The Influence of Ecclesiastical and Community Cultures on the Development of Catholic Education in Western Australia, 1846-1890.

by

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This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Murdoch University, 2005.
I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not been previously submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

Eugene McKenna
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ABSTRACT

Historians have generally tended to represent the pioneering Catholic mission in Western Australia as an homogenous ecclesiastical entity with little cultural diversity. With a few notable exceptions the nature of the Western Australian colonial Catholic mission is portrayed as a ‘hibernised’ form of Catholicism with an Irish clergy taking care of the pastoral needs of a predominantly working class Irish Catholic constituency. This thesis challenges the traditional paradigm as restrictive, and argues that it ignores significant contextual influences and veils the wider cultural tapestry in which the Western Australian pioneering Catholic mission proceeded.

The traditional analysis of the internal dynamics of the Catholic mission implies that there was a beneficial, almost symbiotic relationship between sympathetic bishops and their ‘valiant helpers.’ Internal conflicts concerning administrative issues have been represented as little more than mere personality clashes.

The thesis takes a more critical contextual approach and argues that the manifestation of internal dissension during this period can only be fully explained by taking account of external influences rather than local conditions. These influences include both Gallican and Ultramontane ecclesiastical perspectives as well as the individual community cultures that were transported from Europe to the Perth diocese by missionary personnel.

This new perspective corrects the more traditional approach which overlooked the different ecclesiastical approaches, orientations and community cultures that were represented within the colonial Catholic mission. This expansion of the existing interpretative paradigm through which historians view the West Australian Catholic mission in general and the development of the school system in particular marks a significant shift in the existing historiography. As a consequence, scholars will in future take a more critical approach to the study of not only the Catholic education system but also the Western Australian Catholic mission in general. Rather than representing the definitive closing chapter it is intended that this work will invigorate renewed historical interest in the development of the Australian Catholic mission.
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Abbreviations

W.A.C.R.  
West Australian Catholic Record.

The Inquirer  
The Inquirer: A Western Australian Journal of Politics and Literature, and from 1855, The Inquirer and Commercial News.

Blue Book  
Blue Books compiled from official returns in the Colonial Secretary's Office.
Introduction

The history of civilisation is really the history of the gradual diffusion of certain ideas and values throughout the world. These ideas and values, capable of growth and development in any soil or air, have emerged as a world force in particular centres, and from these centres have radiated outwards in ever extending circles.¹

Historians have generally tended to represent the pioneering Catholic mission in Western Australia as an homogenous ecclesiastical entity with little cultural diversity. With a few notable exceptions the nature of the Western Australian colonial Catholic mission is portrayed as a ‘hibernised’ form of Catholicism with an Irish clergy taking care of the pastoral needs of a predominantly working class Irish Catholic constituency. This thesis challenges the traditional paradigm as restrictive, and argues that it ignores significant contextual influences and veils the wider cultural tapestry in which the Western Australian pioneering Catholic mission proceeded.

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individual community cultures that were transported from Europe to the Perth diocese by missionary personnel.

Whilst it is obligatory to incorporate the general Catholic mission in the narrative the main focus of the thesis is the emergence of the Catholic education network concurrent with the state sponsored public school system. A more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics which surrounded the nascent Catholic school system in Western Australia necessitates placing the colonial Western Australian Catholic mission in its more nuanced and broader metropolitan Catholic context. The thesis also argues that the traditional focus on local conditions and personality clashes fails to adequately account for the discernable pattern of internal disharmony that manifested within the pioneering mission between successive bishops and the members of religious foundations who were attracted to the diocese to staff and administer Catholic schools throughout the nineteenth century. In ignoring the external and internal contextual dynamics this approach impedes a comprehensive understanding of the forces that moulded and propelled the pioneering Catholic mission in Western Australia.

Historians have all too frequently understood the history of the development of elementary education in Western Australia during the colonial period as solely an arena of sectarian conflict between a militant Protestant regional administration intent on promoting the Protestant mentality of Victorian England and a beleaguered Catholic mission. Anxious to ensure that schools preserved their respective dogmatic perspectives these two forces contended for the limited educational budget available from the shallow depths of the local colonial coffers. For its part the predominantly and often exclusively Protestant administration, depending on the religious and political perspectives of the incumbent governor, was by and large intent on
distancing itself from supporting denominational, particularly Catholic, administered schools in favour of a multi denominational or mixed educational system. According to this restrictive approach utilitarianism and fear of igniting transported old world sectarian divisions amongst the settler population with a large Irish representation were at various times advanced as justifications for the official position. However, the denominational demography of the fledgling colony ensured that any public school system remained the child of the Protestant majority. In their endeavours to establish a system of elementary public schooling in the colony successive administrations looked to the Irish National School model as a suitable educational framework for adopting to Western Australian conditions. The identification of the Irish National school system as a suitable model for adoption to Western Australia at a time when the Irish Catholic hierarchy were increasingly suspicious with its operation in Ireland in turn compounded Catholic concern in the far flung Swan River colony. Accordingly, the suitability and congruency of the local system to its Irish primogenitor periodically dominated the educational debate in Western Australia. In tandem with the ongoing debate in Ireland, the status and mode of providing religious instruction in state schools became a critical issue and remained a perennial cause of concern for the Catholic clergy who declined to support the state system. In the absence of any consensus the Catholic hierarchy proceeded to establish a separate school network that nourished a particularly Catholic ethos. Moreover, these bishops, with intermittent periods of success, insisted that the Catholic school system was entitled to a pro rata allocation of state funding. This demand in particular attracted rebuke from the Protestant side. Nevertheless, a dual system of elementary schooling developed in the colony with Catholic schools receiving state support, within intermittent timeframes, depending on the incumbent Governor’s disposition.
But the mission that nourished the development of Catholic education in Western Australia was far from a mono-cultural entity and incorporated a number of, at times contrasting, ecclesiastical perspectives. The Western Australian Catholic mission was established and developed against a background of transition within the international Catholic Church. This change was a reaction to shifts in the church’s external political and social environment springing from the rising popularity of liberal ideologies laced with a strong secular orientation. Underpinned by humanistic philosophies which emphasised individual freedom as a human right and rational deduction based on empirical observation as the only legitimate hermeneutic approach, early nineteenth-century liberalism appeared to the European Catholic leadership to challenge traditional Christian beliefs in a theocentric universe as revealed in church doctrine. At a more material level, in pursuing their ambitions to unite the assortment of states which comprised the early nineteenth century Apennine peninsula nationalist ideologues, inspired by the revelation of liberal philosophies, viewed Rome’s temporal jurisdiction within the Papal States as an impediment to their political objectives and therefore a legitimate target for their military campaign.

Faced with what they legitimately perceived as an anti-Catholic onslaught from both rationalists and nationalists alike a core group of the hierarchy determined to steer the church and its constituency on a self-saving defensive course. Under the colloquial banner of Ultramontanism this reactionary Catholic disposition became the predominant universal Catholic perspective under the Papal mantle of Pope Pius IX. Under the robust guidance of a cohort of bishops this Rome-centred theology challenged, and eventually prevailed over, the already disintegrating, traditional decentralized Gallican form of church government that pertained in much of Western Europe under the patronage of the Ancien Régime. Ultramontanism subsequently
replaced nationally-orientated Catholic cultures throughout Europe and endowed the church with a politically and ideologically conservative orientation with all eyes turned to Rome. Although Ultramontanism developed regionally distinguishing characteristics, depending on the requirements of the immediate external environment, it also developed a number of generic political, pastoral and ideological hallmarks. Politically, Ultramontanes dismissed any vestiges of national church identity in favour of a hierarchical Rome-centred ecclesiastical structure of church government with the Pope at its apex. Rank and file clergy and laity were strictly subject to the authority of the diocesan bishop who in turn was answerable to the metropolitan with ultimate appellate jurisdiction based in Rome. In advancing its tendency toward uniformity, it shepherded spiritual practice toward priestly-mediated, church-centred ritual. This ritual in turn took on all the trappings and splendour of Roman practice as part of a great political and ecclesiastical militancy by Ultramontane Catholics.

As Ultramontanism gained momentum throughout the metropolitan dioceses state-sponsored education became a particular site for its ideological focus. The Ultramontane perspective interpreted initiatives by the liberal state to establish and administer public schools as an attempt to secularise education and little more than a manifestation of the historical struggle by the civic authority to compromise the power of the church. Accordingly, the metropolitan hierarchy opposed state schooling on the grounds that it promoted secular studies and relegated religious instruction to mere subject status. Insisting that religious instruction formed the bedrock of Christian education the hierarchy insisted that the Catholic Church maintain responsibility for the education of its adherents. Furthermore, diocesan bishops, based on the premise that their schools alleviated the cost of public education, demanded that the state bear a pro rata share of the annual costs of maintaining the Catholic
school system. Heavily reliant on missionary clergy from metropolitan dioceses Ultramontanism was transported to and became embedded in the Australian Catholic mission during the nineteenth century. In particular, throughout the latter decades of the nineteenth century the Irish Catholic Church, itself undergoing its own Ultramontanist revolution, rapidly became the predominant nursery for the Australian Catholic mission's workforce.

The rise of Ultramontanism in Ireland became historically associated with the tenure of Paul Cullen (1850-1878) as Papal Legate, Archbishop and subsequently Cardinal. Subsequent to his translation from Rome Cullen stamped an Ultramontane seal on the spirit, practice and private and public identity of Irish Catholicism. which under the influence of a more traditional episcopate had previously been predominantly Gallican in outlook. But in Ireland, as elsewhere in Europe, this transition was neither immediate nor without opposition. Internal tensions periodically manifested within the Irish Catholic Church during the initial transition period particularly between diocesan administrations and religious communities anxious to defend their administrative autonomy against the expanding jurisdiction of individual bishops. Concurrently external tensions between the church and state manifested when the Irish hierarchy, intent on protecting the rising generation against the taint of secular liberalism associated with state schools, emulated the ideological standpoint of their Ultramontane brethren in Europe and insisted on their prerogative to supervise the education of Catholic children. In pursuing this claim they gradually succeeded in transforming the confessionally-mixed Irish National School system into a de facto denominational elementary school network.

Transported to the Australian colonies by Irish missionary clergy this Irish Ultramontanism with its suspicions of state education was to have significant
outcomes for the development of elementary education in Australia. Furthermore, the adoption to the Australian colonies of the Irish national state sponsored school system as a suitable model of public education did little to relieve suspicions of state schooling amongst the expatriate Catholic missionary force. In Western Australia the Catholic mission’s ultimate refusal to co-operate with state-run schooling, particularly in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, was an outcome of the colonial triumph of Ultramontanism which reigned supreme under Bishop Gibney. This mirrored the European and Irish agenda of the Ultramontane church which Gibney was formed in. But as this thesis will demonstrate Ultramontane opposition to state schooling was not the first or only educational approach articulated within the pioneering Catholic mission.

Departing from the more traditional ‘homogenous missionary church’ historical approach, this work will identify the divergent and often competing ecclesiastical cultures that internally prevailed on the Catholic education system within the Western Australian Catholic mission during the colonial period: the period under review. In doing so the study will expand the historical paradigm through which the history of the development of public education in general and Catholic education in particular is viewed.

Given these perspectives two central themes will emerge that far from springing from a homogenous identity the Catholic school system that emerged in Western Australia was the product of a number of ecclesiastical cultures. Accordingly the thesis will argue that, far from local, the forces that pioneered and established the Western Australian Catholic school system represented an amalgam of ecclesiastical trends within the contemporary Catholic Church. Furthermore, the thesis will show that the internal tensions that periodically manifested within the West Australian
Catholic mission were also connected to the interplay of these external forces. Only by recognising and incorporating these international influences can a comprehensive debate on the historical development of public education in Western Australia be achieved.

Unlike his successors and expressing the Gallican sentiment of his contemporaries in Ireland the inaugural bishop of Perth, John Brady welcomed the inaugural state sponsored elementary school initiative. However, a sectarian outburst by the appointed school master gilded Brady’s Gallican olive branch, and he was forced to withdraw his support and proceed with a separate school system.

Reflecting changing attitudes within metropolitan Catholicism, subsequent bishops in the Perth diocese, in contrast to Brady’s initial conciliatory approach, viewed state educational initiatives with a large degree of suspicion. This suspicion had more significant foundations than a natural distrust of the local colonial state apparatus for these clergy represented a particularly conservative Rome orientated form of Catholicism that had its genesis in the profound oppositional position adopted by the metropolitan Catholic hierarchy to the onslaught of liberal ideologies that engulfed Western Europe throughout the nineteenth century.

Because education was and remains such an emotional-laden topic it is important that the assumptions and methods used in this work are made as explicit as possible. The first of these is that attention should be focussed at the top of the Catholic school system—that is upon administrative arrangements. This is not to say that what happened within the school room is unimportant but only after the different cultural influences are accurately defined will it be appropriate for the historian to turn to a more detailed examination of elements such as curriculum and pedagogy. Second because the Catholic school system was the work of ecclesiastical authorities the
emphasis is on ecclesiastical history. The important issues concerning public education in the nineteenth century were defined as religious problems. Thirdly because the work is focussed on the establishment and expansion of the Catholic school system little attempt has been made to describe how the system shaped the minds of the Catholic constituency which it sought to serve.

The structure of the thesis follows a chronological framework and proceeds from the arrival of the inaugural Catholic mission to the Swan River colony in 1843 to the end of the colonial period in 1890. In order to provide an indication of the range and limitations of the existing debate and place the study in its historiographical context Chapter one will concentrate on the existing historical scholarship focussed on the topic. Following this Chapter Two will provide a brief overview of the background to the catholic education mission and the economic and social conditions that the pioneering missionaries encountered on their arrival in the colony. Chapter Three will cover the founding years of the Catholic mission in Western Australia and place the fledgling mission in its metropolitan context by providing a detailed account of the background of the founders of the Catholic school system in the Swan River Colony. Continuing on this theme Chapter Four will cover the years 1852-1859 and analyse the Catholic system under the strongly Spanish Benedictine administrative influence of Joseph Benedict Serra. Covering the years between 1860 and 1890 which saw the controversial debate surrounding the reintroduction of aid to the Catholic school system contained in the first education bill introduced by the Catholic governor Weld, Chapter Five will identify the predominant Catholic cultures that were brought to bear on the Catholic school system during this period. By way of conclusion, Chapter Six will review the preceding chapters and provide a synthesis for the study.
CHAPTER I

COLONIAL CATHOLIC EDUCATION: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 1829-c.1890

This chapter will outline the colonial economic and social conditions, including both inter-denominational and administrative sectarianism, from which the Western Australian Catholic school system emerged. The much vaunted Swan River colony proved more of a trial than a treasure to the original settlers, many of whom relinquished their properties in regional England to avail themselves of the opportunity of embellishing their social status as yeomen farmers through increased land ownership that emigration to the new and vast colony in Western Australia promised. But the far away hills were far from green with respect to Western Australia and the future of the fledgling colony teetered on the cusp of failure for a number of years after the arrival of the first settlers in 1829. Confronted with grossly exaggerated accounts of soil fertility and climatic conditions the pioneering settlers struggled to survive in the isolated colony. Faced with dismal prospects many of the original settlers forfeited their land claims and departed the colony in despair, and by 1848 the settler population, recorded at 4,622, was far from enjoying the colonial lifestyle enjoyed by their contemporaries in the eastern colonies.\(^1\) As word filtered back to England, the resultant negative publicity earned the settlement the dubious title of the ‘Cinderella Colony’ and as late as 1848 intending emigrants to Antipodes were advised to steer clear of the Swan River. An advice booklet available to prospective emigrants printed in London in 1848 warned prospective emigrants that

South Australia and Victoria held better prospects than the Swan River.

No emigrants have gone there for years past, nor would we advise any one to choose his resting place there. Swan River has little or nothing to recommend it, and when compared with the far richer and more healthy districts of South Australia, and especially Port Philip, it falls far short of them in every one of the requisites for a successful Colony. We have spoke of every one of them with candour and truth, and with the same desire of guiding faithfully the Emigrant here; also we have represented the unfortunate Swan River colony as experience has shown it to deserve.²

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Despite this ominous caution the small band of landowners and their workers that persevered in the colony gradually overcame adversity to experience moderate improvements in their fortunes.³ Three factors in particular contributed to the economic turnabout.⁴ Fortified with knowledge gained from practical experience, farmers overcame many of the initial problems presented by the variation in soil and climatic conditions and managed to modestly improve arable yields. Exploration of inland districts opened the land up to pastoral farming and, as the potential of the native forage and climate for wool production became known, settlers began to move away from the more familiar mixed farming system of animal and arable husbandry to develop wool-based pastoral enterprises. By mid-century a shortage in manpower in the still relatively low settler numbers was overcome with the introduction of convict transportation. This system subsequently provided a cheap labour resource to provide the muscle to flex the improved but still brittle economy.⁵ Between the arrival of the first convict transport ship in June 1850 and the last in January 1868, a

fettered workforce of 9,668 men arrived in the colony.\textsuperscript{6} Detailed as members of work gangs building bridges and roads, or as labourers to individual farmers the convicts provided the infrastructure for accelerated growth in the colonial economy and the system endured at a local level until 1886 long after the arrival of the last convict ship.\textsuperscript{7} Although the export-orientated economy subsequently encountered the periodic ebbs and flows of the economic pendulum the colony had gained a sufficient degree of prosperity to warrant the introduction of responsible government in 1890. The subsequent discovery of large deposits of gold in the Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie regions and a contingent population boom which reached 49,782 in 1891 laid to rest any lingering doubts regarding the future of the by then self governing colony.\textsuperscript{8} This less than secure foundation had immediate and long term outcomes for education in the new colony. Colonists faced with a survival option had little consideration for schools in an economy that demanded that all available hands be put to productive work. Hence early attempts to open schools encountered a mixed if not indifferent reception from parents who were struggling to hold on to the little that they had.

However, restricted prosperity did not impede the primary land grant holders and administrative officials from imposing a tightly stratified social order in the social and economic relations of their adopted land. Accordingly, this elite core group began to exhibit all the trappings of the order and respectability which was so much a part of their middle class English aspirations. The colonists further accentuated their Victorian English identity by forging a strong bond between the Anglican Church and

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\textsuperscript{6} Lenore Layman, ‘Work’ in On This Side Themes and Issues in Western Australian History, Perth: Bookland, 1985, p. 71
\textsuperscript{8} Census of Population Returns, 1891, Battye Library, Perth, Q312.941
the almost exclusively Protestant local administration. Accordingly the most isolated colony in the then British empire represented a satellite of the Protestant mentality of Victorian England with the rich man safely ensconced in his castle whilst the poor man dutifully took up his position at the gate. This alliance from time to time was garnished with more than a faint seasoning of sectarianism. Expressions of distrust of the Catholic mission particularly regarding its education agenda had little trouble in finding an attentive ear within the local establishment.

From its inception the Catholic mission saw the provision of schooling as part of its ministry. The three pioneering Catholic missionaries, Fathers John Brady, John Joostens, and their catechist, Patrick O'Reilly, established an elementary school for boys soon after their arrival in the Perth settlement in 1843.10 This humble school, St. John’s, represented the acorn of the future Catholic system. Thus, from their arrival in the developing Swan River Colony, the missionaries echoed the ecclesiastical precedent already established in the eastern Australian colony where they had previously ministered.

In eastern Australia, as early as 1825 the pioneering priest John Joseph Therry sought to organise Catholic schools in the primordial Australian colony at Botany Bay [Sydney],11 and by the time the first Vicar-General to the Australian mission, William Bernard Ullathorne, arrived in 1833 ten Catholic schools were in operation in and around Sydney.12 Determined to expand this small provisional network of

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schools and presaging the future influence of members of religious communities from Ireland on the development of Catholic schools in Australia, Ullathorne successfully attracted Irish Sisters of Charity to teach in Sydney in 1836. This foundation represented the original religious community from Ireland to join the Australian Catholic teaching mission and presaged future trends. A decade later, in response to successive requests for their services, three members of the Irish Christian Brothers community also arrived to establish schools in Sydney.\(^\text{13}\)

Despite this missionary commitment to establish schools, the Catholic hierarchy, subsequent to a brief initial period of cooperation, declined to support attempts by the state to expand public education and prohibited Catholic schools from participating in the nascent state system. Individual bishops not only insisted on the unsuitability of denominationally mixed schooling but also vehemently demanded that the growing network of Catholic schools receive state support.\(^\text{14}\) This subsequently became the established position of the Catholic episcopate throughout Australia. The abolition of state-funded clerical salaries in Victoria in 1861 and in New South Wales the following year served to intensify episcopal demands for the allocation of public funding to Catholic run schools.\(^\text{15}\) But this position had deeper ecclesiastical moorings than the immediate church-state colonial context. Far from a reaction to the immediate social environment this hostile approach from the Australian hierarchy to public education echoed the increasingly reactionary views of their fellow Catholic bishops in Europe who viewed state-run schooling as part of a

\(^{13}\) Ibid, p. 261.


\(^{15}\) K.T, Livingston The Emergence of an Australian Roman Catholic Priesthood 1835-1915, Sydney; Catholic Theological Faculty, 1977, p. 51.
strategy to propagate anti-Catholic secular liberal ideology. The increasingly reactionary metropolitan hierarchy maintained that state-run schools subverted the Church’s traditional educational role in society, undermined the independence of the church, promoted secular philosophy in opposition to church doctrine and, by providing denominationally mixed schooling, inculcated a latitudinarian approach that promoted the idea that all Christian confessions were of equal standing. As a consequence throughout Europe the Catholic hierarchy insisted on their right to superintend the education of their constituency. Closely connected with the rise of the highly Rome-centred, Ultramontane movement within the Catholic church in the mid-nineteenth century, hierarchical opposition to state-controlled education gained absolute ascendancy under the papacy of Pope Pius IX (1846-1878) who refuted the legitimacy of state claims to a monopoly on public education as one of the eighty propositions adjudged erroneous in the Syllabus of Errors promulgated along with the Encyclical Quanta Cura in 1864. Propositions forty-five to forty-seven of the Syllabus referred specifically to education and condemned any absolute claims by the civil authority over the provision of public education. Proposition forty-five, for example, unambiguously questioned the right of the state to administer public schools to the exclusion of the church. It condemned the proposition that:

The entire government of public schools in which the youth of a Christian state is educated, except (to a certain extent) in the case of Episcopal seminaries, may and ought to appertain to the civil power, and belong to it so far that no other authority whatsoever shall be recognised as having any right to interfere in the discipline of the schools, the arrangement of the studies, the conferring of degrees, in the choice or approval of the teachers.

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As a consequence of their following this conservative ecclesiastical line set by their metropolitan contemporaries, Australian Catholic bishops, like their mitred brethren in Europe, found themselves increasingly estranged from local colonial administrations on educational policy. The bishops’ insistence that the state allocate a share of the public purse to sustain and expand a separate Catholic school system only served to exacerbate the educational divide. But Catholic fears were not entirely unfounded and the introduction of state-run public education systems signalled the end for many of the pioneering church schools. Many of the schools associated with the Anglican and Dissenting churches found the new competition overwhelming and, unable to survive independently, either closed or coalesced into the expanding state system. This was not to be the case with schools associated with the Catholic mission. The Catholic episcopate steadfastly refused to yield control over the education of their flock to the secular authority and proceeded throughout the nineteenth-century to develop an alternative network of both elementary and secondary Catholic schools in all of the Australian colonies. Consequently, the provision of both elementary and secondary education became a major feature of the Catholic mission throughout Australia during the latter half of the nineteenth century.\(^{20}\) The policy of prioritising the establishment of parochial schools over churches subsequently approved by successive episcopal councils indicated the import that the Australian Catholic episcopate placed on preserving their authority over education.\(^{21}\) As the Catholic mission developed a formal diocesan structure the provision and manning of schools dominated the internal ecclesiastical deliberations of the individual bishops charged with running each diocese. These ecclesiastical perspectives on education tempered


church state relations in addition to directing the episcopate on issues of diocesan governance. Thus as we shall see, within the Catholic school system educational outcomes were more often a product of the prevailing episcopal ecclesiastical policy than of practical requirements.

The survival and consolidation of the Catholic education system, however, required much more than hierarchical approbation. The survival of the system depended on the rich labour resources available from the expanding ranks of metropolitan-based male and female religious congregations. Sent as schoolteachers and administrators to the Australian colonies the majority of this highly motivated workforce came mostly, but not solely, from Ireland. The subsequent growth of Australian religious foundations thereafter augmented this expatriate workforce. By providing an economically competitive workforce of school administrators and teachers, these congregations empowered successive bishops to realise their educational objectives with minimum financial resources. Thus, throughout Australia as many Anglican and Dissenting Church schools struggled for survival in the face of competition from the expanding state system, the Catholic school network, in contrast, experienced growth and consolidation. Congregational schools were at the forefront of this success and were an integral part of the Catholic education crusade in each of the Australian colonies.\(^{22}\)

Like their colleagues in the eastern colonies religious communities were destined to become the backbone of the Western Australian Catholic education system. Yet, although by 1910 fifteen religious congregations had established foundations in Western Australia only five were present before 1890.\(^{23}\) These early missionaries, assisted by a handful of lay teachers, represented the vanguard of

Catholic school system in Western Australia. Moreover, the members of these religious communities became for many children and their parents the most commonly experienced aspect of Western Australian Catholicism. As teachers and school administrators their contribution was pivotal to the success of the Catholic system. This success was evident by the close of the colonial period when Catholic schools attracted significant numbers of pupils from non-Catholic backgrounds, and posed a serious threat to the state system. 24 The noteworthy success of the Catholic school system in Western Australia can be attributed to the spadework of the colony’s primordial missionary foundations including Mercy Sisters from Ireland, 1846; Spanish Benedictine monks from Spain, 1846; Sisters from the congregation of Saint Joseph of the Apparition from France, 1855; Marist Brothers from France, 1864; and the Australian-founded Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart, 1887. By 1890, when the Catholic population was edging past the 12,000 mark the Catholic system had expanded out from its original base in Perth and Fremantle into the more marginal settlements, and both the Mercy and Josephite communities had extended their convent schools into the more populated regional centres at York, Geraldton and Albany.25

By establishing and administering schools, these foundations delivered and nourished the nascent Catholic system through its precarious colonial genesis. Thereafter, the Catholic system benefited from the sequential arrival of the religious communities, and before the close of the nineteenth century it had developed into a

23 Lecture Series, The Catholic Church in Western Australia, Western Australian Catholic Education Office, Perth, Centenary File, p. 5.
24 David Mossenson, State Education in Western Australia, 1829-1960, Nedlands (W.A.): University of Western Australia, Press, 1972, p. 75.
25 The 1891 Census of Population returned the Catholic population at 12,603. Western Australian Census 1891, Battye Library, Perth.
highly organised network of elementary and secondary schools. As the system developed and spread into regional settlements a pattern of expansion became discernable. In response to local demand, a small school often staffed by a monitor selected on the basis of personal character but with little teaching experience emerged in peripheral settlements. Thereafter, as the number of pupils increased, the incumbent bishop, in response to local demand, inevitably invited a religious congregation to develop the school along either diocesan or congregational lines. In this way missionary congregations propagated and consolidated the Catholic school system throughout Western Australia. A continuing testament to their pivotal role in developing and expanding the Catholic education system, the convent schools established by these congregations remain today a highly visible feature of the Western Australian Catholic landscape.

