year of school. Some also kept journals and some were interviewed again in the year after they left school. The data collected was analysed using methods associated with interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). Conclusions were drawn about how the imagination assists faith development and religious conversion. The findings were aligned with the Western Australian Catholic Bishops’ Mandate Letter to the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) (2009) and recommendations were made to assist the evangelisation of youth in Catholic secondary schools.
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List of abbreviations used

AG  Ad gentes divinitus. Vatican II (1965)


CSTTM  The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium Congregation for Catholic Education (1997)


FC  Familiaris consortio, Pope John Paul II (1982).


IC  Inter oecumenici [Instruction on the proper implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy] (1964).


M01  Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia 2001-2007

M09  Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia 2009-2015


The use of inclusive language in documents published by the Catholic Church is a vexed issue. Out of respect for the authors of the texts cited above, the original language has been retained. No attempt has been made to make the language gender-inclusive.