This success, however, was not achieved in the absence of adversity. In pursuing their educational goals the early missionaries encountered and resolutely endured a range of both personal and social privations. Conditions in the fledgling colony founded on the banks of the Swan River in 1829 were harsh. Located between the Swan River and a perimeter of marshy swamps, the core settlement at Perth provided a natural habitation for flies and mosquitoes, a problem accentuated by the concentrated population and high summer temperatures. The recollections of a member of the Benedictine group that arrived in 1846, Dom Rosendo Salvado, provides some insight into the primitive conditions pertaining in the colony.

One could say that the town was still half-bush, for a lot of the original trees were still there in the streets and squares and by the houses, many of which were shaded from the sun by thick leaved eucalypts. We found the mosquitoes very troublesome, and the croaking of the frogs in

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26 Along with establishing their own convent schools individual orders provided teaching and administrative support to lay teachers in parish schools.
27 Laadan Fletcher, 'New Directions in Education in Western Australia', ANZHES Vol.9, No.1, Autumn 1980. p. 53.
marshy, stagnant waters here and there within the town limits was so loud that we sometimes had to raise our voices as if talking to the deaf.\textsuperscript{28}

When the monks, intent on bringing Christianity to the native aboriginal people, moved to establish a monastery in the Victoria Plains adverse climate, not least the unrelenting summer heat, continued to hinder progress. Eye infections, exacerbated by lack of adequate medical supplies, became a major concern.\textsuperscript{29} Likewise, in Perth and Fremantle the pioneering female members of both the Mercy and Josephite foundations also encountered practical problems not least the lack of privacy afforded by unsuitable accommodation. The security afforded to the initial cottage occupied by the Mercy foundation by its proximity to the local military barracks proved to be a mixed blessing.\textsuperscript{30} Although the barracks afforded some security it also proved to be a source of prying eyes.\textsuperscript{31}

Inadequate funding exacerbated these problems. Located within the lower ranks of the colony’s working class population, the predominantly Irish Catholic constituency had little money to contribute to diocesan coffers or the well-being of the missionaries. Within a decade of its foundation the Western Australian Catholic mission, like the colony itself, teetered on the brink of insolvency. Despite his personal frugality, the level of debt incurred by the inaugural Bishop, John Brady, was insurmountable. Having exhausted all sources of credit he was forced to devise novel economics to support his mission and at one stage resorted to mortgaging the

\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Ibid}, P. 70
\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Ibid}.
dowry promised to a Mercy novice as collateral to finance the completion of the congregation’s convent school.\textsuperscript{32}

Evincing Brady’s financial difficulties his many creditors, including his former school principal and supporter, Terence Farrelly, sought redress in the civil court for unpaid debts. The layman Farrelly’s action against Brady for the sum of £17 and ten shillings for his unpaid wages as a teacher in the Perth school for boys served to accentuate the importance of religious personnel to the success of the Catholic school system. These, despite Brady’s failure to fulfil promised assurances regarding their upkeep and physical well being, declined to take similar action.\textsuperscript{33} Noting the plight of diocesan finances in 1849 the inaugural Mercy Superior, Ursula Frayne, prophetically cautioned the congregation’s mother house in Dublin concerning the future financial viability of the diocese.

Almost weekly protested bills are returned to him to the amount of not less than fifty or one hundred pounds. What he is to do I know not. It is a mystery to us how such debts could have been contracted, as there is nothing to be seen for all the money granted by the Propagation of the Faith, excepting our convent, which we are told some months ago, was free of debts; and certainly the Bishop’s mode of living as well as our own could not have been more in accordance with holy poverty.\textsuperscript{34}

Advised of the deepening financial crisis Rome appointed a member of the pioneering Benedictine mission, Dom Serra, who was then in Europe soliciting funds and recruiting missionaries, as coadjutor bishop to the diocese in August 1849.\textsuperscript{35}

When Brady refused to recognise Serra’s appointment a period of internal conflict


\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Civil Court Lists 1849}, summons no. 2139, Western Australian Public Records Office, Perth, Con. No. 3580/52.

\textsuperscript{34} Frayne to Rev. Mother Cecilia, 7 July 1849, Byrne, \textit{Valiant Women}, p. 133.

ensued within the mission. Eventually, under sanction from Rome Brady departed the colony in August 1852. Despite the controversy surrounding his tenure as the inaugural bishop of Perth by the time of Brady’s departure, the nucleus of a Catholic school system was beginning to emerge in the isolated slowly developing settler colony. Under the administration of successive bishops, this nascent Catholic school system would, by the arrival of self government in 1890, have developed into a competitive school network.

Colonial society yielded little salutary relief from the daily rigours of frontier life and, influenced by a strong Anglican prejudice, the local colonial administration viewed the development of the Catholic mission, particularly its schools, with a mixture of envy and suspicion. Sectarian tensions based on transported old world inter-denominational suspicions surfaced within the colony in 1846 soon after the arrival of the first Catholic missionaries and was particularly robust amongst the higher echelons of colonial society.

Although ultimately under the administrative control of the Colonial Secretary in London, a local, predominantly Anglican, political elite controlled the colony’s administrative apparatus. During the early decades this exclusively non-Catholic group secured its social dominance through land holdings and control of the colony’s political and judicial apparatus. Indeed as has been pointed out ‘they thought of the church and the courthouse as two sides of the same coin’\(^{36}\). Significantly a number of this group had emigrated from Ireland and, as was later remarked, represented the extremities of the non-Catholic side of that country’s religious divide.

In the absence of any countervailing Anglican educational force, any expansion of Catholic schooling represented a threat to this institutional control. Initially

expressed as pejorative comment, opposition rapidly gravitated into direct political obstruction. For example, responding to plans announced by Brady and his vicar general Powell to establish a school, Isabella Ferguson, the wife of a resident general practitioner and future colonial surgeon, in a letter to her friend in the United Kingdom, observed that: 'The importation of Romish priests have not made themselves at all popular I am very happy to say, they are a most illiterate set. They printed notices of the opening of their schools etc. with such gross spelling for instance "Lodgic, bieutiful. Etc."37

This self-indulgent sarcasm, however, soon deviated into more caustic and public rebuke as Brady’s foray into education exacerbated establishment fears concerning the intentions of the Catholic mission. Motivated in part at least by the growing attendance of non-Catholic girls at the Mercy convent-school allegations of a proselytising began to appear in the local newspapers.38

Reflecting these old world influences a spirited public debate on the legitimacy of the term ‘Roman Catholic’ and Brady’s episcopal jurisdiction ensued in the pages of the local papers. Responding to an announcement that the Catholic mission intended to open a new school, George King, Anglican minister at Fremantle, joined in the fray and challenged what he titled ‘Romanism’ and Brady’s literary ability. Rising to his bishop’s defence, the principal of the Perth Catholic school for boys, Terence Farrelly, who Brady had brought from Ireland in 1846 as part of the new missionary force, drew on his experience as a teacher qualified in the Irish school system to applaud both the syllabus and teaching standards available in the school and cautioned the publisher of his intent to edit future editorials.

38 Inquirer, 25 February 1846, Gazette, 21, March 1846,
The Latin language, Sir is the language of the church; it has been spoken and written purely by her divines; we can instruct you for years in Greek and Latin languages; come and hear our lectures on grammar and rhetoric, and then perhaps you will become more cautious as a critic as well as more prudent and skilful as a publisher. You have been wide awake as you thought of taking an unjust liberty of commenting on our teachers, on our new college, on our publication of the same, and on all our fellow labourers who have come to live in this colony; but, Sir, in return, I shall avail myself of the pleasing task of perusing your future publications, and exposing their sophistry, their ribaldry, their fustian, and above all, their grammatical plunders.\footnote{Perth Gazette, 14 March 1846, p. 4, clmn. 1.}

Again in 1846 debate on the issue of education magnified inter-nicene tensions when the Catholic mission announced plans to establish a ‘Literary Institute’ which would provide a ‘wide curricula’ and ‘an opportunity of imbibing good example and of learning every science necessary for any laudable avocation or profession’. This proposal drew an immediate and forthright response from the Anglican side.\footnote{Perth Gazette, 28 March 1846, p. 3, clmn. 2.} Fearing that Catholic missionaries would attempt to convert unwary members of his constituency, the resident Anglican minister in Picton, Australind, John Ramsden Wollaston, in 1846 penned a strongly worded letter of warning through the local newspaper. Revealing his own misgivings about the influx of Catholic missionaries he counselled his younger adherents to reject proselytising advances.

My young friends, I have lately cautioned you against those who would persuade you that the Church into which you have been baptized, and to which you belong, is not a pure branch of the Catholic Church of Christ...You will perhaps hear it asserted that your Church is comparatively modern, an upstart Church; a schismatical Church; that it had no existence before the time of the reformation. But all this is untrue.\footnote{The Inquirer, 29 April 1846, p. 4, clmn. 3.}

When the proposed ‘Literary Institute’ failed to materialise the public controversy temporarily dissipated. Sectarian undercurrents, however, continued to flow and these
initial inter-church tensions presaged more long-term sectarian antagonisms, and
debate on the issue of education in particular regularly deteriorated into allegation
and counter allegation of denominational authenticity. In November 1846 the Mercy
Superior, Ursula Frayne, advised her Dublin correspondent of Protestant disaffection
with the Catholic mission. ‘Anti-Catholic prejudices are so strong in this colony; the
Protestants seem to think our coming here is an invasion of their rights and appear
resolved not to give us any encouragement’.\(^\text{42}\) Frayne’s assertion, however, required
some qualification as a number of non-Catholic girls attended the Mercy convent
school.\(^\text{43}\)

Sectarian tensions also periodically clouded relations between the pioneering
mission and the local colonial administration. Having received an initial measure of
financial support from governor John Hutt, the mission’s fiscal position gravitated
when Hutt’s less tolerant successor Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Clarke, severed aid
to Catholic schools subsequent to his arrival in 1846. To the detriment of the Catholic
mission Clarke nourished and personally represented the nexus between the Anglican
church and state. However, Catholic aspirations were not lost and the appointment of
Richard Robin Madden as Colonial Secretary in May 1847 promised some hope. A
Catholic, Madden lent a sympathetic ear to Catholic overtures within an otherwise
hostile colonial administration. Madden’s Irish background sharpened his sensitivity
to the pertaining sectarian prejudice and he later described the local colonial
administration as deeply anti-Catholic and alleged that it had connections with the
Orange Order.\(^\text{44}\) This allusion to a connection between local officialdom and the
aggressively anti-Catholic Orange Order founded in Ireland at the close of the

\(^{42}\) Ursula Frayne to Mother Cecilia, Nov. 1846, Byrne, \textit{Valiant Women}, p. 53.

\(^{43}\) Baptist O’Donnell to Vincent Whitty, December 1846, International Mercy Archives, Bagot Street
Dublin, Western Australia Correspondence.

eighteenth century was a direct reference to the attempts by Major Fredrick C. Irwin to frustrate the Catholic mission’s attempt to establish its own school network. During his term as acting Governor from February 1847 to November 1848 Irwin, who was born in Ulster the son of an Anglican clergyman, actively promoted the expansion of state education as an alternative to Catholic schools. Irwin was assisted by the then Colonial Secretary Peter Broun who also inherited a robust Anglican background. Nevertheless, Madden’s tenure as a Catholic counterweight within the otherwise exclusively non-Catholic local administration was perceptible, and by the time of his unexpected departure in 1849 the Catholic school system enjoyed a measure of government assistance. By 1855 the subsidy allocated to Catholic schools introduced under the more tolerant governorship of Charles Fitzgerald (1848-1855) was £236. However, Fitzgerald’s departure presaged a return to a less benevolent state approach to education. Taking a more stringent approach to state spending Arthur Kennedy, who replaced Fitzgerald as governor in July 1855, viewed government endeavours to supply anything beyond a rudimentary level of education as an indulgence and an unnecessary burden on colonial expenditure. Accordingly, Kennedy cut back the education budget and initiated a minimalist basic public elementary education program. In doing so he reduced the government allocation to Catholic schools from £236 to £137 and proceeded to restructure the West Australian state school system more closely with the model operated in Ireland.\textsuperscript{45}

Introduced into Ireland in 1831 by Chief Secretary Edward Stanley, later Lord Derby, the so-called Irish System aimed to provide all children with a rudimentary education, in denominationally mixed-schools, measured on a base proficiency in reading, writing and arithmetic.\textsuperscript{46} The system aimed to provide a combined secular and

\textsuperscript{45} Mossenson, \textit{State Education in Western Australia} p. 24.
separate religious system of national education to children of all denominations with ‘scrupulous care taken not to interfere with the peculiar tenets of any description of Christian pupil’. Accordingly provision was made for separate denominational religious instruction. Politically, the system was intended to cement social bonds between all creeds and thereby secure a more homogenous social structure in a society rife with sectarian tensions. The system allocated all participating denominations representation on the national seven member governing board charged with expanding popular education free of any religious prejudice throughout the land. In addition to supplying necessary school items such as texts and classroom aids, the Board was responsible for teacher recruitment, training and payment. Local committees were appointed to supervise the daily running of the schools in each locality in accordance with the regulations stipulated.

Although the system initially encountered dissenting voices from both sides of the Protestant Catholic divide it succeeded in achieving the critical mass of interdenominational support necessary for its survival and by 1834 there were 1,106 schools with an enrolment of 145,521 pupils in the system. This critical mass included a majority of the contemporary Catholic episcopate. Reflecting its initial multi-denominational identity, the inaugural national administrative board included both the Catholic and Anglican bishops of Dublin together with members from the synod of Ulster representing the Presbyterian communion.

Initially the system attracted opposition from two quarters within the Catholic episcopate. More conservative voices within the church articulated their concern at

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what they viewed as a cooperation between church and state representing the manifestation of Gallican ecclesiology.\textsuperscript{50} This opposition was particularly vocal within a group of Irish born clergy working or studying in Rome at that time.\textsuperscript{51} Paradoxically, the other dissenting voice, came from a section of the Irish episcopate led by the Archbishop of Tuam, John Mac Hale, a bishop identified by his contemporaries as having a strong Gallican orientation. Mac Hale’s Gallicanism, however, in contrast to that represented by bishops like Daniel Murray of Dublin, for example, had a distinctly nationalistic flavour.\textsuperscript{52}

By mid-century, however, the support enjoyed for the Irish National School System amongst the Catholic episcopate was beginning to wilt. A number of forces generated this change in ecclesiastical attitude, not least the death of the one of its most prominent episcopal advocates, the influential Archbishop of Dublin, Daniel Murray, in 1852 and the rise of an Ultramontane culture within the Irish Catholic episcopate. Provoked by Ultramontane distrust of state-sponsored education, the episcopate, in return for their continued patronage, demanded relaxation of the rules and regulations pertaining to religious education. Cautious not to alienate the majority Catholic population the Government capitulated and amended the relevant regulations. These changes, combined with the confessional demography of Ireland which concentrated the rural Protestant constituency into distinct regional population pockets, gradually transformed the national school network into a \textit{de facto} denominational system. In short Catholics attended Catholic-administered schools and Protestants attended Protestant-administered schools all under the administrative

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Ibid}, p.54.
\textsuperscript{52} Hilary Andrews, \textit{The Lion of the West a biography of John Mac Hale}, Dublin: Veritas, 2001, pp. 60-65 & 238-239.
canopy of national schools.

Nevertheless, the inaugural non-denominalional Irish system represented an attractive school model for successive colonial administrators. Some of these governors had first-hand experience of the system in operation in its pre-denominalional format. As early as 1833 the Governor of New South Wales, Richard Bourke, wrote to Lord Stanley, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies, and advised that he believed the Irish system was the most suitable model of public education for introduction into that colony. He suggested that ‘Schools for the general education of the Colonial Youth, supported by the government and regulated after the manner of the Irish schools, which since the year 1831 receive aid from public funds, * would be well suited to the circumstance of this country’. But robust opposition initially from the local Anglican clergy ensured Burke’s proposal failed to get off the ground and a state-sponsored denominational system emerged in New South Wales.

In Western Australia Kennedy was determined to restructure elementary schooling within an Irish national school multi denominational framework. Despite resistance from all sides and the resignation of three of the four members of the existing General Board of Education, Kennedy proceeded with his planned educational reform and appointed a new board to administer his proposed system. When the incumbent Catholic bishop, Joseph Serra, registered his opposition by declining a seat on the reconstituted governing board Kennedy in 1856 withdrew all aid to Catholic schools. Serra, like his predecessor, subsequently presented an unsuccessful petition to the colonial government to register Catholic outrage. Bereft

of state support Catholic schools again faced a dim future as an independent network. The system survived, however, in large part due to the prominence of the schools operated by the Mercy community in Perth and the Josephite community in Fremantle.

The significance of religious communities to the Catholic system at that time was recognised by those least interested in its survival. Anglican anxieties arose again with news of the impending arrival of a new missionary foundation of De La Salle Brothers in 1864. The local organ of the Anglican community, *The Western Australian Church of England Magazine*, cautioned its readers against sending their children to the Christian Brothers’ school. While it confused the De La Salle Brothers with the Christian Brothers schools in New South Wales the article reflected continued Anglican fears of proselytism of Anglican children from the Catholic school system.

A few weeks since one of our local newspapers contained a paragraph, announcing the establishment of a new school in Perth, conducted by “The Christian Brothers.”... “The Christian Brothers” form an order, or Association, in the Roman Catholic Church; they devote themselves to the furtherance of education in accordance with the tenets of that Church: they have published various elementary books all fitted to bend the mind to that faith; and they have laboured with great zeal and with great success in training up children in the nurture and admonition of the Church. They themselves tell us that there is “an establishment of the Christian Brothers” in New South Wales, and that since 1838 the proportion of Roman Catholics to Protestants has increased from one fifth to one half.  

Similarly, the continuing association of Protestant girls with convent schools became particularly irksome for some Anglican observers who maintained the sectarian discourse into the second half of the nineteenth century. For example, in 1869 a

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contributor to the *Church of England Magazine* presented a robust warning on the
dangerous example this association presented to the rank and file Protestant
constituency. The writer questioned why some Protestant parents continued to send
their daughters to convent-schools. ‘Yet while in this colony every batch of
immigrants is almost exclusively Roman Catholic-while every endeavour is made to
compel the parties in a mixed marriage to ensure that all their children shall be brought
up in the Romish faith … Protestant ladies assist the schools with their presence,
sympathy, and purse; and Protestant parents encouraged by the example of those who
are above them in rank and education, send their children in troops to these [Catholic]
schools’.

Despite this robust sectarian opposition the Catholic church in Western Australia
managed to develop a small pioneering school network. The convent schools operated
by the Mercy sisters in Perth and the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition who had
established a convent in Fremantle in 1855 represented the heart of this initial system.
But in Western Australia sectarian prejudices regarding schooling continued to cloud
church state relations. Opposition to Catholic schools erupted onto the public arena in
the late 1860s when the acting Vicar General, Matthew Gibney, attempted to obtain
state grants for the Catholic school system. Gibney with the blessing of his bishop,
Martin Griver, who had succeeded Serra in 1860, spearheaded a concentrated
campaign to recover a measure of state support for the Catholic schools. This
reinvigorated thrust for state support immediately generated heated public debate on
the legitimacy of the Catholic demands. Thinly veiled sectarian comment heightened
the temperature of the ensuing debate surrounding the legitimacy of Catholic claims to
state aid. Offering a measured response to proposals to provide a grant of £500 to

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Catholic schools, the editor of the *Inquirer* cautioned that denominational education might perpetuate religious divisions amongst present and future generations.\(^{58}\) Gibney’s campaign achieved a respectable measure of success in 1871 when the colony’s first Education Act, introduced by Governor Frederick Aloysius Weld (1869-1875), restored state-aid to elementary Catholic schools. A devout Catholic, Weld like Madden, represented a sympathetic ear to Catholic approaches in an administration with little affection for the Catholic education cause.

Codified as ‘Assisted Schools’, Weld’s act provided for an annual *per capita* grant to Catholic schools set at half the rate applicable to state schools. Gibney, however, continued to press for a more equitable system of government funding including grants for school building and equipment equal to those allocated to the public school system.\(^{59}\) Catholic schools continued to enjoy a proportion of government funding until 1896 when the newly elected inaugural state Premier, John Forrest, was persuaded to withdraw state support. However, the demographic and economic fortunes of the colony and the Catholic constituency had by that time improved sufficiently to ensure the security and future survival of the Catholic school system. Subsequently, aided by the arrival of a number of additional religious communities the Catholic system under the administration of Gibney, who succeeded Griver as diocesan bishop in 1887, expanded further.

But these external forces were not the only constraints endured by the pioneering Catholic education system in Western Australia. As this thesis will argue internal diversity and disharmony presented a potentially greater threat to the Catholic system during the colonial period (1829-c.1890). Time and again, internal friction relating to episcopal jurisdiction and congregational autonomy curtailed expansion

\(^{58}\) *Inquirer*, 12 September 1870, p. 3, clmn. 3.

\(^{59}\) *W.A.C.R.*, 6 August 1874, p.3, clmns. 2-3.
and, indeed, reversed progress. During the period of this study, at least three congregations considered leaving the dioceses as a result of internal administrative disagreements, and the De La Salle Brothers and the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart, did in fact withdraw from the diocese. 60 Consequently, as we shall see congregational superiors felt reluctant to establish foundations within the colony. This represented a severe threat to a system intrinsically reliant on congregational foundations and personnel for its survival. Yet, despite its significance the theological and cultural background to this internal discord within Western Australian Catholicism has evaded critical scrutiny.

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CHAPTER II

Historiography

What the historian is called on to investigate is what lies behind the act; and to this the conscious thought or motive of the individual actor may be quite irrelevant.¹

The existing historiography of the Australian Catholic Church falls into three broad categories. These include contributions by scholars who cast a wide net to present the general history of the early Catholic mission in Australia, more regionally focussed historians who deal with specific issues peculiar to individual colonies and states and a third group concerned with recording the biographies of specific missionary orders and individuals. A number of historical approaches is also discernable within the existing literature. Concerned with recording the historical narrative of initial missionary development earlier historians presented Catholicism as an Irish church. This was a mono-cultural approach with a triumphalist theme of heroic missionary survival and unity in the face of many foes. In presenting Catholicism as a homogenous entity these historians distracted attention away from analysis of the internal dynamics of divergent ecclesiastical or individual congregational cultures.

Catholicism in Australia as a mono-cultural Irish success story is most prominently represented at the close of the nineteenth century by Cardinal Patrick Francis Moran. His 1894 history of the early Catholic Church not only provided a useful account of the foundation and consolidation of the colonial Catholic mission in Australia but also permitted an insight into how the contemporary church hierarchy perceived itself at that time.² The first cardinal appointed in Australia, and described

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by Edmund Campion as ‘the Irish magnifico’, Moran’s eminence represented the apotheosis of the Irish influence within the Australian hierarchy. His account of the development of the Australian Catholic mission extends from the original transported clergy in Botany Bay to developments in the various Australian colonies. Reflecting the eventual ascendancy of Irish clergy within the Australian mission, Moran accentuated the Irish dimension and played down the significant influence of the Anglo-Benedictine administration. For example, in describing Polding’s and Ullathorne’s European visit in 1841, Moran was careful to provide a rather nostalgic account of their sojourn in Ireland which he promoted as the primary focus of their appeal for aid and missionary personnel.

Dr Polding’s hopes for missionary aid were mainly centred on Ireland, and resolved, as far as time would permit to visit some of its principal districts. … They received a hearty welcome at Carlow where they had the pleasure of again meeting Dr. England Bishop of Charlestown …..They paid a visit to the Cistercian monastery at Mount Melleray, where they saw realized in all their simplicity the sublimest ideas of monastic piety and simplicity. They then proceeded to Lismore, being enchanted with the beautiful scenery along the banks of the Black Water and the surrounding country. … They sailed over the lakes of Killarney with the usual enthusiasm, and witnessed some exciting election scenes, which the temperance movement saved from degradation. All was good-natured and good-humoured. ³

But the Benedictine influence represented by bishop Bede Polding and his fellow English Benedictine Vicar-General, William Ullathorne, was greater than Moran was willing to credit. Moran’s approach did not go unchallenged. Revealing undertones of some cultural tensions within the historiography in his 1911 history of the Australian Benedictine mission Henry N. Birt disputed the earlier account and asserted that Moran eclipsed the significance of the Benedictine mission, particularly the role of Bishop Polding, in establishing the early Catholic mission.

The enormous scope, moreover, of His Eminence’s work, made it imperative on him to split up his narrative into parts, corresponding with the various dioceses of today, which represent the vast district over which the first Vicars-Apostolic were called to rule. This treatment has inevitably resulted in disconnecting the story of Dr Polding’s superintendence of these now different units, with the regrettable effect of somewhat obscuring the important part he played in the development of the Church of Australia in its component Dioceses.  

This censure evinces the existence of a residuary rivalry in the early twentieth century between regular and secular clergy and implicitly points to the existence of more than one ecclesiastical cultural expression within Australian Catholicism.

In his exposition of the role played by the pioneering priest Jeremiah O’Flynn in developing the early Catholic mission in New South Wales, Eris O’Brien was at pains to point out the primary involvement of the laity in establishing the Catholic mission in New South Wales. According to O’Brien, the Catholic settlers throught their demands for a priest initiated the establishment of the Australian Catholic Church rather than the initiatives of either the Irish or English Catholic hierarchy.

The indifference of both hierarchies [Irish and English] seems evident. No English or Irish bishops urged the Holy See or the British Government to send out missionaries, they offered no missionaries from their own dioceses. The interest of propaganda was first gained from the antipodean Catholics which resulted in the appointment of the convict Father Dixon as prefect.

He then, however, betrayed his own prejudices, and absolving the Irish hierarchy from any lapse in their collective responsibility to Irish Catholics pointed a recriminating finger in the direction of England. In doing so, he laid responsibility for any lapse of interest in the welfare of Catholic settlers, either free or convict, squarely at the feet of

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Bishop William Poynter the then Vicar General for the Antipodes and Vicar Apostolic of the London district.\(^6\)

P. J. Hartigan also had a little axe to grind over Moran’s exaltation of the episcopate. Writing under the pseudonym, John O’Brien, in a compilation of articles originally contributed to the *Australian Catholic Record* between 1943 and 1945 and subsequently published in 1975 under the title *The men of 38 and other Pioneer Priests*, Hartigan sought to retrieve the central role of rank and file clergy in consolidating the early mission.\(^7\)

In dealing with the suffragan dioceses he [Moran] is concerned with the careers of individual bishops. No exception is herein taken to that; but when the captain is testimonialised for bringing the bark through the troubled waters, it surely is not out of place to rise a cheer for the crew.\(^8\)

In his major two volume work published in 1959 Ronald Fogarty provided a detailed account of the development of Catholic education in Australia. Fogarty accentuated the significance of religious communities by allocating the second volume of his work to establishing their vanguard role as teachers and administrators in sustaining the Catholic school system throughout Australia in the absence of any state support. ‘As planned [Archbishop] Vaughan’s scheme [to establish a separate Catholic school system] was dependent, almost entirely on religious; they were essential to it … Religious had to be sought- in the Catholic countries of Europe; they had to be invited, or rather begged to interest themselves in Australia.’\(^9\) In his subsequent conclusion Fogarty leaves little doubt regarding the positive response of metropolitan-based

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\(^6\) *Ibid*


\(^8\) *Ibid* p. 2.

religious communities to approaches from Australian bishops to establish foundations in their dioceses.

And come they did-slowly at first, then in greater numbers. Their response in the eyes of the church was magnificent. The arrival of the religious orders in response to the bishops’ requests for teachers may be likened to a stream. That stream, a mere trickle at first, gradually increased in volume until in the eighties- under the impulse of men like Vaughan, Moran and the Quinns it became a veritable flood.  

Timothy Suttor, echoing Birt, in 1965 sought to regain the primary position within the early Catholic mission for the Benedictine pioneers. In dealing with the struggle for a state-supported Catholic school system Suttor presented Polding as the stalwart of the Catholic cause but ultimately the victim of a Protestant-liberal state alliance.

And at a time when Polding was trying to persuade Catholics that the choice of schools was not a matter of more or less secular knowledge for more or less cash, but of life or death for the spirit, Parkes from the opposite side was saying the same thing: ‘Darkness or light—which is the conqueror?’ and this true disciple of Lang merged the evangelical vote in the Grand Whiggery of secular liberal politics.  

He appeared to place an ‘each-way’ interpretation on the nature of the Catholicism associated with Irish missionary clergy and while identifying Australia as an ecclesiastical province of Ireland also acknowledged a Roman cultural influence albeit transported to the Australian mission by Irish clergy. Patrick O’Farrell, in his 1968 analysis of the tensions within in the early Australian mission also adopted this dual culture approach. He identified cultural contrasts between the unpretentious practical Irish missionary approach and the more urbane Anglo Benedictine perspective.  

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10 Ibid, p.268.  
O'Farrell argued that Irish missionary belief in their unique suitability to minister to the predominantly Irish Catholic colonial constituency coupled with a motivation to establish an Irish Catholic empire in the Antipodes free from persecution fuelled the internal conflict regarding the most suitable direction and structure of the Australian Catholic mission.

The Irish interpretation of Benedictine control came to this: if the Irish had full charge of the Australian church, more souls would be saved, the church would be stronger, more extensive, more united. Believing this—that souls were being needlessly lost, and religion needlessly handicapped—it was hard indeed for the Irish to endure Benedictine control. Convinced that they were the natural ministers of Catholicism in Australia, it was logical, an imperative religious duty in fact, that they should seek to bring Benedictine rule to an end and substitute their own. To describe this as Irish ecclesiastical imperialism is not to deny the strong and valid arguments which supported an Irish condemnation of Benedictine control. The Australian laity was Irish or of Irish origin; there had been considerable Irish-English friction;... They would build, in Australia, a new free Ireland, a religious realm in which the piety and fervour they know so well in old Ireland would experience an ennobling, transforming liberation, freed from the bitter weight of a persecuted history and the chains of British rule.13

O'Farrell, however, failed to expand this argument to include any consideration of the possible presence of other Catholic cultural influences. In his 1969 exposition of relations between the Catholic mission and Protestant state James G. Murtagh continued to present the Irish cultural influence as a homogenous entity.14

This prevailing Hibernian version of the Australian Catholic identity in Australia was controversially challenged in 1969 when John Molony concluded that the early episcopate transported and endowed Australian Catholicism with a Roman rather than Irish orientation.15 However, this argument attracted little support in Australian scholarship at that time and the more traditional historical approach prevailed. The

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13 Ibid. p.133.
predominant historian in the field, Patrick O’Farrell, for example, remained convinced that Irish missionary clergy transported and preached a Hibernised form of Catholicism to a predominantly Irish constituency, and defensively reprimanded Molony for placing his conclusions on too narrow a research base.

It is possible to distinguish clearly in regard to this brief book, (169 pages of text) between what it actually does and what its author claims it proves. ... .Taken as such Mr. Maloney’s treatment is open to question in a number of areas. His bibliography is innocent of much that might seem crucial to his Roman and Irish interpretations, which are narrowly based. ... . He claims that it, [his work] together with his personal experience, establishes a general conclusion: ‘The Catholic Church in Australia has no spirit, no liturgy and no law that is not almost entirely Roman’. Or as the blurb puts it: Rome or Ireland. 16

By the early 1970s, however, scholars outside of Australia were already challenging the conventional view of a ‘traditional’ Irish Catholicism. 17 Molony’s thesis gained credibility because of the work of these revisionists, particularly, although not exclusively, Emmet Larkin, who established that Irish Catholicism underwent fundamental ‘Romanizing’ change during the nineteenth century. 18 As a result Australian historians including O’Farrell began to view the nature of the Church transported to Australia by Irish missionary clergy in a different light.

Besides these general histories of the Catholic mission, more regionally focussed research has produced a number of historical studies. These studies, although indicating that perhaps the missionary church was a more diverse entity, continued to present Australian Catholicism as a church of two cultures only. Thus, the nature of the Catholicism represented remained locked inside a Hibernian English-Benedictine

divide. These regionally focussed scholars still declined to establish any nexus between local dissent and concurrent tensions within the broader international Catholic Church.

Mary Shanahan in her 1970 analysis of the tensions within the early Catholic mission in Sydney during the 1850s while suggesting the existence of more diverse internal Catholic cultures than the traditional Irish and Benedictine duo did not elaborate on this more fully. ‘It [Polding’s Benedictine dream] did not take into consideration the difficulties to be encountered in trying to reduce secular clergy, non-Benedictine religious and Benedictines to a uniform working force. Though all shared a common vocation each group was animated by its own spirit and worked within a pattern.’

Concerned with the same topic as Shanahan John Hosie in 1973 drew attention to the debilitating influence this internal rancour had on the Sydney-based mission. Despite the unsatisfactory standard of Catholic schools in the colony at that time, Polding, according to Hosie, rejected approaches from the Marist community to establish a college for boys and a teacher training school in Sydney. In doing this, Hosie argued that Polding was prepared to forfeit an opportunity to upgrade and expand the Catholic school system to preserve Benedictine control over the nascent mission. Similarly examining divisions within the New South Wales Catholic Church Naomi Turner in 1972 contained her analysis within the esoteric Anglo-Benedictine versus crude-Irish diocesan clerical divide. Although James Walderssee included disaffected lay factions amongst the predominantly Irish Catholic constituency as a cause of tension in New South Wales he too remained primarily

focussed on the Irish Benedictine divide. Dealing with the Catholic mission in Victoria Frances O’Kane identified disagreement over authority between headstrong Irish priests and the authoritarian Bishop James Goold as the pivotal cause behind the manifestation of tensions in the Melbourne diocese in the mid-nineteenth century.

Indicating some broadening of foci to incorporate the role of the Catholic laity, Margaret M. Pawsey, in her analysis of the development of the Catholic mission in Victoria, identified dissatisfaction amongst the laity regarding diocesan finances as contributory factors to internal conflict within the early Catholic mission in that state.

In his study of the reaction of the Catholic laity to state education in New South Wales during the second half of the nineteenth century Gregory Hames emphasised the disparity between the clergy and the laity with regard to attending state schools. In doing so Hames connected the vehement clerical rejection of state-sponsored schooling in New South Wales, particularly that of the episcopate, with the contemporary metropolitan Catholic crusade against secular liberal education. Growing misgivings amongst the New South Wales laity regarding state schools, however, according to Hames, was much more ethnic-based and represented innate suspicions of Protestant governments amongst the predominantly Irish Catholic constituency. Although Hames condemned previous romantic representations of Australian Catholic history he appeared reluctant to move beyond the ‘down trodden Irish-Catholic laity led by a gallant clerical vanguard’ version himself. Referring to

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attempts by the British government to introduce a system of education in nineteenth-century Ireland Hames wrote that:

The intention was to Anglicise the barbarous Irish, and great emphasis was placed upon the question of religion. As this proselytising intention became apparent to the Irish, they began refusing to enrol their children in the government-aided schools. .... While it is difficult to say how effectively these measures were implemented, it can be said that the government made a calculated and serious attempt to drive the Catholics of Ireland into penury and illiteracy or else into Protestantism. The attempt to use schools for proselytism produced in the Irish a deep and venomous suspicion of the educational policies of what they regarded as a protestant government. Archbishop Paul Cullen's education rhetoric crystallised around this abiding suspicion. The brutality of the policy measures generated in the Irish a sense of unity in persecution.... What the Irish parliament had tried to repress, the Catholic religion, became, by a process of converse obstinacy, Irish, distinctive and desirable.25

The thesis from which this monograph emerged was completed in 1974 and supervised by Patrick O'Farrell which may have had some bearing on this tendency to retain the ‘Struggling Irish Catholic’ approach to the history of Australian Catholicism. But the weight of evidence presented by scholars outside of Ireland was mounting against the more traditional approach and in spite of reluctance Australian scholarship could no longer avoid acknowledging the influence of revisionist work on the nature of Irish Catholicism. O'Farrell, for example, in his more recent history of Australian Catholicism recognised the contribution of scholars including Emmet Larkin and acknowledged that Irish Catholicism underwent a ‘Romanising’ transition in the mid 1850s. ‘Research has suggested that between 1850 and 1875 the Irish Church underwent a devotional revolution whereas before the famine, religion was relatively

weak and its practice confined and erratic, from 1850 the great mass of the Irish people were transformed into firm and pious practicing Catholics.\(^{26}\)

Archbishop and Papal Delegate, later Cardinal, Paul Cullen, as Larkin had shown, supervised this Irish transition. Subsequent to his translation to Ireland from Rome in 1850, Cullen imposed a strict Roman mould on the Irish Catholic Church and thereby excoriated all traces of its more traditional regional identity. As a result, in tandem with other metropolitan centres Irish Catholicism during the nineteenth century became highly structured and authoritarian with a centralised clerical administration superintending an increasingly formalised and church-centred lay participation. This revisionist interpretation of the nature of Irish Catholicism took into consideration the influence of the Ultramontanism movement within the nineteenth-century metropolitan Catholic Church.\(^{27}\)

In a work chronologically extending beyond the scope of this study, Edmund Campion in 1987 demonstrated a new willingness to depart from the more traditional interpretation of Australian Catholicism. Campion cast a more discerning eye on the internal tensions that developed within the early Catholic mission throughout Australia and drew attention to the authoritarian approach and conservative influence of the second generation of Irish bishops to arrive in Australia. These ‘burly men’ according to Campion ‘combined firm Irish leadership and the rule of Roman canon law’ to control and mobilise the laity in the fight for Catholic schools. Campion, however, attempted to make all heads fit the one cap and presented the Western Australian mission through the same interpretative lens. In order to establish their primary authority over missionary foundations Bishops Brady and Serra, according to

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\(^{27}\) See Emmet Larkin, ‘Devotional Revolution In Ireland’, pp. 625-652.
Campion, attempted to establish a master and servant relationship with the members of the initial Mercy foundation. Brady, according to Campion, became almost obsessed with exercising authority and he ‘insisted in overseeing any appointments to the school; nothing was to be brought without his leave; no carpenter or workman or even a doctor was to enter the convent without the Bishop’s permission’. Again with regard to Brady’s successor Bishop Serra he concluded that: ‘Like Brady, Serra wanted to control the lives of the Mercy sisters. He rewrote their timetable and forbade them to visit their second convent, nine miles distant, without his written permission’. Thus although his description of events was correct his causal analysis, as this thesis will illustrate, was based on less secure ground.

The predominant theme in the history of the establishment and development of the Catholic school system throughout Australia is the predominant Irish background of the laity and a contingent fear from officialdom of sectarian-based social division. A.G. Austin, for example, concluded that anxiety over sectarianism lay behind government attempts to supplant denominational with state schools so that children from all religious denominations would intermingle. “In instituting a co-educational State system, colonial governments attempted to purge sectarian feelings from the minds of the younger generation at least.” Also in the 1960s P.H. Patridge used the same argument to explain the Catholic perspective. Two influences in particular, according to Patridge, forged Catholic opposition to state education in Australia. Fear of Anglican dominance amongst the predominantly Irish-Catholic laity fused with

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episcopal opposition to secular liberal education to promote a separate school system.\textsuperscript{32} In addition, according to Patridge, demands for state support for Catholic schools generated tensions between the Catholic hierarchy and local administrations and fuelled internecine antagonisms.\textsuperscript{33} In his study of church-state relations in Victoria, J. S. Gregory in 1973 also concluded that sympathy with secular liberal philosophy within that colonial administration and a determination to purge transported sectarianism influenced the withdrawal of state aid to denominational schools in Victoria.\textsuperscript{34}

With regard to the development of public schooling in New South Wales Alan Barcan in 1980 drew attention to the influence of transported prejudices on the educational debate that manifested in the eastern Australian colonies. Barcan identified a general demand for public schools combined with innate suspicions of state institutions amongst the Irish Catholic constituency as a pivotal cause for the emergence of a parallel Catholic school system in Australia.\textsuperscript{35} Later, in 1988 Barcan also identified the negative educational outcomes that resulted from internal tensions within the early Catholic mission. Early attempts to establish Catholic schools in Sydney suffered a severe setback when both the Sisters of Charity and the Irish Christian Brothers refused to forfeit their own congregational identities and toe the Anglo-Benedictine educational line demanded by the inaugural bishop Bede Polding. As a result, both communities abandoned their schools and left the colony in 1840 and 1847 respectively.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 25-27.
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 10-11.
With regard to the historiography of Western Australian Catholicism P. McCarthy and D. F. Burke remain the predominant contributors to the history of the early Catholic mission. Whilst not neglecting internal tensions within the pioneering mission both of these authors were more concerned with presenting the historical narrative than in providing any critical analysis of the fabric or nature of Western Australian Catholicism. McCarthy, however, tended to mitigate internal antagonisms and cast a more benevolent account of the internal relationships between the West Australian hierarchy and rank-and-file religious who are viewed as acquiescent subordinates.

The story of the Catholic sisters in Western Australia remains untold. We can never adequately express the depth which the Church owes to this army of religious congregations that came from abroad or developed in our own country. All over Western Australia, in the bush towns, in the city, convent and schools rose up together, the most valued and faithful auxiliary of the Catholic apostolate.\(^{37}\)

D.F. Burke, in his celebratory volume marking the 150\(^{th}\) anniversary of the founding of the colony, treated education as an integral element within the development of the Western Australian Catholic mission. Burke centre-staged the episcopal role in providing education while subordinating the role of religious orders. For example, dealing with the arrival of the Irish Christian Brothers in 1894 Burke attributed much of the educational success to Bishop Gibney’s ability to attract missionaries rather than to the input of the religious who developed the Catholic schools.

Although provision had been made for the basic schooling of the children, yet all thoughtful persons could see that for many children a secondary education was necessary. The Bishop was aware that the children of Western Australia had just as many talents as the children of other states, but they had little opportunity to develop them.... He had been particularly anxious about the teachers for his boys...What he secured for the boys, had

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already been provided to some extent, for the girls. The Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition had already served the Diocese and the State for many years, but the Bishop introduced as well the Presentation Nuns, the Sisters of St. John of God, the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart. 38

In reviewing the Church's involvement in electoral politics during the later decades of the nineteenth century Tom Stannage was the first historian to seriously consider the possible influence of factors other than personality conflicts as a cause of tensions within the Western Australian mission. In his analysis Stannage suggested that extensive land acquisition and prosperous farming interests elevated Benedictine political concerns beyond the more moderate aspirations of the diocesan mission. This, as Stannage rightly highlights, had potentially dangerous consequences for the progress of Catholic education in Western Australia at that time.

Why in the late 1880s and early 1890s hadn't Salvado fought as tigerishly as Gibney for the dual system of education? This article has suggested that his sight of the issue was blurred because of his long friendship and co-operation with his fellow-landowners, most of whom were Anglican... Or perhaps he was slower to perceive the threat to Catholic education because his own schools were less dependent on state money, being largely supported by the wealth of the monastery lands...39

Historians of Western Australian education have generally followed the interpretation of their eastern-states counterparts in presenting a homogenous Catholicism. With regard to Western Australia Fogarty, for example, suggested that the availability of state aid to Catholic schools was dependent on the contemporary viability of colonial coffers. 'In Western Australia building grants were also given to the Catholic schools; but, besides being on a much less generous scale, they were very

irregular, being contingent upon the condition of the Government coffers (which often gave a hollow ring) rather than upon the reasonableness of the claim."\(^{40}\)

Peter Tannock in the 1960s went outside of the usual episcopal focus to emphasise the influence of the Mercy Sisters in the development of the Catholic education in Western Australia. Tannock identified personality clashes and relatively large missionary numbers as pivotal causes of internal tensions within the pioneering mission. In particular Tannock, however, presented personality conflicts combined with structural and economic difficulties as the central causes underlying internal disputes between the Mercy foundation and the inaugural diocesan bishop John Brady and his successor Benedict Serra.

Apart from deep personality incompatibility, the divisions within the clergy of Western Australia were a result of several factors. There were too many bishops ... There was conflict about their trust of the work of the church ... There were simply too many missionaries ... Supporting this number was a daunting task and was bound to cause eruptions within the church. The varied nationalities of the missionaries also complicated thought were not the prime cause of a difficult situation. The divisions within the church were not resolved until Brady (1852) and Serra (1859) had left the colony permanently, and the Benedictine community in New Norcia had become independent of the Church in Perth.\(^{41}\)

David Mossenson in 1972 laced his chronological account of the development of state education in Western Australia with periodic reference to concurrent developments within the Catholic system. Although primarily concerned with the history of public school system, Mossenson, however, grouped all Catholic schools under one homogenous banner and drew little distinction between the different ecclesiastical or congregational cultures represented within the Catholic mission.

\(^{40}\) Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia*, p. 55.

\(^{41}\) Peter D. Tannock, 'History of Catholic Education in Western Australia 1829/1929', (M.Ed.), University of Western Australia, 1964. See also Tannock 'Catholic Education in Western Australia 1829-1979', in *Education in Western Australia*, W. D. Neal (ed.), Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1979.
Drawing attention to Catholic demands for state-aided school funding he stated: ‘Through the activities of Bishops Brady and Serra and the services of the Sisters of Mercy and St. Joseph mixed education did not exist to any great extent in Western Australia’.

In her contribution to the anthology on the history of education in Western Australia Geraldine Byrne returned to ground already traversed by Tannock and focussed on the role of the Superior of the pioneering Mercy foundation, Ursula Frayne, in developing the Catholic school system. Although she acknowledged the presence of divisive forces more complex than immediate personality and economic difficulties, Byrne declined to identify or supply any referential detail as to what these influences were.

Mother Ursula’s contribution to education in this state is far more significant than has been generally recognized. She succeeded in keeping her community together despite the immense difficulties which they faced, and motivated them to a realization of the significance of their task. Her strength, intelligence and knowledge of finance blended with an Irish sense of humour in a way that enabled her not only to overcome sectarian prejudices but also to deal with the erratic and sometimes antagonistic behaviour of administrators within her own faith, the complications of which have only recently been acknowledged.

With the expansion of a more regionally-focused appraisal of Australian Catholic history to include the histories of individual religious foundations historians (many themselves members of their subject congregations) began to focus more

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critically on internal relations particularly between individual bishops and religious congregations and between diocesan and regular clergy. This recent scholarship has begun to consider new variables, for example the influence of individual congregational identity in attempting to understand administrative tensions within the Catholic mission.

In Western Australia this literature has attracted a variety of contributors and approaches. Although the corpus of congregational biographical literature remains largely hagiographical, there is a discernible move in recent work toward a more critical assessment of the structure of Western Australian Catholicism particularly with regard to internal relations between missionary congregations and diocesan bishops. Echoing Campion the author of one such work, Valerian Braniff, in his 1987 history of one Benedictine college in Western Australia challenged what he termed the ‘liberal version’ of monolithic Catholicism complete with Irish autocratic bishop whipping both laity and diocesan clergy in the desired ecclesiastic direction. Challenging this ‘liberal generalisation’ Braniff suggested that the Benedictine administered secondary school for boys and girls, St. Ildephonsus’ and St Gertrude’s located at New Norcia contrasted both in aim and substance with the school established by Irish Christian Brothers in Perth.

The Christian Brothers had opened a highly successful boarding and day school in St George’s Terrace, Perth in 1894; but C.B.C. charged substantial fees... and as a foundation member of the Perth Schools Association, managed to maintain both a certain social exclusiveness and a broader religious tolerance. C.B.C. took some pride in its multi-denominational enrolment. In the prospectus published in the first S.I.C. magazine, however, we find the claim that ‘The purpose of his lordship, the Bishop[of New Norcia] is to bring Catholic Education within reach of the masses.’

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44 The list includes: Geraldine Byrne, Patricia Williams, Ann McIay, Therese Foale and Ann Carter. Ruth Marchant James and Catherine Kovesi Killerby have respectively published biographies of The Presentation Order and of Ursula Frayne.

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Again as Braniff pointed out even nominally the Benedictines were at pains to distance their school from any taint of Irish Catholic culture. ‘The very name of the school—hardly one of the typical Irish Australian Catholic standbys was Benedictine’.  

Reflecting a more critical approach than most historians in the genre Ann McLay in 1992 declared her feminist approach and offered a history of the Western Australian Mercy foundation in the context of nineteenth-century gender relations. In doing so she suggested that the social influence of the Mercy Sisters as teachers was deeper than has been hitherto recognised. According to McLay, as teachers the Mercy congregation became unconscious agents in the liberation of women from their traditional social roles.

In indirect descendance from those abbesses and their nuns of earlier centuries, who left a legacy of skill in administration and various branches of learning and the arts, the sisters demonstrated unconsciously to their pupils, what women could do as they worked outside of the sex roles society had designated female. Thereby, probably unwittingly to a large degree, they undermined the prevailing sense of women’s mediocrity.

However, female religious congregations themselves considered their social role in a more conservative light. Perhaps this is why McLay limited her claims with qualifications such as ‘unconsciously’ and ‘unwittingly’. More significantly, however, McLay highlighted the development of two distinct group self perceptions within the Perth Mercy community; one Irish and one Australian. These cultures contrasted in that Irish missionaries transported a peculiar form of spirituality and maintained their Irish identity through correspondence with home and contact with the local Irish expatriate population. Australian-born entrants in contrast did not share these cultural

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46 Ibid, p. 23.  
background experiences and, according to McLay, periodically resented attempts to superimpose an Irish identity on the community as a whole.

Again, reflecting a more analytic approach to congregational history, Marie Therese Foale presented a forthright account of the background to the conflicts which engulfed the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart and Bishop Gibney during the 1880s. Challenging the canonical legitimacy of Gibney’s attempts to appropriate control over the West Australian foundation, Foale drew attention to the structural and cultural differences that existed between the Josephite community and Irish foundations as a fundamental issue. ‘Their new sisterhood was unique in the way its members lived out their religious lives, a way that was very different from that of most of the nuns known to the Irish born priests and bishops working in the colonies. Thus any woman could become a full member of the institute regardless of her education and social background or her ability to bring a dowry with her.’48 Accordingly, most Irish priests and bishops misunderstood the Josephite congregation’s insistence on autonomy which they read as insubordination. As in a letter to his superior Cardinal Moran, regarding the refusal by Josephite Sisters to comply with his directions Gibney advised that: ‘These five foolish virgins ... have not shown the smallest regard for my convenience ... I would (like to) teach them a sharp but useful lesson. I would make them act at least as becomingly as SECULARS would do and give me due notice.’49 This approach reflected a marked contrast to the COSY missionary construct presented by earlier historians like McCarthy.

Yet, despite the indications of a shift to a more encompassing analytic approach to the history of the Western Australian Catholic mission by some historians

49 Ibid, p. 35.
a residue of the former more benign interpretation perseveres to periodically emerge. Historians have generally proved reluctant to move beyond immediate local explanations such as personality conflict and fiscal shortage to explain the internal institutional tensions that intermittently plagued the fledgling Catholic mission in Western Australia throughout the colonial period. However, although important, these local factors do not adequately explain the causes of internal tensions within the pioneering Catholic mission in Western Australia. They fail to explain the almost habitual frequency with which internal discord befell the early Catholic mission particularly between successive bishops, lesser clergy and religious. Indeed internal tensions between the leaders of religious foundations and diocesan bishops were a regular experience throughout the entire Australian Catholic mission during the nineteenth century. Indicating more deep rooted problems these internal problems did not evaporate with the departure of individual missionaries, more particularly scholars have not considered the development of the Western Australian Catholic mission within the context of the international Catholic Church. Associated with shifts in episcopal authority resulting from the rise to ascendancy of the new Ultramontane movement during the mid and latter half of the nineteenth century, internal institutional tensions concerning ecclesiastical authority frequently manifested within international Catholicism. Anxious to preserve the independence of their community individual superiors disputed any extension of episcopal jurisdiction connected with the ongoing centralisation of ecclesiastical authority. The possible connections between these broader conflicts and the local frictions that manifested within the Western Australian Catholic Church in the nineteenth century have not been fully explored. While not denying the importance of traditional historical factors such as personality conflicts, church structure and external tensions between Church and state this study draws
attention to the diversity and influence of various internal Catholic cultures and their influential bearing on the development of the Catholic education system in Western Australia during the colonial period.
CHAPTER III

The Birth of the Catholic Education System: A Multicultural Ecclesiastical Genesis

The earliest recorded Irish Catholic immigrants to arrive in Western Australia were members of the British garrison stationed at King George’s Sound in 1826, then identified as a strategic port in the southern coastline and later to become the port town of Albany.¹ A member of the garrison, Thomas Mooney, later recalled how he regularly climbed a nearby mountain to compensate for the absence of a priest or formal Catholic ritual and sought spiritual refuge in contemplating his native Ireland.² Mooney had arrived as a member of the garrison in 1833 together with his wife Eliza and two children. Subsequent to his discharge from the army in 1840, Mooney served as a constable in Albany and became a prominent member of the small local Catholic community.³ Reflecting demographic trends within the broader population of the fledgling colony, the number of Catholic settlers remained relatively small. Within less than two decades from its foundation in 1829, however, the Catholic population of the Swan River settlement had increased sufficiently to request the appointment of a priest. Another Irish immigrant, Robert Darcy, in 1841 wrote to the Vicar General in Sydney on behalf of the resident Catholic community to petition for the appointment of a resident chaplain. Darcy had arrived in the colony in 1840 and worked in a number of jobs before finally settling in to become a licensee in the Middle Swan district.⁴ In his letter Darcy bemoaned the deleterious influence of Protestant

² Ibid, p. 556.
evangelists on some Catholics and advised that the posting of a priest was an immediate necessity in order to arrest the work of proselytisers. He also advised the metropolitan that in the event of their request being approved the petitioners undertook to erect a church for the new priest.

We the Catholics of Perth, Western Australia, beg to call your attention to the following facts. In this and the surrounding towns there are to be found all kinds of Protestant Ministers who show a good deal of activity in preaching their creed. There are to be found two of them in Perth, one in Fremantle, one in Guildford and in almost every district of the colony. Not only do they try the conversion of the natives, but also endeavour to bring about the perversion of the Catholics by getting them to give up their religion. Hence the difficulty of the Catholic to persevere in his faith, many a one having already fallen away and joined one or other of the Protestant Sects. Should a favourable opportunity present itself, they would, we believe, come back to their faith. To us Catholics our greatest and, I dare say, our only joy would be to build a church and to have a priest sent to us, whom we promise we would support to the best of our means. Trusting that your Lordship will take this important matter into consideration and that you will provide in all kindness for the salvation of our souls.  

No doubt, their previous experiences in Ireland sharpened the awareness of many of the petitioners to the subtleties of evangelistic activities, and some possibly harboured memories of robust Anglican proselytising campaigns in Ireland. During the early decades of the nineteenth century Protestant evangelists, concurrent with a surge in evangelistic activities in England, embarked on a proselytising campaign among the Catholic peasantry throughout Ireland. Little surprise then that some amongst the predominantly Irish immigrant Catholic community in the new colony viewed the exclusively Anglican local colonial political apparatus with a deal of suspicion. The regimental code exercised under the directions of the commander of the military garrison in the colony, Fredrick Chidley Irwin, obliging all Catholic

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5 A copy of this letter is available in the Catholic Archdiocesan Archives, Perth.
soldiers to attend Anglican services only served to heighten any misgivings. In 1831 John Bussell, a wealthy settler in the southern region of the colony, drew attention to this military practice.

As we have no parson here (I use the word on the authority of Blackstone) I have established a meeting (I dislike the word) every Sunday in my house where I read prayers and one of Paley’s sermons (the only things of the sort I have). I generally have a house full, besides soldiers outside, who attend from constraint, for they are all Roman Catholics, their attendance is however necessary by the Articles of war.  

Born in Ulster, Irwin, the son of an Anglican minister, displayed a particular evangelistic disposition and was pivotal in establishing the Western Australian Missionary Society. His ordinance that Catholic soldiers and their dependents attend Anglican services under threat of forfeiting their military provision echoed events in Ireland and generated antagonism and concern within the Catholic settler population. This context, together with appointment of three new Anglican clergymen in 1842 to augment the existing Colonial Chaplain, J.B. Wittenoom, generated the apprehension expressed in Darcy’s letter. Nevertheless, the petition from the small Catholic population for a resident priest remained unfulfilled for some time.  

More compelling business in the east diverted the immediate attention of the Catholic primate, John Bede Polding, from these western concerns. An English Benedictine priest, Polding had arrived in Sydney in 1835 as the inaugural metropolitan bishop to the Australian Catholic mission. He inherited what can best be

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7 Letter John Bussell, July 1831, Battye Library, P.R. 555.
9 Memorandum of facts presented to the Colonial Secretary, by Bishop Brady, 1848, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australia correspondence file.
10 The new appointments included D. Mears (York), R. Wollaston (Bunbury) W. Mitchell (Middle Swan) and J. Thug (Fremantle) in Blue Books 1842, p. 140.
described as a frontier church. Prior to his appointment the structure and tone of Australian Catholicism was an informal affair. Under the distant authority of the Bishop of Mauritius, the early resident Catholic clergy were little restrained by ecclesiastical formality. Isolated from the metropolitan administration and obliged to resort to practical solutions in a convict colony, pioneering priests like J. J. Therry and Philip Conolly, who had arrived respectively in 1820 and 1821, became a law unto themselves in matters of faith. As resident priests to the respective Catholic communities at Sydney and Hobart both men jealously guarded the independence of their respective jurisdictions. Efforts by John McEncroe to introduce reform subsequent to his arrival from Ireland as a diocesan priest to Sydney in 1832 were stoutly resisted by Therry.

The appointment of the English Benedictine William Bernard Ullathorne as Vicar-General to the bishop of Mauritius in 1833 heralded the dawning of a more canonically organised Australian Catholic mission. Acting on Ullathorne’s advice and in pursuance of the aims proclaimed by Gregory XVI to expand the church’s overseas missionary work, Rome subsequently appointed Polding to the mission as resident bishop. As the primate of the mission Polding endeavoured to construct a formal diocesan territorial structure around a Benedictine-orientated church. As a missionary church it was responsible to Rome through the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Propaganda Fide) and received financial support from

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the Lyon-based Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Subsequent to his arrival Polding, desperate for missionaries, dispatched Ullathorne to England in 1836 to procure priests and religious for the mission and gain papal approval to establish a Benedictine monastery in Sydney. Although Polding met with little success in England a number of Irish priests, eighteen in all, committed their services to the mission. The Irish Sisters of Charity religious community also agreed to send five of their members.

In addition to the contingent from Ireland Ullathorne secured the services of two other priests, Charles Lovat, an English priest and former teacher in the Jesuit College at Stonyhurst, and John Brady, then on recuperation leave from his missionary work in Bourbon (Reunion). Brady was seen as a particularly good catch and Ullathorne made little attempt to disguise his satisfaction at having acquired his services. He advised Dr. Brown, the Prior of Downside Monastery, that he had procured the services of ‘two priests, one of them, Mr. Brady, who has been ten years in Bourbon, for whose services several Bishops have been contending, is a very valuable subject; one who unites to experience great piety and humility: his training is altogether French’. Indeed Brady’s French formation rather than his Irish background would define his subsequent religious career in Australia both as a missionary priest and inaugural bishop of the diocese of Perth where he established the first Catholic school in the newly established Swan River Colony. It was the first of a variety of internal Catholic cultures which would be instrumental in forging a network of schools as part

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19 *Ibid* p. 87.
of the Western Australian Catholic mission.

Although there is no extant record of his date of birth, Brady’s subsequent career indicates that he was born c. 1800 in the parish of Castletara, County Cavan, in the diocese of Kilmore.\textsuperscript{20} Encompassing counties Cavan, Leitrim and parts of Meath and Fermanagh the diocese also had a relatively large Protestant population within its geographic boundaries. As part of the then ascendant Anglican minority these descendants of seventeenth-century English and Scottish settlers exercised a disproportionate influence over local administrative and social institutions. This periodically gave rise to sectarian tensions within the diocese despite the relative harmony that existed nationally between the predominantly Catholic and the ascendant Protestant population at the turn of the century. Brady’s native Cavan in particular was a county noted for agrarian outrage associated with disaffected tenants during the early decades of the nineteenth-century.\textsuperscript{21} The confessional nexus between landlords and Protestant tenants distilled internecine suspicions even amongst neighbours, hindered social harmony and encouraged sectarian tensions. These suspicions escalated when the predominant landlord in the county, John Maxwell, fifth Baron Farnham, extended unreserved support to the proselytising activities of evangelical Anglican missionaries in the early decades of the nineteenth century. As a result of Lord Farnham’s active involvement in the proselytising campaign internecine tensions heightened throughout the county as Catholics suspected their fellow Protestant tenants as collaborators in the Anglican evangelistic effort.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{20} Records in the Sydney Archdiocesan Archives indicate that he was born about the turn of the nineteenth-century. These records indicate that Brady was ordained to the priesthood in 1825. \textit{The Australasian Catholic Record}, Vol. XIV, No. 2, April 1937, contains a number of references to Brady’s background.


divisions, not least Protestant suspicions of the spiritual ability to miraculously cure illness claimed by priests in some parishes within the diocese, only served to exacerbate religious cleavages. Debilitating tensions affecting the Catholic Church were not, however, restricted to the external sectarian context and internal feuding concurrently fermented within the ranks of the Kilmore diocesan clergy. Disputes surrounding the continued legitimacy of the traditional practice, a surviving legacy of the clan system, of appointing the clerical representatives, of prominent local families to more wealthy parishes and promotional vacancies within the diocese factionalised the Kilmore clergy during the early decades of the nineteenth-century. The occupancy of the better-off parishes in the diocese by a cohort of O’Reilly priests all related to the bishop, Farrell O’Reilly, compounded the problem of clerical discontent.

But lack of clerical uniformity in early nineteenth-century Ireland was not confined to the diocese of Kilmore and incidents of clerical indiscipline were recorded throughout the country. For their part the bulk of the laity were little more than nominal Catholics and less than one-third of the Catholic population attended mass regularly. The bishops were occupied with a number of controversial issues as a result of the political union of Ireland into the United Kingdom in 1800. Reduced to a regional hierarchy in charge of a minority church within the United Kingdom, the Irish Catholic episcopate were far from united. Disagreement regarding proposals to extend government jurisdiction over Catholic ecclesiastical affairs, including a veto on

24 *Ib*., p. 5.
25 *Ibid*.
episcopal appointments and clerical endowments, divided the episcopate and drew
two opposing responses. One group expressed full acceptance of the proposals and the
other demanded absolute episcopal independence.\textsuperscript{28} This diversity in episcopal
response articulated an ecclesiological division within the Irish Catholic hierarchy that
has been identified as ‘traditional’ and ‘new’ forms of Gallicanism. ‘Traditionalists’
included the group of bishops who supported an alliance between altar and throne and
a conciliatory relationship with the Anglican Church, while the ‘new’ Gallicans
distanced themselves from any association with the Anglican Church, supported Irish
nationalism and called for repeal of the union.\textsuperscript{29} In 1824 the bishop of Kildare, James
Doyle, was among the traditionalists within the episcopate and called for closer ties
between Catholic and Anglican churches. In doing so Doyle drew attention to the
eighteenth-century French Catholic theologian and Gallican canonist, Jacques
Benigne Bossuet, who emphasised the theological proximity of the Roman Catholic
and Anglican faiths.\textsuperscript{30}

Growing tensions within the contemporary political arena in the 1820s pertaining
to Anglican ascendancy rapidly stifled such conciliatory overtones and temporarily
united the Catholic episcopate in common cause. Failure by the government to repeal
discriminatory laws prohibiting Catholics from parliamentary participation, alienated
urban middle-class Catholics, and focused a united Catholic front demanding repeal of
the offending legislation.\textsuperscript{31} The movement for Catholic emancipation that emerged in

\textsuperscript{28} D. W. Miller, ‘Irish Catholicism and the Historian’, \textit{Irish Economic and Social History}, Vol. 13,
1986, p. 113, distinguished these two groups as Whiggish and Native Gallican bishops.
\textsuperscript{29} Desmond Bowen, \textit{Paul Cardinal Cullen and the Shaping of Modern Irish Catholicism}, Dublin: Gill
p.32, has defined this spirit of cooperation as a manifestation of Liberal political ideology within
Irish Catholicism.
\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Ibid}, p. 152.
the early years of the nineteenth century gave public vent to this agitation. Led by a leading Irish Catholic barrister Daniel O’Connell the movement represented a combination of civil and religious objectives that aimed to secure the repeal of laws prohibiting Catholics from taking seats in parliament. O’Connell, who professed an empathy with Benthamite philosophy, introduced a liberal element into the Irish Catholic cultural arena and asserted that reason and justice demonstrated the right of every man to freedom of conscience.\textsuperscript{32} He sought to raise the political consciousness of the Irish Catholic population to a level sufficient to prise the required relief measures from the British government. As a result he enlisted the cooperation of the Catholic clergy in dioceses throughout Ireland under the united banner of the Catholic Association. Through a campaign of mass public meetings organised with the direct involvement of local Catholic clergy in parishes throughout Ireland he successfully mobilised the critical mass of lay support necessary to contribute to the passing of Catholic emancipation in 1829.\textsuperscript{33}

This then was the political and ecclesiastic ferment in Ireland both regionally and nationally from which young men like Brady emerged during the early decades of the nineteenth century to pursue a priestly vocation. The practice of Irish students attending continental seminaries had long been established and became compulsory in 1751 when Pope Benedict XIV (1740-58), anxious to maintain Tridentine orthodoxy, decreed that all Irish diocesan priests attend theological courses in continental seminaries. Many of the clergy who went to France elected to remain there under the more congenial atmosphere of the ancien régime.\textsuperscript{34} Although the establishment of an Irish seminary, The Royal College of Saint Patrick, at Maynooth in 1795 with the


\textsuperscript{33} O’Ferrall, \textit{Daniel O’Connell}, p. 54.

\textsuperscript{34} Corish, \textit{The Irish Catholic Experience}, p.127.
assistance of a British government grant supplanted this obligation many students under the tutelage of their diocesan bishops, themselves continental trained, still looked to the more traditional seminaries in Europe. Consequently, as French seminaries reopened in the aftermath of the revolution Irish students again began to seek entry. In Brady’s case the Saint Sulpice Ecole Des Missions in Paris was the decided destination. 35 Brady’s choice was unexceptional as Paris had long proved a popular destination for prospective clerical candidates from the Kilmore diocese to elect to study for the priesthood. 36

However, the deep internal divisions that recently visited the French Catholic Church provided little sanctuary from the institutional insecurity and the clerical vagaries of Brady’s native Catholicism. In the aftermath of revolution French Catholicism was itself far from secure and like its Irish counterpart was bereft of stable ecclesiastical and political moorings. The Gallican system that for centuries defined relations between the church and successive monarchs of the ruling Borbon dynasty had itself become a victim of the revolution. Since the later medieval period a body of legal and theological doctrine had been accumulating in France in support of the liberty of the French Church from papal control and in favour of royal authority over the French church. An assembly of the leading French theologians including Bossuet formally codified the framework for the system in 1682. 37 Contained in four

35 The Catholic Standard, January 1886, p. 393.
36 Gallogley, The Diocese of Kilmore, p. 335.
articles which prescribed the respective parameters of church and state authority in France as well as relations between the French episcopate and Rome this Gallican code was reitered at the synod of Pistoia in 1786.\textsuperscript{38} Under the terms of the code the French hierarchy delegated all civil authority to the monarch unrestricted by ecclesiastical interference, and the spiritual authority to the Pope conditional on conciliar acquiescence and conformity with the 'principles of the Kingdom and church of France'.\textsuperscript{39} Although the bishops allocated unfettered civil authority to the state they subjected papal spiritual authority to episcopal veto and French civil law. In doing so the Gallican episcopate reserved the right of recourse to French civil authority against any adverse extension of papal power over their jurisdiction in matters of faith and morals. Thus, the essence of the system titled Gallicanism lay in the independent existence of a national church supported by a Christian king who protected that independence against papal intervention.\textsuperscript{40} It fostered an ecclesiastical culture that looked favourably to an alliance with secular authority.

In addition to gelding papal power within the French realm, this collaboration between altar and throne proved politically beneficial to both sides. It allowed the monarchy a substantial jurisdiction over the church, including a veto on episcopal appointments, thereby reinforcing its own authority; and it securely ensconced the episcopate as a powerful and quasi-state institution. Mutual legitimisation delivered spiritual and civil hegemonic authority to both church and state in their relative spheres. The system elevated the public role of the church by bestowing civil responsibility for official activities such as the registration of births, marriages and deaths to parish clergy. More significantly it endowed the church with full control

\textsuperscript{39} Saunders, \textit{Jacques Bénigne Bossuet}, p.198.
over the provision of education. 41 Thus, under Gallicanism the church became an integral part of French society, and French society became infused with a high degree of religious culture. This culture, dominated by the demanding and ascetic morality of Tridentine Catholicism, vehemently resisted all manifestations of localised or popular spiritual practice and moderated French Catholicism. 42

Not withstanding its institutional security, internal divisions, particularly between the hierarchy and parish clergy who periodically contested the arbitrary authority of the episcopate, manifested within the Gallican church. Thus, at the revolution many of the curés or parish clergy supported the reforming demands of the third estate. 43 But the excesses of the revolution ensured this association was short-lived. Provisions in the new Civil Constitution of the Clergy governing future relations between church and state in 1790 included a demand that all clergy swear an oath of loyalty to the new civil authority. Unlike the previous rule by a Christian monarch, this provision virtually subjected the church to a lay control that was aggressively secular. 44 Debate on the legitimacy of the oath again divided the French clergy into two camps; those who agreed to take the oath, or the jurors, and the nonjurors who refused. The half decade following the enactment of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy witnessed the worst anti-clerical excesses of the revolutionary period with clergy who refused to take the oath suspected of acts of treason against the new republic. Consequently, church closures became commonplace and a number of clergy were executed. Recognising the utility of religion to foster social cohesion Napoleon moved to restore church-state relations and

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42 Ibid. p.17.
44 Ibid, pp. 34-41.
concluded a concordat with Pius VII in 1801. However, he eclipsed the concessions granted to Rome under the terms of the concordat including the anti-Gallican restoration of papal authority over the French episcopate through enacting a series of regulatory conditions termed the ‘Organic Articles’. These Articles regulated relations between France and Rome throughout the nineteenth-century.\(^{45}\) Although the Articles offered concessions to Rome, including recognition of Catholicism as the majority religion of France, they also allowed the state a large degree of control over the church including the right to nominate bishops and veto episcopal selections of parish priests. Thus, the reconstituted French church retained a renovated Gallican countenance, albeit with Napoleon replacing the monarchy as its protector. Ensuring future conformity, the Articles specified that all clerical training inculcated the principles of Gallican ecclesiology.\(^{46}\)

For their part the concordatory bishops, although stripped of their pre-revolution civil authority, retained their great power on matters pertaining to the church over the clergy and laity within their individual diocesan constituencies.\(^{47}\) Although the bishops regained some of their former pomp and once again became *grands seigneurs* during the restoration period the dominant bourgeois element within its lay constituency vetoed any episcopal attempts to regain civil authority.\(^{48}\)

Therefore in this reconstituted Gallican Church the two main seminary teaching orders, the Sulpicians and Lazarists, taught their seminarians the conciliar tradition central to Gallican ecclesiology including the degree of independence from papal

\(^{45}\) *Ibid*, p. 22.


\(^{47}\) Gibson, *A Social History of French Catholicism*, p.60.

\(^{48}\) Spencer, *Politics of Belief*, p. 23.
interference attached to the French Catholic Church. This tradition, through advocating the primary jurisdiction of episcopal councils in matters of faith and morals, reduced Roman power and challenged the notion of arbitrary papal authority promoted within the Italian and Spanish Catholic churches.

In the same way the Gallicanism promoted by the concordat emphasised strong co-operation between church and state. The terms of the concordat obliged the clergy to act as government agents. Article 6 of the concordat demanded the clergy under solemn oath to, ‘observe fidelity and obedience to the government established by the constitution of the Frenchy Republic’ and to promise ‘not to have any knowledge, not to take part in any scheme nor to associate in any conspiracy whether internal or external which may be inimical to public tranquillity and if in any diocese elsewhere, [they] learn that something prejudicial to the state is contemplated [they will] make it known to the government’.

But by the turn of the century reforms introduced by the new civil administration had material as well as cultural outcomes for students undertaking clerical training in post-revolutionary France. By excising all state support, the government placed economic responsibility for seminaries on the shoulders of individual bishops in whose diocese they were located. This in turn gave rise to variation in standards between seminaries. Some well-financed institutions offered a wide-ranging curriculum while others, more financially restricted, curtailed academic opportunity to core subjects. Lacking the necessary resources to accomplish their mandate, the most economically encumbered seminaries became little more than

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49 Bailly’s work *Theologia Dogmatica et Moralis ad Usum Seminariorum*, 8 volumes published in 1879 was, as the title indicated, intended as a text for seminarians.
conveyor belts aimed at filling vacant clerical positions within the dioceses. Confronted with a shortfall in vocations diocesan seminaries turned to the sons of the poorest families to buttress their rapidly depleting student numbers. These young men, lacking a basic education and little opportunity to experience the wider world, frequently ended up at the least well-financed seminaries. As a result, rank and file post-revolutionary French diocesan clergy became ignominiously associated with a reputation for ineptitude and naivety.

Within this unsettled ecclesiastical climate, with its predominant official Gallican Catholic culture Brady and his fellow seminarians at the Ecole des Mission in Paris underwent their spiritual formation. Clerical students like Brady attending the Sulpician-run seminary progressed through a two-tiered system from the petit into the grand-séminaire. The central aim of these seminaries during the time of Brady’s spiritual formation in the early decades of the nineteenth century was to ingrain students with a spiritual piety based on Tridentine Catholic principles that advocated rejection of the material world through a theology of contemptus mundi. This tendency to relegate intellectual study as a poor second after the inculcation of approved piety was unambiguously put by a superior in a Sulpician seminary between 1829 and 1842.

[It] never proposed and should not propose ... to make its members into scholars and doctors, but rather useful servants of the clergy, which has a great deal more need of the prayers, example and guidance of those whose task it is to train them than of their lessons and their teaching, and for whom piety is a great deal more necessary than extensive and profound learning.

Clearly the aim of the seminary was to produce a priest acquainted with a working knowledge of the core church doctrines. Little attempt was made to impart or equip a

\[52\] Gibson, A Social History of French Catholicism, p. 81.
\[53\] Ibid, p. 82.
wider educational formation with subjects like mathematics science and history excluded from the curriculum. Piety mattered more than intellect and students were constantly exhorted to reject all things of this world to attain spiritual maturity and ultimately divine salvation.\(^{54}\)

Accordingly, on entry into the petit-séminaire Brady and his fellow novices received tuition in classical Latin and Christian doctrine under the guidance of a priest-tutor. Somewhat the equivalent to a secondary school these minor seminaries in addition introduced a spirit of self-discipline through a rigorous combination of self denial and fear of God and Hell. Redemption required austere self-discipline practiced under the ‘ever present’ eye of the teaching staff.\(^{55}\) Brady’s frugal lifestyle would later reflect the austerity of his formation.

In addition to strict self-denial, the seminarian became acquainted with the array of legislation associated with the Concordat. On graduating to the grand-séminaire the student began his clerical learning in earnest and studied a core curriculum of biblical studies, canon law, theology, preaching and ceremonial procedure. In accord with the terms of the ‘Organic Articles’ the use of Gallican canonists including Bossuet, Fénélon and Bailly continued in French seminaries during the early half of the nineteenth century.\(^{56}\) Found to be offensive to the ascendant Ultramontane ecclesiology, Bailly’s work, the common manual on dogmatic and moral theology used in French seminaries, was eventually placed on the Papal Index of condemned books in 1852.\(^{57}\) In addition to undertaking this formal course of study seminarians

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\(^{54}\) Ibid, pp. 102-103.

\(^{55}\) Ibid, p. 88. Brady would subsequently reflect the influence of this formation in his own austere lifestyle.

\(^{56}\) These theologians were recognised authorities within the Gallican tradition. Bossuet was the primary architect of the Four Articles which defined Gallicanism drawn up in 1682. Saunders, Jacques, Bénigne Bossuet, p. 197.

were required to teach catechism to the children of the diocese and were assigned this task on a weekly basis.\textsuperscript{58}

Finally, after four years of this disciplined Gallican formation, the newly ordained priest was sent out to face the secular world armed with ‘not much more than an outline of the main philosophical “errors” and a knowledge of the liturgical calendar’. The ordinand also inherited a disposition to look favourably on state authority and episcopal independence from Rome.

Subsequent to his ordination in 1825 Brady worked as a diocesan priest for twelve years in the small French colony of \textit{Îles de Bourbon} [Reunion]. One of the Mascarene Islands situated in the Indian Ocean on the east coast of southern Africa, Reunion became a French colony in 1646. While there, Brady’s missionary zeal, including his educational endeavours in his assigned parish, St. Marys, subsequently won official acclaim from a member of the resident judiciary.

‘\textit{Mon cher Abbe, voici l'article dont Je vous ai parlé. L’Allier porte en France Monsieur Brady, Cure de la paroisse de Sainte Marie. Nous ne saurions trop faire l'eloge de cet ecclésiastique. C'est le vrai pretre Catholique d'un desinteressement parfait-II consacrait toutes ses ressources au soulagement des pauvres, et a l'éducation des enfans de la paroisse -homme d'esprit et d'instruction-II s'use faire aimer et estimer dans le commune de Sainte Marie qui de toutes celles de l'île et cella peut-être don't les appreciations, ressortent toujours les plus exempts de prevention, au d'enthusiasme.}
\textit{Votre devoue Serviteur, Filhole, Judge d'instruction}.

The ship \textit{Allier} brings to France Rev. Mr. Brady of the parish of St. Mary. We could not too highly praise this ecclesiastic. He is the true type of a Catholic priest perfectly unselfish. He gave everything he had to relieve the distress of the poor, and to educate the children of the poor. A man of ability and learning, he made himself beloved and esteemed through the district of St. Mary’s which of all the districts of those Islands is the one we estimate has always been reckoned most free from exaggeration or prejudice.\textsuperscript{59}


Suffering from a bout of illness, however, Brady returned to the more favourable climate of France to recuperate. His stay coincided with Ullathorne’s visit and both men met in Rome in 1838. The promise of a more favourable climate enhanced Ullathorne’s invitation to join the Australian mission at a time when Brady was an experienced missionary priest with a reputation for missionary zeal. Having embarked on the *Upton Castle* Brady landed in Sydney on 24 February 1838. His fellow passengers included another missionary priest, James Goold, subsequently the inaugural bishop of Melbourne, and also the new Governor of New South Wales Sir George Gipps (1838-1846). Assigned in New South Wales as a resident priest to the rural settlement of Windsor, Brady soon became acclimatised to the timbre of colonial life. Originally known as Green Hills with its boundaries encircled by the Hawkesbury River and gazetted by Governor Macquarie in 1810, Windsor developed as an urban hub for the surrounding agricultural hinterland. Reflecting the popularity of the area within a decade the population had increased to 7721, with 1679 living in Windsor. This population included 965 Church of England, 361 Roman Catholics, 118 Church of Scotland and 213 Methodists. In addition to Windsor, Brady’s jurisdiction included a number of smaller outlying settlements, including Curragong and Penrith.

Echoing the colony’s penal foundations, Brady’s predominantly Irish-Catholic constituency included a significant convict population. Constructed of all levels of the bonded system these included ticket-of-leave assigned labourers and servants as well those still in chains. In addition to his duties as diocesan priest, Brady doubled as

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60 *Ibid*, p. 554.
prison chaplain and received an annual stipend for his attendance at the Windsor prison and the convict stockade at 17 Miles Hallow.\textsuperscript{64}

Brady showed a willingness to defend the rights of the less fortunate members of his constituency and remonstrate on their behalf. However, this disposition precipitated a torrent of allegations concerning his ability as a priest. This reached a climax in the case of an assigned servant, John Keane, who, having disobeyed a direction by his master, Mr. Thompson, not to attend Sunday mass at Penrith, was charged before the local court for breaching the Master and Servant Act. Brady approached the local magistrate to appeal on behalf of Keane. In advising Polding of his rationale for taking such a course Brady revealed his sensitivity to social injustice and in conformity with his \textit{contemptus mundi} formation emphasised the necessity to reject the material world in favour of heavenly salvation.\textsuperscript{65}

I thought it my duty to acquaint Mr Dunlop [the local Magistrate] of what had occurred on Sunday morning at the courthouse, as Mr. Thompson's conduct toward his assigned servant had made a very unfavourable impression on the minds of the people in Penrith and the neighbourhood. … I would consider myself dead of every feeling of religion and humanity if I did not endeavour to rescue any unfortunate man from the grasp of a heartless master, who would thirst for the blood of a servant because that servant considered himself bound to obey his master who is in heaven rather than his task master who is on earth.\textsuperscript{66}

Brady’s propensity to intercede with the civil authority was already a recognised trait of his Gallican clerical contemporaries in France where according to one local politician the great defect of the French diocesan clergy was their propensity to ‘involve themselves in everything even police work’.\textsuperscript{67} Brady subsequently attended

\textsuperscript{64} Polding to Governor, 19 October 1838, Polding Letter Books, Sydney Archdiocesan Archives, Letter 86.

\textsuperscript{65} Gibson, \textit{A Social History of French Catholicism}, p. 22

\textsuperscript{66} Brady to Polding 16 September 1838, letter published in the \textit{The Australian Catholic Record}, Vol. 14, No. 2, April 1937, p. 103.

\textsuperscript{67} Gibson, \textit{A Social History of French Catholicism}, p. 79.
the court hearing and gave evidence in Keane’s defence. He also appealed, through Polding, to the governor about the legality of such actions. His statement alleged that Thompson habitually refused to allow assigned Catholic servants to attend mass.\textsuperscript{68}

This stand on behalf of assigned servants alarmed those anxious to preserve their privileged life style and established master and servant conventions. As a consequence Brady became the focus of an orchestrated campaign of vilification. In a series of letters published in the Sydney Gazette his detractors referred dismissively to Brady as a ‘Hedge Priest’. This was pressed home in a subsequent letter to the Gazette drawing attention to a letter published in the Dublin University Magazine, which caustically labelled priests formed in Ireland during the penal-law period as ‘barely literate Hedge Priests’.\textsuperscript{69} After a series of letters in the Sydney Gazette the matter was resolved with the assistance of Ullathorne to Brady’s satisfaction in the local courts.\textsuperscript{70}

Brady maintained his reputation for missionary zeal in Reunion by completing the construction of the church at Windsor in 1840. He had also commenced the construction of another church, St. Joseph’s, in the MacDonald river district. He was also engaged in establishing schools and by March 1843 had five schools up and running in the Windsor and MacDonald river districts. The goodwill and assistance from the non-Catholic population in the area helped to achieve this success. Highlighting this interdenominational co-operation the Vicar-General, Francis Murphy, in his covering letter to a petition from the Windsor district requesting permission to locate the Catholic and orphan school in the hospital building, drew attention to its multi-denominational origins.

Sir, I Have the honor [sic] to transmit herewith the accompanying petition from the parents of Roman Catholic children and also from those of other

\textsuperscript{68} Polding to Governor, 23 July 1838, Published in The Australasian Catholic Record, Vol. 14, No2, April 1937, p. 102.

\textsuperscript{69} Letter to the Sydney Gazette, 28 August 1838.

\textsuperscript{70} Birt, Benedictine Pioneers, Vol. 11, p. 315.
Religious Denominations residing in the vicinity of Windsor, respectfully requesting that his excellency the Governor may be pleased to grant the use of the Hospital at that place for one year, for the accommodation of the Roman Catholic school established previously to the year 1837, and for the Windsor Orphan School, under the superintendence of the Revd. John Brady.71

Brady’s success in attracting support from all sides of the religious divide was all the more remarkable considering that it was achieved at a time when the pendulum of debate surrounding the introduction of a state-sponsored education system in Sydney was swinging across an increasingly widening denominational divide. Old world inter-denominational tensions manifested when Governor Richard Bourke attempted in 1836 to introduce a state-funded elementary education system based on the Irish National System.72 The proposal became a sectarian battlefield, rather than generating the educational harmony that Bourke anticipated and which he had experienced first-hand during periodic visits to his Irish estate ‘Thornfield’ in County Limerick. Advising the home government of his intended adoption of the Irish system Bourke identified the provision for separate religious instruction as particularly suited to the needs of the colony.

I am inclined to think that Schools for the general education of the Colonial Youth, supported by the Government and regulated after the manner of the Irish Schools, which since the year 1831 receive aid from Public Funds, would be well suited to the circumstance of this country. I allude to those in which Christians of all creeds are received, where approved Extracts from Scripture are read, but no religious instruction is given by the Master or Mistress, such being imparted on one day of the week by the ministers of the different religions attending at the schools to instruct their respective flocks.73

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71 F. Murphy to Auditor General 8 April 1842, Polding Letter Book, Sydney Archdiocesan Archives, Letter 333.
73 Ibid. p. 48.
This proposal, however, precipitated a prolonged and heated debate between the leaders of the main denominations. By no means peculiar to New South Wales and reflecting growing antagonism between the Anglican church and newly elected Whig government similar proposals to introduce a state-sponsored non-denominational educational system in England in the 1830s encountered spirited opposition from the Anglican hierarchy on the grounds that it undermined its status as the established church.

However, the vicissitudes of internal ecclesiastical relations rather than external inter-denominational disharmony threatened at that time to terminate Brady's tenure in New South Wales. In 1840 Brady became enmeshed in a bitter internal dispute concerning the appointment of a Vicar General to administer the diocese during Polding's planned visit to Europe. When another diocesan priest (probably Francis Murphy) challenged the suitability of Polding's appointed candidate, Polding nominated Brady and Francis Murphy to assist his original appointee, Ullathorne. However, Ullathorne refused to work with Murphy and consequently declared his intention to leave the mission and return to England. Thereupon Brady registered his interest in the position of Vicar General, but, despite his notable success in establishing the Windsor mission, Polding declined his application and awarded the position to Murphy. The aggrieved Brady then advised Ullathorne that he also intended to leave the diocese. Polding, who by this time had embarked for Europe, wrote to Brady requesting that he reconsider. On his return from Europe in 1843,

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77 Polding to Brady, 7 December 1840, Polding Letter Book, Sydney Archdiocesan Archives.
Polding, having received the imprimatur from Rome to constitute Western Australia as a separate suffragan missionary diocese, appointed Brady, as the inaugural Vicar-General to the new see. It is a matter of conjecture whether Polding viewed Brady’s appointment to the far flung colony as compensation for his earlier failure to appoint Brady as Vicar General in Sydney or as an admonishment for his subsequent reaction to not getting the appointment and notice of his intention to leave the mission. Polding’s subsequent recommendation that Rome appoint Ullathorne as the inaugural bishop of Perth ruled out any consideration of promotional advantage motivating Brady’s appointment.

Polding allocated an aged diocesan priest, John Joostens, and a young Irish catechist Patrick O’Reilly to assist Brady in establishing the mission. A native of Belgium, the aging Joostens who had ministered as a diocesan priest in the Sydney diocese acted as Vicar General in Perth during Brady’s extended absence in Europe. He subsequently left Australia for Batavia. Irish by birth, O’Reilly worked as a schoolteacher in Sydney before agreeing to travel west.

Having spent some time ministering in the Albany district en route, the three missionaries disembarked at Fremantle on 8 December 1843 and made their way upriver where Brady and his two companions set about establishing a formal Roman Catholic presence in the main settlement at Perth. The settlement contrasted in many material respects with the colony in New South Wales. Representing one of the most isolated British colonies in the nineteenth century the Swan River Colony, having failed to live up to highly exaggerated expectations, was from secure by the time of

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Brady's arrival. Originally founded as a free crown colony with the natural attributes for a successful agricultural based economy, the settlement teetered on the cusp of failure for several years after the arrival of the first British settlers in 1829. A number of inter-connected factors contributed to the near failure of the venture. Inflated reports regarding the agricultural potential of the land at the Swan River attracted land speculators as well as skilled farmers. Early land grants were erratic in size and location with the most fertile soils annexed in the larger divisions, and officials with little or no farming background took up many of these large grants. With some of these larger grant holders seeing their role as land owners rather than soil cultivators the availability of skilled labour became a problem for those settlers anxious to create a stratified social structure replicating that of their English homeland. Unlike New South Wales, the Swan River Colony had no reserve of cheap convict labour to exploit during its founding years and rising labour costs due to shortage resulted in the employment of novel strategies to bring in cheap labour including the importation of Chinese indentured servants and the transportation of young offenders from Parkhurst prison on the Isle of Wight. Ignorance of the natural environment, local soil types and weather patterns compounded the settler's initial problems. Landholders who were willing to work found their traditional farming skills ill-suited to the unfamiliar new environment. Traditional methods of tree-felling, for example, proved to have little effect in clearing thick hardwood forests described by one settler, John Bussell, as of 'stupendous magnitude and great hardness' and which

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in the southern regions swept down to the water’s edge.84 Disheartened, many of the original immigrants left the colony within a short period after arriving.85 Those who remained through a process of trial and error gradually came to grips with the vagaries of their new environment. Ring barking, a process involving the removal of a collar of bark from near the base of a tree thereby starving the upper trunk of its vital supply of sap, combined with burning replaced the more traditional axe as standard method of clearing timber. Inland exploration identified the most fertile tracts in the countryside surrounding the initial settlement heartland and influenced subsequent patterns of settlement. The alluvial soils in the main river valleys of the southwest region became the primary targets for subsequent expansion. Sheep grazing, particularly for the production of wool, subsequently became identified as a suitable open-range farming enterprise and allowed settlement to expand out into less fertile areas. As a result, by the time of Brady’s arrival a patchwork of small peripheral settlements dotted the south-west region of the colony.86

Notwithstanding these advances toward the future prosperity of the colony, colonial coffers contained little surplus to establish the required infrastructure of roads and bridges. Frontier conditions pertained with little consideration of the more refined social aspirations. Certainly few amongst the struggling immigrant population in the isolated Swan River settlement aspired to secure an education for their offspring. Although the Anglican Colonial Chaplain J.B. Wittenoom, a former English school headmaster, attempted to establish schools in Perth and Fremantle in 1833 the withdrawal of colonial funds and lack of enrolments subsequently forced both schools to close. Held in the Court House the Perth school enrolled boys and was under

86 Cameron, ‘Patterns on the Land’, p. 213.
Wittenoom's personal supervision. In the same year the *Perth Gazette* advised on the opening of a school at Guildford under George Gladman 'similar to the one at Perth and Fremantle'. However, these schools suffered from a general lack of interest and poor attendance rates. Attempting to inject more interest into the issue of education the *Gazette* cautioned parents of the dangers of neglecting to send their children to school and advised them to: 'weigh seriously the importance of giving a suitable education to their rising offspring and to assist in working at the advantages which must of necessity result from insisting upon their children's regular attendance at school, strange to say either ignorance or selfishness influence many parents; and the welfare of their children is sacrificed for the paltry consideration of trifling services.' In addition to these Anglican-run schools, the Methodist church operated from 1834 to 1840 a school for Aborigine children. More an evangelising than an education exercise this school indentured pupils out as servants and housemaids after an initial period of practical training.

These schools were, however, far from secure. When the recently appointed governor, John Hutt, withdrew colonial allowance to these schools in 1839 their future was sealed. Described as an indifferent churchman, Hutt harboired a belief, not uncommon at that time, that the state was not obliged to support public schooling. Unable to survive on income from pupil-charged fees these schools were consequently obliged to close and although a number of private teachers offered tuition in return for payment, the colony remained without a public school. Although the *Inquirer* drew

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87 David Mossenson, *State Education in Western Australia 1829-1960*, Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1972, pp. 4-5.
88 *Gazette*, 16 February 1833, p. 2, Clmn. 2.
89 *Gazette*, 1 June 1833, p. 2, Clmn. 2.
90 *Inquirer*, 11 November 1840, p. 3, Clmn. 2.
92 Mossenson, *State Education in Western Australia*, pp. 2-5.
attention to the necessity for a school, the settlers, more concerned with their material welfare, generally expressed little interest in having their children educated. For his part, Hutt remained adamant that the responsibility of his office did not extend to the provision of schools. Indeed, with their future far from secure little wonder that there was a general consensus amongst its 3,842 men women and children settlers that all available hands including those of children were best occupied in manly labour in an attempt to secure the economic base of the fledgling colony. Bemoaning the absence of public schooling the Inquirer argued that few were interested because the whole time was devoted to ‘agriculture and other farming pursuits and their children are considered to be sufficiently educated if they are trained to all the duties of a farm-the tending of sheep and the herding of cattle’. Thus, by the time Brady and his fellow missionaries arrived in Perth there was no public school in operation and interested parents sent their children to one of the tutors operating small private schools in the settlement.

Hutt received the little Catholic party on their arrival in Perth in November 1843 and allocated a plot of land at Lord Street [Victoria Avenue] to their mission. Determined to provide their mission with a visible public presence as quickly as possible, Brady and his companions commenced the construction of a Catholic church on the designated grant two days after Christmas on 27 December 1843. Despite the initial flurry of enthusiasm progress on the construction of the little church, dedicated to Saint John the Evangelist on whose feast day the building commenced, soon stopped. Thereafter, bridled by a shortage of funds and labour the church remained

93 Blue Book, 1843, Battye Library Perth.
95 Blue Book, 1843, p. 144.
in various stages of completion for several years. Although incomplete it nevertheless represented the only visible evidence of the presence of a formal Catholic mission and, in deference to the frontier nature of the settlement, served as both school and church long before its completion. Reflecting the relatively small practicing Catholic population the church had a weekly attendance of fifty mass goers during these early years and by 1849 attendance numbers reached 130, exceeding the small church’s capacity of 120.\textsuperscript{97} In addition to church building Brady also viewed the provision of education as part of his mission and established an elementary school for boys early in 1844.\textsuperscript{98} Initially located in a storeroom the school subsequently relocated to the unfinished church where the shelter of the east wall provided both teacher and pupil with meagre protection.\textsuperscript{99} Three years later it still lacked doors or windows and the sky was visible through its roof.\textsuperscript{100} Both Joostens and the catechist O’Reilly taught at the school which practiced a combination of the Irish National System and Christian Brothers mode of instruction.\textsuperscript{101} This combination facilitated the routine punctuation of the secular curriculum promoted within the Irish National School system with devotional prayer such as the recitation of the mid-day Angelus and the allocation of set periods of the school day for catechism and religious instruction peculiar to schools run by the Christian Brother’s community.\textsuperscript{102} Significantly, in Ireland after a brief period of co-operation, the delegates at the General Chapter of the Christian Brothers held in 1836 voted unanimously to sever their connection with the Irish

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\textsuperscript{97} Blue Books, for the year 1845, p. 103, and 1849, p. 139.
\textsuperscript{98} Blue Books for the year 1845, p. 103.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid, recorded Joostens as President of the school, p. 105
\textsuperscript{100} Ursula Frayne, Sketches of Conventual Life, p. 12, Manuscript copy in Mercy Archives Perth. folio, 10.
\textsuperscript{102} Edmund Rice to the Archbishop of Cashel, 9 May 1810, cited by Keogh, Edmund Rice, pp. 105-106.
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National system. The main objections to the Irish National System voiced by those attending the General Chapter included the use of textbooks which made little reference to religion and moral subjects and increasing demands from the governing board that younger Brothers attend its teacher training schools. However, the disconnection was not immediate and the last participating Brothers’ school did not break with the National system until 1857.

In Perth, Brady, hampered from developing the mission by financial and manpower constraints, delegated his authority as Vicar-General to the aged Joostens and adopting the strategy employed by his former mentor Ullathorne sailed to Europe in March 1844 in quest of missionaries and financial support.

But events unfolding in Rome were to have a fundamental influence on Brady’s future career. When Ullathorne, who was Polding’s preferred candidate, declined to accept his nomination for the isolated Perth bishopric the curia cast a searching glance for an alternative candidate. Brady, who was then in Rome, and whom Ullathorne had recommended for the position became the new candidate. It is not clear why Ullathorne refused the appointment in favour of Brady who had already run foul of his superior Polding. Moreover, in contrast to Ullathorne Polding had expressed strong reservations about Brady’s ability. Significantly a fellow religious would later describe Ullathorne as ‘Gallican in the strongest way’. Twelve days after his apostolic letter of 6 May 1845 established the diocese, Pope Gregory XVI consecrated

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John Brady in Rome as inaugural bishop of Perth on 18 May 1845.\textsuperscript{107}

Erected as a suffragan to the Archdiocese of Sydney and comprising all of Western Australia, Brady’s new diocese covered an area of 975,920 square miles. The diocese was subsequently subdivided in 1867 when Pope Pius IX decreed the Benedictine mission at New Norcia and its hinterland an \textit{Abbey Nullius Diocensis} with its own distinct mission territory.\textsuperscript{108} Perth subsequently became a suffragan to the newly established Melbourne Archdiocese in 1874 and later to Adelaide in 1887. A decade later, on 22 March 1898, Pope Leo XIII excised the diocese of Geraldton from Perth under the episcopate of Bishop Kelly and elevated Perth to the status of an Archepiscopal See in 1913. In 1848 the pioneering Catholic population estimated at 337 was predominantly Irish and occupied the lower social strataums.\textsuperscript{109} For example, of the forty-seven Catholic immigrants that disembarked from the \textit{Ganges} in October 1841, all with the exception of two, a bricklayer and sawyer respectively, were listed as servants and labourers.\textsuperscript{110}

Thus sanctioned with the authoritative status of bishop, Brady resumed his quest to solicit labour and finance with renewed vigour. He secured financial aid from the French Society for the Propagation of the Faith and randomly petitioned missionaries from within the ranks of both regular and diocesan metropolitan clergy. As a result he assembled a group of missionaries from an assortment of religious and ethnic backgrounds. The final group included two Spanish Benedictine monks, Dom Rosendo Salvado and Dom Joseph Maria Benedict Serra; an Italian priest, Angelo Confalonieri, and catechist Nicola Caporelli; a number of French priests from the

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\textsuperscript{109} Census of Western Australia, 1848, Battye Library, Perth.
\textsuperscript{110} Western Australia Shipping Lists, Battye Library, Perth, Acc. 36, CSR, 162/11.
Missionary Association of the Immaculate Heart including Fathers Thevaux, Thierse and Boucher, a novice and two Brothers; an English Benedictine, Denis Tootle; an Irish priest, Peter Powell; six Sisters from the recently founded Irish Mercy Order and six Irish catechists.\textsuperscript{111} As well as its ethnic diversity the group of twenty-seven missionaries that embarked on the Elizabeth on 17 September 1845 represented both male and female contemplative and active congregations as well as secular religious traditions. The inclusion of the Mercy Sisters, an active teaching congregation, testified to Brady’s vision that the establishment of schools was central to his mission.\textsuperscript{112}

On their arrival Brady carved the diocese into geographical spheres to which he swiftly assigned his unprepared missionary workforce; south to the Vasse settlement [Albany], north to Port Essington [Darwin] and East to the Victoria Plains [New Norcia]. Brady remained in Perth and appointed Father Powell cathedral curate.\textsuperscript{113} The Mercy Sisters, no provision having been made for their accommodation, secured temporary board with a member of the Methodist community, a Mrs Crisp, before moving to rented accommodation on St. George’s Terrace. There one of the community, Catherine Gogarty, succumbed to an illness in the end of July 1846. In August, seeking a more private location for their convent, the community moved to rented accommodation in Lord Street [Victoria Avenue] located close to the church where they proceeded to establish a school.\textsuperscript{114} The frontier nature of the settlement soon presented practical problems for the unprepared missionaries. For example, the members of the Mercy community struggled daily with the sand reflected glaring

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\textsuperscript{112} Brady’s emphasis on education throughout his missionary work echoed the Gallican canonist Fénelon who considered education a central social responsibility. F. Fénelon, \textit{Education of Girls}, Boston: Ginn and Company, 1891, p.38.
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\textsuperscript{113} Bourke, \textit{Catholic Church in Western Australia}, p. 40.
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sunlight. By November of their first year the superior, Ursula Frayne, in an effort to combat eye infections requested a supply of dark glasses and parasols from the community’s house in Dublin.\(^{115}\)

Elsewhere the missionaries found the conditions intolerable. Confronted by a combination of poor planning, inadequate finance, and a numerically small population many of the missionaries, having endured both physical and emotional distress including disease, near starvation and in some cases the death of their companions, became disillusioned and withdrew from the diocese.\(^{116}\) Consequently, the mission rapidly contracted to the main settlement at Perth where Bishop Brady, his curate Powell, a catechist Timothy Donovan and the five Mercy Sisters held the line. The Benedictine mission at New Norcia was reduced to Salvado; Serra having sailed to Europe at Brady’s request to procure financial aid in 1847.\(^{117}\)

Stoically, the remaining missionaries continued to establish the mission including the provision of education. In doing so they subsequently interwove their individual cultural identities representing an amalgam of their own unique origins, formation and traditions into the fabric of the mission. At this historical juncture the diverse culture of the Mercy Sisters from Ireland and Brady with his French Gallican formation prevailed on the fledgling mission’s educational orientation. Although from the outset concerned with evangelising the native aboriginal people the influence of the Benedictine culture represented by Joseph Serra and Rosendo Salvado was not to impact on education until Serra became Bishop of Perth in 1852 and the order


\(^{115}\) Frayne to Mother Cecilia, 22 November 1846, Geraldine Byrne, *Valiant Women Letters From the Foundation Sisters of Mercy in Western Australia, 1845-1849*, Melbourne: Folding Press, 1981, Letter, 7A, p. 41. Frayne’s correspondent, Cecilia Marmion, had, on the death of the founder succeeded, as the Mother Superior of the convent in Baggot Street, Dublin.

\(^{116}\) The misfortunes that befell the missionaries included drowning and an accidental shooting, Bourke, *Catholic Church in Western Australia*, p. 47.

developed its own formal school in the 1890s. This Benedictine development will be taken up in chapter 3. As its progenitors both Brady and the Mercy foundation personified the earliest internal cultural influences on the nascent Western Australian Catholic education system. Yet, despite the uniformity of their educational objectives to develop a Catholic school system, the individual influences of these two parties were not always symbiotic. In addition to their individual and combined input, tensions arising from differences between Brady’s ecclesiology and the Mercy identity as a religious community frequently influenced Catholic educational outcomes in this period.

Established in Dublin in 1831 the Mercy congregation had its origins in a secular rather than a religious movement. Founded by the daughter of a Dublin businessman, Catherine McAuley, the Mercy community originated as a benevolent society of middle-class women animated to provide assistance and protection to working-class girls exposed to corruption and ‘moral dangers’ in a city rank with social problems. Like McAuley the first members of the community came from privileged middle-class backgrounds and the initial group included the daughters and niece of the prominent Catholic barrister, parliamentarian and leader of the Catholic Emancipation movement, Daniel O’Connell.\textsuperscript{118} As such, McAuley and her companions echoed the altruistic sentiment expressed in the charitable activities of upper and middle-class women throughout the cities of Victorian Britain who aspired to preserve the social fabric of their society by inculcating an awareness of the moral values of their own social class to the rapidly multiplying numbers of urban working-class women. In addition to fulfilling a sense of social obligation, this voluntary commitment also provided an opportunity to circumvent gender-based restrictions on

\textsuperscript{118} Monograph titled \textit{Catherine McAuley Educator}, p. 3, no author or date given, International Mercy Archives, Baggot St, Dublin, box marked Education.
the role of women in Victorian society which identified women with the private
domain of home and family as wives and mothers.\textsuperscript{119} As voluntary work it did not
unsettle bourgeois patriarchal sensitivities pertaining to the gentle role of middle-class
ladies within the Victorian household.\textsuperscript{120} Inspired by masculine ideals of femininity
and constructed along class lines, these sensitivities restricted female involvement in
paid work to the less refined ranks of the working class.\textsuperscript{121} Victorian middle-class
concepts of propriety, however, piously endorsed female involvement in charitable
work then interpreted as a social necessity. Consequently, involvement in church-
based organised philanthropy was not only approved of but also became an escape
route from the repetitive round of domestic life for many, particularly single middle-
class, Victorian women of all denominations.\textsuperscript{122} Not surprisingly then a variety of
middle-class church-based societies sprang up to channel funds and more particularly
to advise on acceptable moral standards to the needy in general and to women in
particular.

McAuley, however, determined to extend her crusade beyond contemporary
horizons of a charitable amelioration of poverty and aspired to provide a more
permanent solution. Accordingly, she forfeited her personal privilege and material
comfort and allocated her substantial financial inheritance to establish a refuge for
poor girls and ‘workwomen’ in the Irish capital. In doing so she followed a precedent
already set in Dublin by other wealthy women including Mary Aikenhead and Frances
Ball.\textsuperscript{123}

\textsuperscript{119} June Purvis, \textit{A History of Women's Education in England}, Milton Keynes (U.K.): Open University
\textsuperscript{120} Sean Gill, \textit{Women and the Church of England from the Eighteenth Century to the Present}, London:
Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1994, p. 132.
\textsuperscript{121} Purvis, \textit{A History of Women's Education}, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{122} Gill, \textit{Women and the Church of England}, p. 134.
The Mercy community commenced their soul-saving crusade with a school and dormitory residence for pupils, helpers and inmates at Baggot Street, Dublin, in 1824. Indicating the intended orientation of her community McAuley advised a confidant that women ‘who prefer a conventual life, and are prevented embracing it from the nature of property or connections, may retire to this house. It is expected a gratuity will be given and an annual pension paid sufficient to meet the expense a lady must incur’. Again reflecting their middle-class background the group in accord with contemporary middle-class domestic ideology refrained from routine domestic tasks. Accordingly housemaids were employed to carry out delegated household chores.\footnote{124}

Although incorporating spiritual contemplation in their daily communal activities the group did not seek recognition as a formal religious institute. On the contrary, unlike her predecessors Ball and Aikenhead who both founded religious communities McAuley was anxious to resist any identification with convent life and initially insisted on a secular identity for her community.\footnote{125} Consequently the group was representative of the many contemporary groups of middle-class women from all denominations including Quaker and Anglican who came together to perform practical altruistic work amongst the increasingly urbanised poor of the early nineteenth-century.\footnote{126} Indeed McAuley displayed a willingness to embrace non-Catholic support for her venture and drew on the school run by the exclusively Anglican Kildare Place Society which she visited regularly to construct her own school model.\footnote{127}

\footnote{124} June Purvis, \textit{A History of Women’s Education}, p. 6
\footnote{126} Gill, \textit{Women and the Church of England}, p. 132.
However, despite its pronounced secular status the Baggot Street community thereafter rapidly moved toward a more pronounced religious identity. But, this transformation was more a reaction to external ecclesiastical forces than to internally generated demands. In 1828 the Institute of the House of Mercy in Baggot Street was granted diocesan approval as a secular institute by the Archbishop of Dublin, Daniel Murray. In practice this status bestowed on the community the archbishop’s permission to carry out works of charity on his behalf within the Dublin Archdiocese.\textsuperscript{128} The group and their sanctuary, however, soon encountered a groundswell of opposition from both clerical and lay elements within the local Catholic establishment. Both practical and ideological influences shaped this opposition. Established religious institutions and their supporters feared that the new fraternity would encroach upon their voluntary support base and thus undermine their economy. Some diocesan clergy believed that the uncertain status of the group presented significant problems regarding clerical jurisdiction. In keeping with their strict Tridentine orientation these priests viewed all groups with a religious orientation but not directly subject to the clergy with suspicion and sometimes hostility.\textsuperscript{129} Such was the attitude of Matthew Kelly, the administrator of the nearby parish of St. Andrew’s who, having received a guided tour of the refuge, advised that Archbishop Murray wished to have the house placed under the administration of the Irish Sisters of Charity. Established by Mary Aikenhead in 1816 and modelled on a contemporary French order titled the Daughters of Charity, the Irish Sisters of Charity was a prominent religious community of women and subject to ecclesiastical control.\textsuperscript{130} According to one of Catherine McAuley’s colleagues, ‘Several of the clergy made no

\textsuperscript{128} Sullivan, \textit{Catherine McAuley}, p. 12.  
\textsuperscript{129} Gibson, \textit{A Social History of French Catholicism}, p. 25.  
\textsuperscript{130} Clear, \textit{Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland}, p. 50.
secret of their opposition though obliged to confess that it was grounded not on any
mismanagement or misconduct which had come to their knowledge, but on an opinion
that hereafter evil consequences would ensue from certain arrangements which were
not such as they thought advisable.¹³¹

Thus challenged by prevailing conservative clerical and lay prejudices the future
of the community was far from certain. Certainly any expression of feminine
independence would have attracted even greater opposition from a highly patriarchal
Catholic administration. Accordingly, McAuley conceded to the advice offered to her
by the Archdiocesan Vicar General, Michael Blake, and agreed to reconfigure her
group as a religious institute.¹³² In doing so, McAuley turned to an already established
order of Irish teaching sisters for guidance on the rules of her institute. Founded in
1794, the Presentation Order was the foremost female religious congregation involved
in educating the poor in Ireland at that time. McAuley and two companions
subsequently elected to undergo their own spiritual formation at the Presentation
convent in Dublin.¹³³ Subsequent to their profession in 1831 the trio returned to
Baggot Street to formulate the regulations governing the spiritual formation and future
conventual life of the new community to be known as the Sisters of Mercy. Although
drawing on the Presentation rule, McAuley carefully avoided anything that might
limit the congregation’s intended mission to instruct poor girls. She discarded the
strict enclosure regulation practiced by the Presentation Sisters and adopted simple
vows of poverty, chastity and obedience as opposed to the more traditional solemn
vows associated with enclosure. Unlike contemplative cloistered orders, members of
the congregation were free to move outside the confines of their convent and work

¹³¹ Mary Ann Doyle, ‘Notes on the Life of Mother Catherine McAuley By One of the First Sisters of
¹³² Ibid, p. 52.
amongst the sick and disadvantaged and educate the poor. This was incorporated in the fifth rule which stated:

The sisters shall feel convinced that no work of charity can be more productive of good to society, or more conductive to the happiness of the poor than the careful instruction of women, since whatever be the station they are destined to fill, their example and advice will always possess influence, and where ever a religious woman presides, peace and good order are generally to be found. 134

Under the influential patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, the community gained papal approbation in 1841. Accordingly, they became the first congregation of religious sisters to gain papal approval and become a religious congregation in the canonical sense. Again, confirmation of this status generated concern within the ranks of the Irish episcopate who had already unsuccessfully objected to the elevation of another teaching congregation, The Christian Brothers, to papal approval.135 Individual bishops resented the autonomy granted to the recipient communities by this status and perceived it as undermining their own diocesan jurisdiction. The General Chapters and Superior Generals of congregations granted papal approbation, subject to congregational constitutions, exercised exclusive control over the diocesan activities of their members. Hence McAuley, careful to avoid possible censure from the hierarchy provided for episcopal accountability in her constitution. Chapter 1 part two of the rules and constitutions of the of the congregation stated:

This religious congregation of the sisters of Mercy shall be always subject to the authority of the Diocesan Bishop, and the Sisters shall respect and obey him as their first superior after the Holy See. If on account of his many avocations he should not have leisure to attend immediately to the direction of the Community, a Priest shall be appointed by him on whose prudence, piety and experience he can depend to govern and direct under him and to whom he will give the necessary faculties. Nothing of

135 Keogh, Edmund Rice, p 67.
importance relating to the house or community shall be undertaken without the consent of the Bishop.\footnote{136}

Notwithstanding this provision tensions periodically manifested between local bishops who attempted to extend their episcopal jurisdiction beyond the convent door and appropriate the administration of Mercy foundations within their individual diocese, and the community members who, in keeping with their bourgeois origins, desired control over their own affairs. Despite the presence and periodic eruption of these tensions concerning ecclesiastical authority and episcopal jurisdiction, the hierarchy in general realised the potential of Mercy Sisters as cost-effective school administrators and teachers and the community rapidly became the foremost female teaching community in Ireland. A number of factors, not least their teaching practice and constitutional structure, enabled the community to become a primary force in the Catholic education system.

In pursuing its acclaimed educational objectives the Mercy community, like their male counterparts the Christian Brothers, employed the monitoryal system associated with the Lancastrian model of schooling wherein senior girls under the direction of a sister-teacher were entrusted with the school-room supervision of younger children.\footnote{137} This system developed by Andrew Bell in (1753-1832) and Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838) was widely adopted because of its staffing economy which required only one teacher to instruct and supervise the older children who in turn acted as monitors for the more junior pupils.\footnote{138}

Unlike its exemplar the Presentation Order the Mercy congregation had no centralised constitutional structure but was localised and subject to diocesan episcopal


\footnote{137} Sullivan, \textit{Catherine McAuley}, p. 132

authority. The decentralised constitution of the order allowing new foundations autonomy from the mother convent proved particularly attractive to diocesan bishops who jealously protected their own diocesan jurisdiction. Similarly, in contrast to the more traditional cloistered nuns who contained their work in schools or hospitals within the convent precincts, the work of the Mercy community was free from such demarcation and thus of greater benefit to diocesan bishops. A further distinguishing feature of the Mercy community, in contrast to their male contemporaries in the Christian Brothers, was their willingness to conduct their schools within the framework of the state-sponsored National Education system. Under the terms of the Irish National School legislation this practice enabled participating schools to avail themselves of government grants and thus ease the burden on diocesan funds.

Nevertheless, Mercy collaboration with the Irish National School system was not always possible and despite the economic advantage a handful of bishops continued to voice opposition to the new scheme and the cleavage between traditional and nationalist Gallican bishops endured. In 1838 led by John MacHale of Tuam the group of bishops who opposed the system alleged that the books prescribed by the national board, particularly Scripture Lessons and Lessons on the Truth of Christianity, subverted the authority of the Catholic Church and supported a latitudinarian relaxed approach to doctrinaire denominational differences. However, led by Murray the bishops who supported the system remained steadfast and both sides appealed their grievances to Rome. After three years of claims and counterclaims Rome eventually directed that each bishop act according to his individual conscience. Thus the issue was left in abeyance with the majority of

139 Clear, Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland p. 52.
140 Akenson, The Irish Education Experiment: p. 87.
bishops permitting schools within their diocesan jurisdiction to affiliate to the state-sponsored system.\textsuperscript{142}

Despite the controversy surrounding the debate within the episcopate regarding the appropriateness of participating in the system, the Mercy community continued to work within the system.\textsuperscript{143} Furthermore, McAuley became an outspoken advocate of the system. Writing to a member of her community, Aloysius Scott, in 1841 she advised that she fully regretted any opposition to the system which was supported by Archbishop Murray of Dublin. ‘I am sorry to find any displeasure existing toward the National Education Board … and Dr Murray is its chief patron. This is the peace to be prayed for: and the plenty is Miss Ryan [A monitress in the Mercy convent school in the regional town of Birr]. Prayer will do more than all the money in the Bank of Ireland. Let us pray well and never grow weary’.\textsuperscript{144} Similarly McAuley did not allow protests alleging proselytism from some bishops to deter her from participating in the teacher training scheme operated under the auspices of the General Board. Sister M. Vincent Whitty, who succeeded as the Superior in Baggot St. in 1839, was one of the first female teachers to receive a qualification certificate from the National Board’s central teacher training school in Marlborough Street in Dublin.\textsuperscript{145} Although their vows of poverty prohibited direct salary payment to individual members, their schools attracted state aid in the form of per capita grants based on enrolment numbers and thus relieved bishops, in part at least, from their fiscal responsibility toward diocesan convent schools.

\textsuperscript{144} Monograph titled Notes on Catherine McAuley on Education, no Author or Date, Archives Mercy International Centre, Dublin, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{145} Bolster, \textit{Catherine McAuley}, p. 5.
In addition to supplying elementary education the community from 1838 became increasingly involved in providing fee-paying schools for the daughters of the more financially secure echelons of nineteenth-century Irish Catholic society. The first Mercy convent to establish an exclusively upper-class school was in 1837 in the provincial town of Carlow in response to a request from the local bishop.\textsuperscript{146} Thenceforth the Mercy community became more popularly, though not exclusively, associated with establishing these fee-paying ‘superior schools’.\textsuperscript{147} Through these superior schools the Mercy’s formed Christian wives and mothers for the emerging regional Catholic bourgeoisie and their offspring whilst replenishing their own numbers with young women garnished from appropriate backgrounds to maintain the community’s middle-class identity.\textsuperscript{148} The annalist of the Carlow convent later recorded the importance of this middle class education.

Although properly speaking the education of the middle class is not a feature of our Institute, yet our venerated Foundress gave her fullest sanction to its being undertaken by this community. The Presentation Nuns having been established in Carlow for some years prior to our coming, and having devoted themselves most zealously to the instruction of poor girls, the Bishop directed that we should leave that portion of the vineyard entirely to them as their exclusive work. Right Rev. Dr. Daly [Nolan’s posthumous successor] considering of almost equal importance the religious education of children of the better class, requested rev. Mother to undertake it.\textsuperscript{149}

McAuley viewed this expansion of their work beyond its original altruistic objectives as an opportunity to safeguard the hearts and minds of middle-class homes

\textsuperscript{146} The pioneering Mercy community included Ursula Frayne the future superior of the Perth foundation. Sullivan, \textit{Catherine McAuley}, p. 225.
\textsuperscript{149} Excerpts from the Annals of St. Leo’s Convent of Mercy Carlow, Sullivan, \textit{Catherine McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy}, p. 228.
as well as secure recruits to the community. Advising the Cork foundation to establish a similar school as soon as possible she wrote: 'The pension school in Carlow is making great progress. You must get their regulations. It is quite simple and does not seem to add to their toils. Some sweet young persons amongst them bid fair become Sisters. They are all interested and some prefer it to any other duty.'

This meander in their educational direction to include upper schools for middle-class girls also demanded curriculum expansion from the core elementary subjects which included tuition in History, Geography, English, Book-Keeping, Reading, Writing, Spelling and English Grammar. Classical stories were told 'as a stimulus for hero worship and mental enrichment' and Catechism was taught for thirty minutes each day, with great attention paid daily to 'civility of manners and goodness of heart'. Again ancillary subjects such as personal hygiene, moral training and housekeeping skills, were replaced with more genteel pursuits including deportment where special attention was given to 'control of the eyes and countenance as well as other essentials of good breeding', the classics and music.

Thus, the community became increasingly associated with forming a nucleus of cultured and disciplined young women that subsequently would as wives and mothers propagate a future regional middle-class Catholic constituency and who would also inculcate values appropriate to the middle-class status of the future vanguard of Irish Catholic society. The establishment of schools for the middle-class subsequently became a defining component of the Mercy national and international mission.

151 Regan, Tender Courage, p. 89.
In addition to its stratified configuration of free and fee-paying schools, the community’s hierarchical structure of choir and lay sisters also mirrored contemporary social divisions. Those who joined the community as choir sisters would also espouse the middle-class construction of their calling. Reflecting their comparatively privileged backgrounds, many of these young women entering convents in Ireland in the early nineteenth century surrendered substantial dowries to provide for their future upkeep in the host community.\textsuperscript{154} Although averaging £200 to £300, dowry sums of £2000 and one of £35,000 were also recorded.\textsuperscript{155} In addition to recruiting from the more wealthy Catholic families the two-tiered structure of Mercy communities also allowed less privileged aspirants to join. Excluded from the primary activities undertaking by choir sisters such as teaching and school administration, lay sisters were allocated menial tasks within the community such as housekeeping and washing duties. As housekeepers lay sisters were seen to exercise their spirituality through providing a more practical contribution within the community as cooks and housekeepers.\textsuperscript{156} Thus the community reinforced the dominant middle-class ideology of the existing social order which demarcated the more menial and heavier household tasks as the subordinate preserve of working-class women with lighter duties the preserve of their-middle class sisters.\textsuperscript{157} This ideal of different spheres of household duties for working and middle class women was succinctly expressed by a prominent social worker Mrs Raynard in 1846 regarding their respective potential input in community work.

The woman goes where the lady might not enter, and performs offices which are most fittingly rendered by persons of the working class. The floor is scrubbed by a good woman better than by a pious lady. Yet the lady can find the scrubbing brush, and the soap, and materials for soup

\textsuperscript{154} Sullivan, Catherine McAuley, p. 229
\textsuperscript{155} Clear, Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland, p. 87.
\textsuperscript{156} Clear, Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland, 94, Sullivan, Catherine McAuley, p. 228.
\textsuperscript{157} Gill, Women and the Church of England, p. 2.
and supplies of clothing and the funds that are needful, and the sympathy and counsel which are indispensable, and be very blessed in her deed.\textsuperscript{158}

Consequently as a group the six members of the pioneering Mercy community in Perth mirrored the middle-class culture of the order. Far from humble they represented a group of spirited Victorian women. Their appointed superior, Mary Ursula Frayne had joined the community in Baggot Street in 1834 and received the habit in 1835.\textsuperscript{159} The daughter of a Dublin businessman who had converted to Catholicism Frayne had previously led a Newfoundland foundation where her mission included the provision of a privileged education for those in a position to pay for it.\textsuperscript{160} The stated aim of the Newfoundland school was to teach the daughters of the wealthy, ‘elegant and fashionable accomplishments of the day, and at the same time have their young minds properly imbued with the principles of religion.'\textsuperscript{161} Portentously Frayne withdrew from Newfoundland back to Dublin after disagreement with the bishop.

Although hastily assembled, the pioneering Australian group included representatives from all ranks of the community and were predominantly middle class.\textsuperscript{162} In addition to Frayne the group included two fully professed sisters, Catherine Gogarty and Ann Xavier Dillon, the remaining four, Catherine de la Hoye (Sister Ignatia), Eliza Kelly (Sister Mary Aloysius) Mary O’Donnell (Sister Baptist) and Catherine O’Reilly (Sister Evangelista) were novices at different stages of their formation.\textsuperscript{163} While Mary O’Donnell’s dowry was £200, O’Reilly, who became a novice after her arrival, was clearly a lay sister and acted as servant in the absence of a

\textsuperscript{158} Reproduced in June Purvis, \textit{A History of Women’s Education in England}, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{159} Sullivan, \textit{Catherine McAuley}, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{161} Clear, \textit{Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland}, p. 104.
\textsuperscript{163} McIay, \textit{Women Out of their Sphere}, pp. 7-20.
housekeeper. Revealingly in a letter to Dublin Frayne dismissively described O’Reilly as ‘exceedingly plain and very ignorant’.¹⁶⁴

The Mercy Foundation established their inaugural school in a rented house on Saint George’s Terrace in February 1846. The school, which enrolled both boys and girls, had an initial enrolment of six children. In its close proximity to the military barracks the location proved unsuitable either as convent or school and the sisters moved to rented accommodation in Lord Street in August where they commenced a free school for girls adjacent to the yet unfinished church. In keeping with the bourgeois educational emphasis of the community in Ireland, the Perth Sisters attempted to establish a fee-paying school soon after their arrival. Unlike the increasing fortunes of middle-class Catholic Ireland, however, the colony’s restricted economic development, impoverished Catholic constituency, and indignation from the Anglican establishment who were invited to participate obviated interest and consequently temporarily deferred the immediate establishment of such a school.¹⁶⁵ The poverty of the Catholic constituency promised little prospect to the Mercy community either as a resource for future members or as a source of potential students for a fee-paying school. Relating her own apprehensions about future developments Frayne advised her Dublin correspondent, Mother Cecilia, that the Catholic constituency in the colony was sadly greatly different from what they were accustomed to dealing with in Ireland. In doing so she complained that ‘there is not the slightest prospect of our being joined by any person in the colony as the inhabitants, that is the Catholic portion, are either poor tradesmen or farmers, or the families of soldiers stationed here for a time, or else permanently settled on being

¹⁶⁴ Frayne to Mother Cecilia, 19 December 1848, Byrne, Valiant Women, Letter 25, p. 117. Again demonstrating the exigencies of the mission O’Reilly was eventually admitted as a Choir Sister.
discharged from the army. The respectable people, as they call themselves, are with one solitary exception, Protestants’.

Remarking on the different responses amongst the Catholic laity to her approaches for support for her school, Frayne reported that she had encountered at least four different responses to her appeals for pupil enrolments. ‘Some listened eagerly and at once promised compliance. Others seemed distrustful, as if doubting our sincerity, a third class of person hardly looked at us, whilst others seemed glad of the opportunity of hearing themselves talk.’ This was clearly not a viable middle-class Catholic constituency eager for self-improving bourgeois education such as Frayne knew well in Dublin and Carlow. However, the non-Catholic population did include a middle or upper working-class constituency and this constituency consequently became the focus of the Mercy community’s educational programme. From the outset the Mercy community did not discriminate between pupils from different denominational backgrounds and the sixty-three girls enrolled in their free school within months of its establishment in 1846 included non-Catholics as well as Catholic children.

Nonetheless, the majority of the Protestant community welcomed the opportunity provided by the missionaries to educate their children and by the end of the first year 1846 the Mercy run school had nearly as many Protestants as Catholic children in their sixty pupil enrolment. This served to heighten the resolve amongst the administrative elite to establish an alternative system. Consequently, in 1846 with the enthusiastic support of Governor Andrew Clarke a number of publicly

166 Ibid.
168 *Blue Books*, 1846, p. 142.
169 Frayne to Mother Cecilia, 10 September 1846, Byrne, *Valiant Women*, Letter 7A, p. 38.
170 Mossenson, *State Education in Western Australia*, 1972, p. 9.
financed schools were established in the colony at Perth, Fremantle, Guildford, York and Albany.\textsuperscript{171} Under the direct control of the governor, and enrolling both boys and girls from all denominational backgrounds these ‘Colonial Schools’ were intended to restrict the Catholic education mission. Clarke’s resolute refusal to allocate any aid to the two Catholic schools in Perth, despite promises to the contrary by his predecessor, evinced his intent to undermine the Catholic education mission. Clarke rejected all appeals for assistance from Brady on the grounds that the Colonial School system exhausted the limited share of public funds available.\textsuperscript{172} Increasingly frustrated by Clarke’s anti-Catholic disposition Peter Powell, Brady’s vicar general, advised Clarke that: ‘His Lordship cannot understand how the Colonial Government could deprive the Catholic children of a portion of the funds appropriated for the benefit of general education’.\textsuperscript{173} Clarke’s attempt to justify his refusal to subscribe Catholic schools on the grounds that all available finances had been exhausted on the public system rang hollow in the light of his concurrent active involvement in attempting to expand public schooling into surrounding settlements. In his reply to enquires from the governor regarding the feasibility of establishing a colonial school locally the Anglican minister in the Middle Swan district, William Mitchell, advised the Colonial Secretary in March 1846 that although forty children of school-going age resided in the area many were full-time engaged in assisting on their parent’s land. Reflecting the depressed state of the economy, Mitchell further advised that although the employment of aboriginal labour could potentially solve the pupil problem, lack of circumstances ruled out any possibility of the parents shouldering the cost of a school.

\textsuperscript{171} Blue Book, 1846, pp 142-3.
\textsuperscript{172} Colonial Secretary to Brady 10 March 1846, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, C.S.F. 22/110.
\textsuperscript{173} Peter Powell to Colonial Secretary, 27 March 1846, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, C.S.R. Vol. 47/178.
Again indicating existing social cleavages, Mitchell advised that two or three gentlemen farmers had indicated that they would contribute £50 or £60 per annum conditional on the availability of a classical education for their sons in such an establishment.\textsuperscript{174} One month later in May 1846 Mitchell welcomed the proposal to establish a colonial school in Guildford and recommended a local resident, Mr Abraham Jones, as principal teacher.\textsuperscript{175} Despite previous refusals Brady persistently continued to request support from Clarke and in April 1846 complained that Catholic parents could not in conscience send their children to the governor’s Colonial Schools because they were Protestant in perspective and lacked organisation.

His lordship is well informed relative to the late management made by the local government for the education of children. Schools have been erected in different districts of the colony on Protestant principles without any previous arrangement or system of education, the only measure upon which Catholic parents would send their children to such schools. His lordship is also aware that this application [for aid] had been laid before the local government before the above arrangement.\textsuperscript{176}

But this approach for assistance met the same fate as before and was refused.\textsuperscript{177} Clarke, however, appeared to take some notice of Brady’s complaint about the absence of a regulatory structure and drafted a set of rules and regulations regarding the Colonial schools. Under the terms of admission published in the Government Gazette 19 June 1846 ‘Colonial Schools were open to children of all classes and religious denominations whether male or female’. Parents deemed capable paid fees and teachers received a government allowance to make up for any shortfall in

\textsuperscript{174} W. Mitchell to Colonial Secretary, 17 March 1846, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, C.S.R. Vol. 147/175.

\textsuperscript{175} W. Mitchell to Colonial Secretary, 16 May 1846, Western Australian State Archives, C.S.R. Vol. 147/185.

\textsuperscript{176} Powell to Colonial Secretary, 2 April 1846 Western Australian State Archives, Perth, C.S.R. Vol., 147/179.

\textsuperscript{177} Colonial Secretary to Powell, 10 April, 1846, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, C.S.F. 49/22.
wages.\textsuperscript{178} Apart from regulations governing administration the new regulations contained no directions regarding curriculum or pedagogic aids such as school readers. Despite the virtual withdrawal of government support the Catholic system, in Perth at least, still held pride of place, and by the end of 1846 the school for boys, St. Johns, recorded an attendance of fifty-three and the Mercy school had increased its enrolment to sixty-three by the time official statistics were collated for that year.\textsuperscript{179} These attendance numbers became all the more significant when considered against the twenty male and seven female pupils attending the Perth Free Grammar School then under the supervision of an Oxford graduate John Gibson.\textsuperscript{180}

Encouraged by this success and chastened by Clarke’s continued refusal to fulfil a promise of aid made by his predecessor, Hutt, Brady in December 1846 embarked on a forthright response to the local administration’s blank refusal to grant assistance to his schools. Determined to outflank the local Anglican establishment, in a way emulating his actions in Windsor, he took his appeal for financial aid directly to the highest level. He collected a memorial from his still small constituency alleging that the school system operated by the administration was a thinly veneered sectarian vehicle and forwarded it to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Earl Grey.\textsuperscript{181} Significantly, in a move indicating his acknowledgement of their middle-class influence, Brady modestly acquiesced to request Frayne to forward a copy of the memorial signed by 156 Catholics to Baggot Street for copying and distribution amongst influential individuals considered favourable to the Catholic cause, including the ubiquitous Daniel O’Connell. In her covering letter attached to petition Frayne advised Dublin that; ‘Dr. Brady sends the enclosed petition to her Majesty of which he

\textsuperscript{178} Government Gazette, 19 June 1846, No. 60.
\textsuperscript{179} Blue book, 1846, p. 142.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid.
begs you will have the charity to make five or six copies written signatures and all-one for St. Catherine’s one for the liberator [O'Connell], and the other for any influential friend you might know of who would be disposed to take part with the oppressed.¹⁸²

For her part Frayne refused to rely completely on the ability of episcopal intercession, and again exhibiting an independence and self-assuredness indicative of her middle-class background and also of her perception of the eminence of her position as Superior of the convent, she dispatched her own appeal against the administration to Queen Victoria. In their petition the sisters assured the monarch of their allegiance, and their objectives to Christianise the Aboriginal population to inculcate a healthy respect for the crown and pray for her heavenly reward.¹⁸³ With regard to the Aboriginal population Frayne assured the monarch that evangelisation would make them faithful and useful subjects,

Some of them who are parents could easily be induced by kind treatment to give up their children into our care; these children instructed first themselves, would in time draw others to share in their newly-found happiness and thus hundreds, ignorant as yet of every moral and social duty, would be brought to the knowledge, love and service of God, consequently to be faithful subjects of Your Majesty and useful members of society.¹⁸⁴

It appears Victoria had made her own heavenly arrangements, as there is no record of any reply.

Relations between the Catholic mission and local administration deteriorated further under the governorship of Chidley Irwin who succeeded as acting governor on the death of Clarke in February 1847. An Irishman, born in Enniskillen and son of an Anglican priest, Irwin harboured inherited suspicions against Catholicism. The

¹⁸² Frayne to Mother Cecilia, January 1847, Byrne, Valiant Women, Letter 7B, p. 53.
¹⁸³ Frayne to Mother Cecilia, April 1847, Byrne, Valiant Women, Letter 8, pp. 55-58.
¹⁸⁴ Frayne to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, 29 January 1847 reproduced in Byrne, Valiant Women, p. 57.
presence of another Irish Protestant, George Fletcher Moore, as Acting Colonial Secretary (Nov 1846 –May 1847), exacerbated the situation. Also a native of Ulster, Moore exhibited a sectarian disposition. Later to be described as bigoted Orangemen, Irwin and his secretary made little attempt to conceal their opposition to any expansion of the Catholic school system. The continuing success of the Catholic schools in Perth, especially the convent school, in contrast to the increasingly moribund public system introduced by Clarke, sharpened the cutting edge of this official sectarianism. The announcement in May 1847 that the Mercys intended to construct a new convent school to accommodate increasing enrolments only served to heighten sectarian anxieties regarding the expansion of Catholic education.

In his address to the Legislative Council in June 1847 Irwin proposed a number of initiatives to rehabilitate the ailing state system and implicitly curtail the success of Catholic schools. He sought to enlist leading colonists to serve as visiting school supervisors and to engender more acceptable Victorian values into the system by separating the boys and girls schools. By September 1847 a Committee for the Management of Colonial Schools was convened. Exclusively non-Catholic and composed of prominent public figures the committee included the Anglican chaplain J. B. Wittenoom, the Advocate General Richard W. Nash, the editor of the *Inquirer* Francis Lochee, the Register General G.F. Stone and Irwin himself. Within weeks the structure of Irwin’s proposed public school system increasingly resembled that of its Irish counterpart, with the Colonial School Management Committee reconstituted

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185 Richard R Madden who arrived as Colonial Secretary in March 1848 was candid in his reference to what he described as ‘a colony administered by Irish Orangemen for the interests of Orangemen and with the views of Orangemen’. Cited in P.F. Moran, *The Catholic Church in Australasia*, Sydney: Oceania 1894, p.565.

186 Minutes of the General Board of Education 31 August 1847, Western Australian State Archives, Perth Acc. 526. A.N. 582.

187 Mosse, *State Education in Western Australia*, p. 12.
as the General Board of Education with responsibility for supervising local committees and allocating public funds. As in Ireland, the new system was intended to attract children from all denominational backgrounds.\textsuperscript{188}

Despite this predominantly Protestant weighting, Brady displayed an extraordinary degree of compromise and agreed to cooperate with Irwin’s proposed public school system.\textsuperscript{189} The reformulation of the rules governing the emerging public school system in compliance, to a degree at least, with the Irish National School administrative structure may have influenced Brady’s reaction. In reply to an invitation to consult the board on his disposition to the venture, Brady’s newly appointed vicar general, J.J. Joostens, advised the board in September 1847 that the bishop was receptive to any system that enhanced an opportunity of education for the children of the colony. ‘I have the honor [sic] to submit for his Excellencys [sic] kind consideration and information that according to the wishes of the inhabitants of Perth and its vicinity, I have submitted to the Right Rev. Dr. Brady, the great advantage of uniting all the schools under one general system of education, and am happy to state that his Lordship has nothing more at heart than to see all harmonise in that one great object.’\textsuperscript{190} This positive approach emulated that of the majority of the Irish episcopate, identified as Gallican, to the introduction of the state schooling in Ireland in 1831 later to evaporate under the increasing influence of Ultramontanism. Again Brady’s positive response to state-sponsored schooling echoed the educational philosophy articulated by the Gallican canonist Fénelon who more than a century previously advocated state education when he declared that: ‘Children belong less to their parents

\textsuperscript{188} Minutes of the General Board of Education, 31 August 1847, Acc. 526, A.N. 582.
\textsuperscript{189} The debate in New South Wales resulted in the Catholic Church declining to cooperate with government attempts to introduce a state school system in Sydney.
\textsuperscript{190} J.Joostens to Colonial Secretary, 9 September 1847, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Correspondence.
than to the Republic, and ought to be educated by the state. There should be
established public schools in which are taught fear of God, love of country, and

Furthermore, Brady's positive attitude to state schooling contrasted with the
position concurrently adopted by his contemporaries in New South Wales and
conservative elements within the metropolitan Catholic episcopate. Earlier attempts to
introduce a system of state education in New South Wales encountered resistance
from the leaders of the main denominations. The central objections revolved around
the unsuitability of the provisions for religious instruction incorporated in the Irish
National School model proposed by Governor Bourke.\footnote{Ronald Fogarty, \textit{Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950}, Vol.1, Melbourne: Melbourne
University Press, 1957, p. 96.} Although it initially
received approval from Polding, his contemporaries in the Anglican and Dissenting
churches, W.J. Broughton and J.D. Lang, vehemently opposed the Irish model
because they believed it favoured the Catholic Church. They protested that restrictions
on the use of authorised Bible reading extracts practiced in Ireland favoured Catholics,
and both suspected a degree of state collusion between Bourke and the Catholic
hierarchy in the colony. Burke, unable to overcome interdenominational divisions, had
little choice but to shelve his plan and revert to the existing system of state-sponsored
denominational schooling. Proposals by his successor George Gipps (1838-1846) to
introduce a system based on the British and Foreign School System model in 1840
fares no better.\footnote{Gipps to Normanby, 9 December 1839, Reproduced in A.G.Austin, \textit{Select Documents in Australian Education}, New York: Pitman, 1963, p. 78.} Polding opposed the scheme on the grounds that it admitted
unrestricted Bible readings and thus favoured the Anglican church.\footnote{Alan Barcan, \textit{A History of Australian Education}, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 47.} Significantly, in
1844 Polding took the same position and opposed the adoption of the Irish National School model on the grounds that he considered it impossible to ‘educate children from different denominations in the one classroom’. Fears of secularism fed Polding’s opposition. Questioned on the role of religious instruction in elementary schools, by the select committee set up to investigate objections, he replied that he considered religious education a central part of education and that no system of education would be complete without ‘religious instruction and practices being intermingled. In our schools, every hour when the clock strikes the children cease from their work, and raise up their minds to almighty God’.

Internecine disharmony, generated by both political and theological issues continued to vex Australian colonial government attempts to introduce a unified state-sponsored system of public education. Determined to maintain the church’s institutional and social dominance within the local colonial administration Anglican church leaders insisted that the only legitimate public school system should be based on ‘Anglican formularies’, including unrestricted readings from the Authorised Version of the Bible augmented with the Anglican Catechism framed around the Bell model. Unable to resolve the problem the administration in New South Wales set up two Boards of Education to respectively allocate state funds to both public and denominational school systems. This was in effect a dual education system with the state supporting both public and denominational schools. Initial attempts to introduce state education into Victoria encountered similar problems.

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195 Report from the select Committee on Education reproduced in A.G. Austin, *Select Documents in Australian Education*, p. 82.
But disharmony over public schooling was far from merely a colonial issue. In Europe the Catholic hierarchy also viewed freedom of the church to have its own schools as a central aim in their struggle to oppose liberal secularism. Consequently demands for the right to superintend Catholic schools became a leitmotif of the Ultramontane movement throughout Europe during the nineteenth century. In Germany under the Ultramontane leadership of Cardinal Johannes von Geissel the right to establish Catholic schools was a well established issue in church state relations by the time the first conference of German Catholic bishops convened in Wurzburg in 1848. In France the issue of control over schools became pivotal in negotiations between the post-revolutionary regime and the increasingly Ultramontane episcopate. Concentrated pressure from the Catholic side eventually achieved a degree of success in 1850 with the passing of the Falloux Law which returned a measure of control over education to the Catholic Church.

Thus, Brady’s response contrasted with that of the Australian Archbishop and many of his European and Irish contemporaries. In the light of this context Brady’s liberal attitude of cooperation toward the proposed state system appeared to escape both the individual and collective vision of the education board members. In an effort to ensure the success of the state system the Inquirer emphasised its compatibility with the system operated by the Mercy Sisters and stated that although Brady objected to some points he was in general supportive of a system that aimed to propagate the diffusion of knowledge.

202 Inquirer, 13 October 1847, Clmns, 2-3, p. 2.
But in Perth in 1847 the voice of sectarianism was about to plunder the spirit of harmony that momentarily existed within the education debate. Then occupying the seat of acting governor Irwin alleged that Brady had supplied Rome with a spurious census regarding the Catholic population of the diocese. Irwin’s dual role as acting governor and member of the newly constituted General Board of Education was of little consolation to Brady’s educational aspirations. Hopes of cooperation were further damaged when Irwin’s Education Board rejected Brady’s nominee Terence Farrelly to the newly created position as head of Perth Colonial School.\textsuperscript{203} Farrelly’s former teacher training under the Irish National School system and position as headmaster of the Catholic school for boys rendered him an eligible candidate for the position.\textsuperscript{204} The Board instead appointed W. Dacres Williams to the position. An Anglican, Williams had previously conducted a small private school for boys in Perth. In advising the Colonial Secretary of their decision the members of the Education Board made no reference to Farrelly’s interest in the position and advised that they recommended Williams ‘in most decided manner who holds an excellent school in Perth, and seems highly competent and eligible for such a difficult task as that of forming an efficient and popular colonial school in Perth despite the discredit which has resulted from the late almost total failure of this undertaking.’\textsuperscript{205}

Farrelly’s suitability, however, appeared to have received serious consideration from some members of the board and the secretary, Richard Nash, had reviewed his suitability including an inspection of his class-work and school administration techniques. In an outburst of exasperation at the board’s failure to appoint Farrelly

\textsuperscript{203} J.J. Joostens to Colonial Secretary, 10 September 1847, Western Australian State Archives, C.S.O. 1842–1848, Folio 378.
\textsuperscript{205} Education Board O.C. 15 Sept 1847, Western Australian State Archives, Acc. 5426/1.
Brady alleged in his letter to the *Inquirer* that Nash had deceitfully gained entrance to the Catholic school for boys and copied the administrative model used by Farrelly.\textsuperscript{206}

The Mercy Superior, Ursula Frayne, astutely summed up the situation and advised the Superior at Baggot Street that Brady was determined to demand his rights as a British subject regardless of Irwin’s and the colonial Protestant elite’s sectarian objections.

The poor amongst the Protestants seem to think our arrival here a singular blessing and confide their children to us with gratitude and joy but the Wesleyans, poor and rich, are too conscientious either to send their children to our school or encourage us in any way. A liberal Governor would be able to do a vast deal of good. All who possess influence in the Colony seem bent upon maintaining Protestant Ascendancy and for that end have compelled the Governors to be of that party. There is I believe no occasion to compel the present governor, as he even goes beyond the others in his hatred of Catholicity. Up to this time they have had the ascendancy (simply because they have had no one to contest it with them), but now the Catholics with their zealous Bishop at their head are resolved to maintain their ground as British subjects. They do not want the ascendancy, they only claim equality of rights which hitherto they have been most unjustly deprived of, without the knowledge or consent of the home Government.\textsuperscript{207}

In September 1847 the Perth Colonial Boys’ and Girls’ Schools were reconstituted under the auspices of the General Board of Education. Subsequently titled the Perth Boys’ and Perth Girls’ Schools these represented the state system in Western Australia. Although established as non-denominational the tenor of these schools was decidedly Anglican. Brady’s worst fears were realised when Williams subsequent to his appointment revealed his sectarian prejudice and publicly expressed his belief that he considered it his duty as headmaster to inculcate a Protestant ethos into the pupils of the school.\textsuperscript{208} The Board’s response to Williams’s declaration did little to address Catholic dismay. Whilst advising Williams of their objections to his

\textsuperscript{206} *Inquirer*, 20 October 1847, Clmens. 1-2, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{207} Frayne to Mother Cecilia, Geraldine Byrne, *Valiant Women*, Letter 10, p. 62.

\textsuperscript{208} *Inquirer*, 1 Dec 1847, p. 3, clmn. 2.
letter in content style and spirit they proceeded to excuse his intemperate remarks on
the grounds of zeal.\textsuperscript{209}

Eschewing any further debate the board sent a copy of their letter to the school
visiting committee and advised them that it was not necessary to notice the matter any
further. Thus, by the end of 1847 the public school system was safely under the
control of the Anglican ascendancy in the colony and despite the Catholic bishop’s
initial conciliatory overtures any possible cooperation with the Catholic system had by
then disappeared and Brady refused to sit on the board with Irwin and withdrew all
support for the venture.\textsuperscript{210} This polarization of elementary public schooling in the
Swan River colony into state and Catholic schools contrasted with the dual structure
of the public education system concurrently operating in New South Wales. In
contrast public assistance was restricted to state schools only.\textsuperscript{211} Official changes in
1848, however, removed the sectarian bite from the local administration and ushered
in changes in the colony’s educational systems.

The Catholic mission gained a significant ally with the arrival of Richard
Robert Madden as colonial secretary in March 1848. The close cooperation that
subsequently developed between Madden and Brady served to emphasise the bishop’s
inclination to work with a reasonable state administration. Displaying renewed
confidence in the local administration, Brady corresponded with Madden on a number
of issues and sought to finalise the registration of titles to all church property.\textsuperscript{212} For

\textsuperscript{209} Education Board to Dacres Williams, 9 May 1848, Education Board Outward Correspondence.,
Western Australian State Archives, A.N. W.A.S. 582.

\textsuperscript{210} Charles Fitzgerald to Grey, 20 April 1949, Western Australian State Archives, C.S.O. 1842-1848,
Folio, 420.

\textsuperscript{211} Mosenson for example argues that unlike the dual board system introduced New South Wales the
Western Australian System was unitary. Mosenson \textit{State Education in Western Australia}, pp. 12-
13.

\textsuperscript{212} By May of the same year, Brady was becoming aware of anomalies in the registered ownership of
lands he had purchased on behalf of the mission and expressed his dismay that their should be any
ambiguity regarding ownership. Brady to Colonial Secretary, 12 May 1848, Dublin Archdiocesan
Archives, Western Australian Correspondence.
their part the Mercy community also rejoiced in regular visits from Madden’s wife to their new convent completed early in May 1848. Frayne could scarcely contain her excitement when she advised her correspondent in Ireland, Cecilia Marmion, that:

The Colonial secretary is arrived; he came in the ship that brought your dear letter. Great good is expected from him. when he arrived in Perth, his first visit was to the bishop who seems much pleased with him. I wrote to request that he would bring Mrs. madden to visit us and received a polite friendly answer expressive of the great pleasure, nay, the high privilege they would consider it to be allowed to form an acquaintance with us. …. The new governor is daily expected. …. He is said to be liberal and free from all anti-Catholic prejudices. Perhaps bright days are about to dawn upon Western Australia after the long night of bigotry and intolerance.

Frayne’s prayers were indeed answered and the arrival of the more congenial Charles Fitzgerald to replace Irwin as governor in 1848 heralded in an era of improved relations between the Catholic mission and local colonial administration. Encouraged by this change in the local administrative regime Brady resumed his struggle for funds for Catholic schools. In his letter to Fitzgerald Brady sought to assure the new governor that he was not a bigot and outlined six reasons why he was unable to cooperate with the ‘Government Schools’ established under Irwin. In doing so he drew attention to the exclusively non-Catholic composition of both the General Board and the individual school committees and his objections to the appointment of Dacres Williams as head teacher. Finally Brady stated his objections to the provision allowing scripture reading without note or comment and again reiterated his support for state-sponsored schooling based on the Irish National School model.

‘We should hope from the above simple but respectfull statement of our conscientious objections to the existing Government school that his excellency will not credit reports that have been circulated that our community could consent to send their children to the government school as it now stands or that we ourselves are ill disposed to any

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214 Frayne to Mother Cecilia, 25 March 1848, Letter 17, p. 92.
comprehensive system of education such as that now existing in Ireland or disinclined to avail ourselves of its advantages. 215

This familiarity with the mechanics of the Irish system was no doubt attributable to Farrelly who was a staunch advocate of the Irish Model under which he received his formal teacher training before leaving Ireland. 216 Nevertheless, Brady’s expressed support for the Irish National Education model placed him in the same ecclesiastical camp regarding the issue of state education as his contemporaries within the faction of the Irish episcopate, including the bishop of his native diocese Kilmore, James Brown (1829-65), and the Archbishop of Dublin, Daniel Murray (1823-52), who supported the Irish National System, and were acknowledged Gallicans. 217 Labelled ‘Castle bishops in a caustic reference to their association with Dublin Castle, the administrative centre for the British government in Ireland, by the faction of bishops led by the Archbishop of Tuam, John MacHale, who opposed state education, this group were considered by Rome to represent ‘Ireland’s Gallican educational establishment’. 218

Responding to Brady’s call for a comprehensive adoption of the Irish National School model Fitzgerald approached the education committee but met with outright refusal. Unrestricted by any alliance with local political affiliations and empowered by firm imperial directions to deal impartially with all denominations Fitzgerald then supervised the introduction of a hybrid educational system that supported Catholic and Protestant schools as separate systems yet acclaimed itself not to be denominational.

215 Brady to Colonial Secretary, 5 October 1848, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Correspondence.
216 Farrelly to Colonial Secretary, 20 October 1848, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Correspondence. See also D.H. Rankin, The History of the Development of Education in Western Australia 1829-1923, Perth: Carrolls Ltd., 1926, p. 24.
218 Ibid, p.52.
This dual system, introduced in March 1849, whilst based on Protestant principles sought to accommodate dissenting sensibilities by incorporating unrestricted scripture readings but excluding the transmission of denominational doctrines within school hours. In concurring with his request that public schools should incorporate Anglican principles the General Board advised Fitzgerald that,

as the separation of Roman Catholics has certainly removed one great difficulty; and as the Board in an interview which they had the honour to hold with the Governor understood that there is no wish on His Excellency’s part to make the system of education one of denominational character, but simply that the free and unrestricted use of Holy Scriptures should be allowed in the Schools, the board have the satisfaction of being able to state that their own views are in so far agreement with those of his Excellency, and that their attention should be directed to everything necessary to place the schools on the desired footing. The Board would, however, respectfully solicit his Excellency’s particular attention to that position of their report which treats of this subject, as they consider the prohibition against ministers of the different religious denominations attending the schools for the purpose of giving special religious instruction therein, and against the masters in the course of their teaching entering upon the controversial points of religion to be essential to the existence of a system of education which is intended to be general to all amongst Protestant ranks. 219

As a result of this compromise system acceptable to all sides Catholic schools received a per capita allocation. 220 This arrangement continued beyond Brady’s term as bishop of Perth.

But new sectarian cracks were beginning to appear in the education debate. In August 1849 Frayne’s apprehensions about the viability of the recently announced Mercy fee-paying school appeared to be groundless when ‘one of the most respectable ladies in the colony’ enrolled her two daughters much to the annoyance of their aunt, the Protestant clergyman’s wife. 221 Thus by mid century the Catholic school system

219 General Board of Education to Colonial Secretary, 10 April 1849, Western Australian State Archives, CONS, 526, pp. 41-42.
220 Mossenson, State Education in Western Australia, p. 17.
221 Frayne to Mother Cecilia, 5 August 1849, Byrne, Valiant Women, Letter 28B, p. 138.
had not only survived the trauma of sectarianism but also had succeeded in attracting a degree of state support and, as least as far as the Mercy convent-school was concerned, patronage from some within the local Anglican community. But rumblings of discontent from within the Protestant establishment continued for decades to come.

But sectarian-based prejudices, fuelled by Brady’s gallican willingness to cooperate with the colonial government were not the only obstacle that the Catholic school system had to overcome during these early years of existence. Concurrent with these threats to its survival presented by external forces, the fledgling Catholic system also endured periodic bouts of debilitating internal strife during these early years. In the same way as cultural dispositions influenced the mission’s response to the government they also conditioned internal relations through influencing administrative decisions and responses. Acknowledging the disruptive tensions generated by these disparate cultural influences within the mission, as early as 1846 the Mercy Superior Ursula Frayne drew attention Brady’s French formation to explain his particular ecclesiastical position. Writing to the Superior of the community’s Dublin convent, she contrasted Brady’s episcopal disposition with that of Irish bishops and drew attention to the influence of his French spiritual formation as an explanation for the internal administrative indiscretions that had began to sour relations between the bishop and herself.

I should now tell you his motives ... I would venture to say that if Dr. Brady had been an Irish bishop, or even a priest on the mission in Ireland, he would act very differently, but although Irish by birth, the greater part of his life has been spent in France or in a French colony. Therefore, all his views, customs and manners are French and I have often heard of some Convents in France where severity on the part of the Bishop was necessary to preserve order, and probably our good Bishop places us on a par with them.222

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222 Frayne to Mother Cecilia, November 1846, Byrne, Valiant Women, Letter 7B, p. 52.
Although accurately identifying the influence of Brady’s French formation on internal ecclesiastical relations Frayne overlooked the congruent influence of her own congregation’s self identity, including its customs and perspectives, in shaping the diverse tone of internal Catholic relations in the mission. For example, the community’s response to Brady’s request to establish a small two-person convent school outside of Perth was to refer him to undertakings he had given to the superior in Dublin. ‘He says that the necessity of the mission requires our customs to be different, that this country is not to be compared to Ireland and that even the Jesuits give up their customs when they go on missions. On one occasion I told him that it would have been better that he had mentioned all these circumstances to you before we came.’

This determination to preserve their community spirit, identity and culture was significant to the primary missionary role of the Mercy foundation as educators. In accord with their own ethos, tradition and founder’s vision, the pioneering Mercy Sisters restricted their pedagogic efforts almost exclusively to the task of instructing girls and confined their work during the pioneering period to the primary settlements at Perth and Fremantle. Although they subsequently expanded their mission they continued to focus on the larger peripheral centres with future potential for upper and middle -class convent-schools including Guildford, York, Geraldton and Toodyay and refrained from direct involvement with schools in smaller settlements. This contrasted with later female congregations who subsequently established foundations in the diocese.

The community’s response to the new environment was also influenced by their own cultural background. In September 1847 although the mission’s fiscal position

was to say the least strained the congregation lamented the unavailability of a housemaid for the convent. This was a time when the bishop’s efforts to keep the mission going obliged him to live within the most frugal of means.\textsuperscript{225}

In the same way although much has been made of Brady’s novel fundraising tactic involving a dowry promised to the Mercy novice as security for a loan toward the construction of the Mercy convent, the building placed a heavy burden on the limited diocesan funds available and half-way through its completion in March 1848 even Frayne expressed some concern regarding the cost of the two storey building.\textsuperscript{226} Situated in proximity to the church grounds the completion of the two-storeyed convent secured the Mercy’s future educational mission in Perth. The following year the congregation expanded into secondary education and opened a fee-paying school for girls. This school, offering tuition in French Language, Music, Drawing and Plain and Ornamental needle work as well as Grammar, Geography, History, Writing and Arithmetic like its Irish counterparts aimed to attract the daughters of middle class families.\textsuperscript{227} Although Frayne recognised the strain this building placed on scarce diocesan resources she considered it pertinent to refuse some fee-paying pupils in order ‘to keep it very select’.\textsuperscript{228} The school was clearly not intended to attract Catholic girls of humble background seeking tuition in subjects attractive to local employers but targeted the predominantly Protestant upper class. The congregation subsequently operated a three-tiered school which incorporated a lower non-paying school for poor girls, a middle or elementary school for those paying a nominal fee and a higher fee paying advance school for young ladies.

\textsuperscript{224} Unlike the Mercy nuns, subsequent to their arrival at a later date, both the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition and Sacred Heart established convent schools in smaller pioneering settlements.

\textsuperscript{225} Frayne to Mother Cecilia, 20 August 1847, Byrne Valiant Women Letter 10, p. 61.

\textsuperscript{226} Frayne to Mother Cecilia March 1848, Ibid Letter 17, p. 90.


\textsuperscript{228} Ibid.
Despite this success, internal tensions, particularly regarding the demarcation of spheres of episcopal and congregational authority, were ever-present and represented a more negative force within the educational mission. Although not exclusive of the influence of local conditions, disparity between Brady’s Gallican understanding of his authority as bishop and Frayne’s perception of her role as community superior also engendered discontent within the Catholic mission that were further complicated by gender considerations.

In addition to her social background her community had also endowed Frayne with another powerful weapon which enabled her to negotiate gender as well as ecclesiastical constraints for Frayne’s self conception was drawn from her position as leader of the pioneering foundation rather than her contemporary social status as a woman. She constructed her own female identity from her role as Superior in the Mercy community rather than by her female gender. Thus by virtue of her position in society she could reject the contemporary understanding of femininity which as far as Victorian society went was constructed around deference.\(^{229}\) Thus, Frayne’s construct of her own female identity drawn from her position as founding Superior of her community in the Perth diocese enabled her to question Brady’s authority both as a man and a bishop. Furthermore, in conformity with the regulatory structure of her community Frayne, could be confident of her own authority as Superior which after all had papal authorisation. As early as November 1846 Frayne protested the independent character of the community against the bishop’s intrusions. ‘He thought his visits gave us pleasure and that it was even necessary that he should be a good deal

\(^{229}\) Although yet to be applied in the Western Australian context, scholars have applied gender construction theory to investigate the experiences of missionary women elsewhere. In the Canadian context, for example, see Myra Rutherdale, ‘I wish the Men were Half as Good, Gender Construction in the Canadian North-Western Mission Field 1860-1940’, in Telling Tales: Essays in Western Women’s History, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000, p. 34.
with us at first, but he little knew how independent the sisters of Mercy are and that they have no needs outside their own community for amusement or society’.

Authority became a critical issue with the first attempt to expand the work of the Mercy community beyond the confines of Perth and almost resulted in the closure of the Mercy convent. Brady first tried to expand the Catholic system outside of Perth in 1847 when, partly in response to the failure of a compromise with Irwin’s system, he moved to open a Catholic school in Fremantle. Initially established in a rented cottage in December 1847 Brady placed the school under the supervision of the Mercy community. The community, however, declined to assume the daily running of the school as it involved establishing a residential branch-convert in Fremantle to accommodate resident sisters as distance ruled out daily travel from Perth. Consequently, Brady had little choice but to employ a lay monitor, Louise Cresswell, at an annual salary of £40 to teach in the school. Mercy involvement was restricted to fortnightly inspections until pupil attendance warranted the establishment of a branch-convert. Now that numbers made the Fremantle venture probably viable, Frayne took full advantage of this attempt at educational expansion beyond Perth and pressed Dublin to send additional members. In doing so she advised the Superior of the Dublin convent that the school at Fremantle would be forced to close unless her request for reinforcements from Ireland were realised. Despite Frayne’s appeals events in Fremantle forced her hand before any extra members arrived from Ireland. Advised that the school was performing below expectations, Brady delivered an ultimatum to Frayne either to close the school or establish the required branch-convert to facilitate the permanent residence of Sisters at Fremantle. Although

231 Baptist O’Donnell to Cousin, in McIay, Women Out of Their Sphere, p. 27.
232 Frayne to Reverend Mother Cecilia, 4 December 1847, Byrne, Valiant Women, Letter 11, p. 69.
233 Frayne to Mother Cecilia 28 March 1848, , Letter 18, p. 98.
reluctant in the absence of any new additions to the community Frayne gave the proposal her tentative approval and the branch- convent, St. Francis Xavier’s, was established in September 1848. Despite Frayne’s misgivings about the expansion, particularly regarding the ability of the two sisters that she appointed to accomplish the task, Mary Aloysius Kelly and Mary Ignatia de la Hoyde, the school proved a success. In addition to turning the fortunes of the school around both Catholic and Protestant women attended the branch- convent for instruction. Reflecting the continuing presence of a sectarian underbelly the convent was subjected to harassment in November 1848 when a group of youths celebrating Guy Fawkes approached the convent brandishing an image of the guy and banners. The year ended on a celebratory note, however, when the Mercy community received three new members from Ireland in December 1848. The new reinforcements included a novice, Laura Goold, later to become Sister Mary Francis, Ann Strahan, later to become Sister Mary Catherine, and Ellen Dillon, on profession Sister Mary Magdalene and a sister of Ann Xavier a member of the original foundation.

But issues of authority continued to surface in the cautiously expanding Catholic mission. The mission at this time became preoccupied with tensions concerning authority. The issue of authority came to a head when both sides contrived to preserve their own sanction after Brady advised the Mercy community that he intended to close the Fremantle school. On informing the Sisters in Fremantle of his intentions, Brady advised that they proceed as directed by Frayne. Frayne expressed some surprise at this directive and advised Dublin that Brady’s delegation of authority were words of

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234 Frayne to Mother Cecilia, 18 October 1848, Letter 23, Ibid. p. 111.
235 Brady to Colonial Secretary, 7 November 1848, Western Australian State Archives, C.S.O. Inward Correspondence, folio 148.
236 McLay, Women Out of Their Sphere, p. 28.
237 Frayne to Mother Cecilia, 7 July 1849, Byrne, Valiant Women, Letter 28, p. 131.
custom; ‘I have not permission to direct the Sisters!’ This appeared to be disingenuous on Frayne’s behalf with respect to her authority as Mother Superior. Certainly curtailed under the community’s autonomous structure with regard to new foundations the authority vested in the Superior did extend to sub-convent offshoots.²³⁸

Frayne’s subtle response nuanced deeper shortcomings within the mission and revealed that she did not believe that the bishop was forthright in his explanation that financial concerns determined his decision to close the Fremantle school. Her direction to the Fremantle-based sisters to await her directions indicated her determination to safeguard the customary authority of her position as Superior of the Perth foundation against episcopal infringement.

His lordship had informed the Sisters in Fremantle long before we received the news, but we desired them not to make any preparations until they should hear it from me, and then to act, as I should direct. These were words of custom; I have no permission to direct the sisters! … We were rejoiced to get back our dear Sisters but deeply pained at being obliged to break up a little establishment where so much could be done for the glory of God. The Bishop gave as a reason the low state of his funds, but I think he had other reasons which he did not make known.²³⁹

Brady had already flexed his diocesan authority in March that year when he directed Frayne to conclude a five-day visit to Fremantle and return immediately to Perth. Furthermore, he directed Frayne to request his imprimatur in advance of any future transfer of Sisters between the Perth and Fremantle convents.²⁴⁰

Although Brady advised the sisters based in Fremantle of his intention to close the school prior to notifying Frayne, he tactfully advised the Sisters to await instructions from Frayne. In doing so he signalled his diocesan authority yet avoided allegations of impinging on Frayne’s position as Superior of the community. On

²³⁹ Frayne to Mother Cecilia, 7 July 1849, Byrne, Valiant Women, Letter 28, p. 131.
receiving notification from Brady of the impending closure Frayne directed the sisters to withdraw to Perth but also to remove all of the furnishings from Fremantle and to proceed as directed by the bishop. Brady’s subsequent direction that the Sisters only remove from Fremantle items of furniture that were deemed immediately necessary was circumvented by including all furnishings in the designated ‘immediately necessary’ category.\textsuperscript{241}

This drew a strong rebuke from Brady and he subsequently refused to provide the required episcopal examination of the two most recent candidates from Ireland prior to their reception as postulants on the grounds that the entire convent should accept communal responsibility for the alleged insubordination to his episcopal authority. Frayne then advised Brady that his refusal to carry out the prescribed regulations regarding the admission of postulants left her with no option but to remove the foundation from his jurisdiction. Faced with this option Brady agreed to admit the two postulants thus avoiding the possibility of a further school closure.\textsuperscript{242} Despite these tensions the Mercy school in Perth continued to flourish and in August 1849 Frayne advised Cecilia Marmion that the attendance at the free school was approaching treble figures. ‘Our free school is going on most flourishingly. We now have eighty three children in attendance regularly; almost every week two or three new pupils present themselves and thank God they are all good children. We would not admit a naughty child and this is I believe one of the chief recommendations of the school.’\textsuperscript{243} No doubt the presence of the governor’s wife at prize giving days also embellished the school’s repute.

However, Brady had determined to free the Catholic system from dependency on the Mercy community and by this time had proceeded to establish a separate

\textsuperscript{241} Frayne to Mother Cecilia, 7 July 1849, Byrne,, \textit{Valiant Women}, Letter 28, p. 132.

\textsuperscript{242} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{243} \textit{Ibid.}
school for boys and girls in Perth. Under the care and tuition of ‘two efficient instructresses’ this school had a mixed enrolment of forty two-pupils by March 1852 and Brady was confident enough to invite the governor to visit it at his convenience. ‘Should his Excellency be pleased to honour the school with a visit or invite any gentleman belonging to the board of education I feel satisfied that he will be pleased with the manner in which the school is conducted. The hours are from 10 am to 3 pm. conducted at Mrs Jeffries large room opposite the Govt. School rooms’.

Brady’s career in Perth however was about to end and he left the colony on the 19 October 1852 after a protracted disagreement with the authorities in Rome-arguably another outcome of his Gallican ecclesiastical background-concerning the jurisdiction his appointed coadjutor Dom Serra. Certainly his willingness to have the civil courts deliberate over what was essentially an ecclesiastical matter smacked of Gallicanism which acknowledged ‘the right of the civil tribunal to decide matters of an ecclesiastical character’.

Despite its brief span, Brady’s tenure as the inaugural bishop of Perth witnessed significant progress in the development of education in Western Australia. Responding to his humble public school venture in 1844 and the foundation of the Mercy convent school in 1846 a triumvirate of governors sought to develop an elementary public school system to combat the Catholic educational mission. Brady’s reaction to each of these attempts had a distinctive Gallican tone. When Governor Andrew Clarke excised all access to the public purse, Brady, in true Gallican fashion, appealed not to the spiritual authority of Rome but directly to the civil authority of the

243 Frayne to Reverend Mother Cecilia, 5 August 1849, Byrne, *Valiant Women*, Letter7B, p. 50.
244 John Brady to His Excellency [Governor Fitzgerald], 18 March 1852, Perth Archdiocesan Archives, Brady Correspondence.
245 Events surrounding this imbroglio with Serra which resulted in near schism are detailed in a number of sources including Bourke, *The History of the Catholic Church* pp. 44-48.
Colonial Office in London thereby reflecting his faith in the civil power. Moreover, he sought to enlist the assistance of the Irish parliamentary party through the intercession of its leader O'Connell. Brady declared his support for state education at a time when under the increasing influence of the Ultramontane movement the Catholic episcopate in general was going in the opposite direction and demanding that the state support Catholic schools. But Brady's olive branch to state schooling was summarily dismissed when Irwin and his education board refused to censor their newly appointed headmaster when he declared that he intended to mould a Protestant identity around the nascent state system. Despite sectarian admonishment by the local administration, Brady persevered and eventually gained a measure of success when the more sympathetic administration of Governor Fitzgerald granted Catholic schools a degree of state support in 1849. Similarly Brady in true Gallican fashion acknowledged the jurisdiction of the civil authority to adjudicate over ecclesiastical matters and readily took recourse to the civil courts.

Brady's Gallican background also influenced his internal administrative approach. The authoritarian tone of his episcopate echoed the ecclesiastical disposition of his Gallican background and was brought into sharp relief when challenged by the less than deferential bourgeois values of the Superior of the Mercy foundation. Frayne was determined that these defining values would be maintained despite the frontier nature of the mission. Requests for Lay Sisters 'strong and able to perform all the domestic duties, washing etc., which in this country is exceedingly laborious on account of the heat' indicated that Frayne intended to preserve the internal class structure of the community even in the wilds of Western Australia.\textsuperscript{247}

Thus, Frayne accentuated the Perth foundation's continuing conformity with social

\textsuperscript{247} Frayne to Reverend. Mother, November 1846, Byrne, \textit{Valiant Women}, Letter 7B, p. 45.
perspectives prevailing amongst the middle-class which divided the respective roles of middle and working class women along class lines into component managers and practical housekeepers.\footnote{Purvis, \textit{A History of Women's Education in England}, p. 6.}

But this also generated tensions particularly with regard to authority. When the Mercy Superior refused to accept the bishop’s dictates, a struggle concerning authority manifested in which the astute Frayne, motivated by the spirit and charisma of her community, successfully defended the foundation’s independence against episcopal dictate. Again, as Frayne remarked, Brady’s understanding of the authority of his episcopal office sprang from his Gallican formation and although tensions over jurisdiction remained both sides managed to maintain a degree of arbitration. Thus, the culture of the pioneering Mercy foundation survived its encounter with Brady to become the enduring connection with the pioneering Catholic system. This culture squarely established on the middle-class ideology of the early nineteenth-century together with a Mercy inspired construct of female identity empowered the community represented by their superior Ursula Frayne to negotiate gender as well as ecclesiastical constraints. This background not alone inspired Mercy independence but also proved advantageous to the success of their schools as it authorised them to accommodate bourgeois middle-class Protestant educational aspirations in the absence of a suitable Catholic constituency. This ability to accommodate middle-class Protestant aspirations conferred on the community a social eligibility that attracted patronage from the higher echelons including the wife of at least one governor. However, this cultural determination to preserve congregational independence and authority over their own sphere of operations to preserve their own distinct identity
would encounter a more formidable challenge from Brady’s episcopal successor Joseph Serra.
Dear Mr Reece.

Thanks for the information. Really helpful for me cause I have always been thinking of what happened to my grandfather then. Even the report did not say where he ended up, at least I know now of his movements at that time so I know where to look for more info. Thanks so much for your help again. My family appreciates it. If you know any other way to get more info, do let me know.

Here's my postal address:

1160 Kenyalang Park
Lorong Sim Kheng Hong 6,
Sim Kheng Hong Road
93300 Kuching, Sarawak.
Malaysia

Sincerely,
Melissa

----- Original Message ----- 
From: "Robert Reece" <B.Reece@murdoch.edu.au>
To: "Melissa" <meli60@streamyx.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 05, 2006 3:43 PM
Subject: RE: Murphy - information needed ASAP

> Dear Melissa,
> One of the documents I have found is the May 1942 report
> by W. McKerracher, the Borneo Co.'s mill manager at Sibu, who was with
> the party of Europeans under Resident Andrew McPerson who fled
> up-river from the Japanese on 26 December 1941. He mentions Murphy
> (then Superintendent of Police at Sibu) as one of the party and later
> says that he (Murphy) and two others (Cobbold and Reid) were keen to
> return to Sibu to give themselves up to the Japs. Murphy was at the
> time suffering from fever and a sprained ankle. He doesn't make it
> clear what happened to Murphy subsequently. If you give me your postal
> address I will airmail a copy of the report to you.
> Bob Reece
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Melissa [mailto:meli60@streamyx.com]
> Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2006 2:45 PM
> To: Robert Reece
> Subject: Re: Murphy - information needed ASAP
> Importance: High
>
> Dear Mr. Reece.
>
> How are you? Haven't heard from you since. Any news on the list of
> names
>
> from the report you mentioned? If you need some help let me know what
> to do. Thanks.
----- Original Message ----- 
From: "Bob Reece" <breece@murdoch.edu.au> 
To: "Melissa" <meli60@streamyx.com> 
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2006 4:10 PM 
Subject: Re: Murphy - information needed ASAP 

Dear Melissa, 
I think that I have seen somewhere a report on Long Nawang by an Aust. Army officer which gives a list of names. However, it will take me some time to look for it. I don't remember Murphy being on the list, but that doesn't mean anything. 

With best wishes 

Bob Reece 

PS I did meet Murphy's contemporary, W.H. Kelley, in the UK before he died. 

At 02:42 PM 4/01/2006, you wrote: 

>Dear Prof. Reece. 
>
>I have came across your name from your book you have written, 'Masa Jepun'. I am currently researching particularly on the massacre of the 41 European men, women and children at Long Nawang, Borneo by the Japanese marines in August - Sept 1942. >
>
>I looking for information whether my grandfather was among them. I know it's information long overdue but it's something that I must know. And I hope and appreciate if you can help me with this in any way possible. >
>
>His name was Desmond Vernon Murphy (or D V Murphy). Deputy Commissioner of Sarawak Constabulary. Officer superintending the Sibu Constabulary sector and deputy Superintendent of Prisons, Sibu from 12th July 1940 till he went MIA. No records were ever mentioned that he was part of the group but as an Assist. Comm, it is likely he was stationed in Sibu at that time and as the then Resident of Sibu ordered the escape, he would then have been part of the group. But I just need proof that he was. Even if I have to go to great lengths to get it, I will. >
>
>I hope you can help me. Appreciate any advice on where else to dig
>for
>
>info. If you need more info on my grandpa, let me know.
>
>Thanks again. I really do appreciate your help.
>
>Sincerely,
>Melissa Murphy
>Kuching, SARAWAK
>Malaysia
>
>mailto:meli60@streamyx.com>meli60@streamyx.com
>Tel. 6082-246803
>
>
>Internal Virus Database is out-of-date.
>CHECKED BY AVG Anti-Virus.

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Internal Virus Database is out-of-date.
Checked by AVG Anti-Virus.
CHAPTER IV

1852-1859
An Abbey Diocese
Joseph Mary Benedict Serra: Benedictine Priest and Spanish Bishop

Following Brady’s controversial departure in September 1852, Joseph Benedict Serra, in his capacity as coadjutor bishop, assumed diocesan authority.¹ Serra, who had initially arrived in Swan River as part of Brady’s 1846 missionary group, returned to Perth in 1849 as coadjutor bishop after a prolonged European visit. His subsequent episcopate in the Perth diocese, which continued until 1859, articulated a conservative Spanish authoritarian administration, exacerbated by emerging Ultramontanism in Serra, and was marked by controversy. As Serra brought his office to bear on educational projects within the mission, these attributes, together with his Benedictine orientation, increasingly conditioned outcomes.

From the outset, both Serra’s Spanish Catholic background and spiritual formation bequeathed him with a hefty measure of devotional and ecclesiastical conservatism. Certainly, these influences did not escape the observations of at least one of his early missionary contemporaries. In his letter to his patron, the reformist French Benedictine priest, Prosper Gueranger, the French Benedictine novice, Leandre Fontinne, a member of the original missionary party that accompanied Brady from Europe, astutely advised that Serra had imbibed the conservative Catholicism of his native Spain.² Fontinne described Serra as; ‘An excellent man, of

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truly holy piety. I believe he is far advanced in the ways of God. However, his character, formed in the Spanish mould, differs greatly from our French character. On the one hand it seems to be that his education did not inculcate in him those liberal principles which distinguish French education.\(^3\)

In addition to Serra’s Spanish background Fontaine’s remark drew attention to the ecclesiastical diversity of the French Catholic matrix in the mid-nineteenth century. Having crossed the French border, the rising tide of conservative Catholic opposition to liberalism had found tentative support within disaffected elements of the French clergy. This support was particularly pronounced amongst elements of the rank and file diocesan priests who were becoming increasingly disgruntled with the abuse by some bishops of the arbitrary powers bestowed upon the episcopate under the neo-Gallican terms of the ‘Organic Articles’ proclaimed concurrent with the terms of the concordat negotiated between the new French Republic and Rome in 1801.\(^4\)

Between these two ecclesiastical extremities, a minority liberal Catholic movement attempted to advance its somewhat ambiguous theoretical position that sought to reconcile church and state whilst simultaneously preserving close ties with Rome and ecclesiastical authority.\(^5\) This movement led by the state-church French priest Félicité de Lamennais (1782-1854) subsequently, in contrast to the older Gallican clergy such as Brady, sought to reconcile religious leadership from Rome with the political jurisdiction of the secular government.\(^6\) Significantly, Lamennais was an associate


\(^6\) Gibson, A Social History of French Catholicism, p. 108.
and confidant of Fonteine's correspondent Gueranger who had re-established the Benedictines in France at Solesmes in 1837. Implicitly this liberal movement of men like de Lamennais within French Catholicism represented an ecclesiastical departure from the customary pre-revolutionary Gallican alliance between the Catholic church and French throne and the increasingly prevalent Rome-orientated Ultramontanism. Lamennais attempted to identify a middle way and sought to accommodate liberalism by catholicizing it.\(^8\)

Though short-lived, this diversity within French Catholicism certainly was not evident in the contemporary Spanish Catholic Church characterised by its medieval institutions, mystical ways and hankering for the past.\(^9\) Administered through a rigid hierarchical structure that placed the bishops on a princely pedestal the Spanish Catholic Church was not, however, completely sheltered from the challenge of anti-ecclesiastical political liberalism.\(^10\) Unlike France, however, Spanish liberalism remained a lay phenomenon and found little clerical sympathy particularly amongst the crosiered ranks of the hierarchy. Indeed the political term 'liberal' was employed in Spain as a pejorative term to describe the Spanish insurgents that challenged the legitimacy of the unrestrained royal authority exercised by Fernando II in 1820.\(^11\) Having displayed their loyalty to the Spanish monarchy in its struggle against Napoleonic domination during the peninsular war (1808-1813) the Spanish Catholic clergy subsequently rejected the secular ideology and philosophy associated with liberalism and 'retreated into a reactionary defensive position hostile to intellectual

\(^7\) Farmer, *Benedict's Disciples*, p.333.


and scientific initiatives judged incompatible with its theocratic vision of human existence. Coupled with resolute papal allegiance this disposition subsequently superseded both Gallican and liberal Catholic contenders to become the prevailing response of the Spanish Church to secular liberalism. As the spasmodic Spanish liberal assault on the church-friendly monarchy of Fernando VII became more resolute during the early decades of the nineteenth-century these secular political ideologies concurrently challenged the church’s traditional responsibility for social institutions such as marriage and education. As a consequence, the church increasingly identified liberal ideologies as subversive and contrary to Catholic teachings. For example, the resistance of the clergy in Santiago de Campostela, the location of Serra’s monastic training, in 1841 to the construction of a theatre deemed ‘prejudicial to the decorum of religion which the Spanish profess’ indicated the level of conservatism that pervaded Spanish Catholicism during the first half of the nineteenth-century. The Spanish Catholic Church’s conservative reaction to the liberal onslaught was to have a significant and long lasting influence on the religious career of Joseph Benedict Serra.

Born into a merchant family in 1810 in the town of Matarola in the northeastern Spanish province of Catalonia, Serra encountered both personal trauma and social upheaval during his early life. Orphaned at a young age he attended a school at Barcelona established by Piarist priests before becoming apprentice to a hat maker. He subsequently migrated north across the Cantabrian Mountains and commenced his novitiate in 1826 as part of the Valladolid Benedictine congregation at the Abbey of

12 Ibid., p.11.
14 Ibid p.15.
15 Callaghan, The Catholic Church in Spain, p. 11.
16 Perth Catholic Archdiocesan Archives, Box No. C23. Founded in 1597 as a teaching congregation of men, the Piarists had by the nineteenth century established schools in France Spain and Italy.
San Martin Pinario in the historical pilgrim town of Santiago de Campostela in the Basque province of Galicia. On completing his novitiate in 1827 he was professed a Benedictine monk, and eight years later in 1835 after study in Benedictine houses at Navarre and Oviedo he was ordained to the priesthood.

Serra’s early religious experience and spiritual formation contrasted in a number of ways with that of his episcopal predecessor in the Perth diocese. As a member of the Benedictine order, he represented a more cloistered and communal contemplative tradition within the Catholic Church than Brady’s more practical-orientated seminarian and diocesan experience. His monastic spiritual training emphasised a culture of self denial and obedience to authority. During his seven-year formation Serra practiced daily the monastic regime of his community which, in conformity with the tradition of the Benedictine rule, fused a regime of obedience, spiritual practice, physical labour and scholarship. The cloister aimed to develop an inner piety in the individual in contrast to Brady’s formation as a missionary priest to work in the outside world.

In addition to external suppression of the church from liberal regimes emerging throughout post-revolutionary Europe, hostile scrutiny from within obliged European Benedictine congregations in the early decades of the nineteenth-century to undertake a number of reforms. These reforms attracted sympathetic support from the first two Popes of the century both of whom, reflecting the order’s eminence within the church, had Benedictine backgrounds. Pius VII (1800-1823) was a Benedictine monk of Cesena. His successor, Gregory XVI (1831-1846) lived according to the strict Benedictine

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rule of the Camaldolese community for fifty years prior to his elevation to the papacy. This Benedictine representation on the papal throne no doubt contributed to the rise in the order’s fortunes during the nineteenth century and ensured reciprocal support from the order for a centralisation of ecclesiastical power in Rome.20

In addition, the Spanish Catholic Church into which Serra was born historically enjoyed a privileged social position and wielded significant social and political power. The Spanish church court, or Inquisition, received the full support of the Bourbon monarchy and the Catholic hierarchy enjoyed the protection, hospitality and pomp of the royal court. Socially secure, the church profited from rents and tithes collected from the tenants on large estates attached to monasteries. However, Serra’s religious life coincided with a sustained change in the fortunes of the Spanish Church. Having long benefited from royal patronage it suffered a significant reduction in its social status following the eventual collapse of the monarchy under the unremitting liberal onslaught of the early decades of the nineteenth century. No longer safeguarded by the union of altar and throne, the wealth and influence of the church increasingly became the focus of the new liberal regime which had its political genesis in the Cortes of Cádiz, Spain’s first parliamentary convention, assembled in 1810.21 From then on, Spanish liberalism, representing an emerging bourgeoisie, sought to curtail the wealth, pomp and power of the Catholic Church. But the objective was to reform rather than revoke the theocratic legacy of the Bourbon regime so that the nexus between church and state was never completely severed.22 Contending for political

20 Ibid, p.328
22 Ibid, p. 4.
primacy the different liberal fractions sought to restrict in varying degrees church influence in state affairs, initially by suppressing the Inquisition in 1810.\textsuperscript{23}

Representing the alternative side to the liberal coin, the regular clergy in particular became the focus of liberal reform. Long associated with the \textit{Ancien Régime} the ideal of monastic life devoted to an after-life redemption contrasted with the liberal notion of human perfectibility and the concept of fraternity.\textsuperscript{24} Intent on ending their privileged social status the emerging liberal regime sought to disamortize monastic estates and thereby sever the source of much of the church’s wealth. The return from exile and restoration of Fernando VII in 1814 granted the church a temporary reprieve from the turmoil of liberal reform. However, this reprieve was relatively short-lived and when the liberals seized power in 1820 they quickly moved to sell off monastic lands and property.\textsuperscript{25} Eventually, when the clergy became involved in a series of armed revolutions in the northern districts of Galicia and Catalonia in 1822 the liberal government responded by suppressing all friaries and monasteries.\textsuperscript{26} The succession of Fernando VII to the Spanish throne in 1823 again granted the church a reprieve and restored the traditional ecclesiastical alliance. This decade-long sanctuary ended with the untimely death of the king in 1833. The subsequent struggle for succession between his brother Carlos and daughter Isabel permitted the birth of liberal parliamentary politics in Spain.\textsuperscript{27} This heralded the end of the traditional hierarchical society and with it the old social order of which the church was so much a part. Thenceforth the church witnessed the contraction of its societal role and temporal fortunes and the emergence of a regionally-based popular

\textsuperscript{24} Rees, ‘The Benedictine Revival in the Nineteenth Century’, p. 324.
\textsuperscript{25} Callaghan, \textit{Church Politics and Society in Spain} p. 130.
\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 129.
\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 2.
anti-clericalism. The alignment of clerical factions on opposing sides in the succession war between Isabel and Carlos compounded an already complex situation. Regular clergy including the Benedictines, provided both material and spiritual support to forces in the Carlist strongholds of northern and north-eastern Spain. Anti-clericalism erupted into mob violence in 1834 when rioters in Madrid ransacked monasteries and murdered many of the occupants. A total of seventy-eight Jesuits, Dominicans and Mercedarians were murdered. In 1835 the newly-elected liberal government, determined to eclipse any vestiges of absolutism, decreed the secularisation of all regular communities in Spain and ushered in a more prolonged period of secular reform which disentailed church property and, by 1860, the bulk of lands formerly held by the church had been sold. Eagerly sought by regional middle-class liberal supporters this disamortized land in turn produced a rural bourgeois complete with a subaltern class of exploited tenantry and day labourers.

Thus, under increasing threat of personal attack many Spanish congregations fled to refuge in neighbouring countries. Consequently, four years after his profession to the priesthood in 1835, Serra and his fellow monks were obliged to flee Campostela in 1839 and seek refuge in the Cassinese Benedictine monastery at Cava dei Tirreni in the Kingdom of Naples in Southern Italy. At Cava Serra and his fellow émigré, Rosendo Salvado, though not yet professed, were both aggregated to the Italian Cassinese Benedictine congregation.

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28 Ibid, p. 27. 
29 Ibid, p. 5. 
30 Ibid, p. 3 
But this was out of the liberal Spanish frying pan into the liberal Italian fire, because Italy had also been encountering liberal demands for reform which included growing opposition to the privileged temporal status of the Catholic Church. Reflecting the tenor of the times, Cava eventually came under secular edict and only evaded state censure under the nebulous classification of an archive.\textsuperscript{33} Serra remained at Cava until 1845 where, confident in the benign rule of the restored Bourbon monarchy (1815-1860), the monks, despite gathering revolutionary clouds, enjoyed a degree of security. This was evident in the regular attendance of King Francis II at piano recitals given by Rosendo Salvado.\textsuperscript{34} During their six-year residence at Cava Serra taught Theology, Canon Law, Greek and Hebrew to novices in the monastery. But Serra’s inflexible personality undercut his academic prowess, and induced a fellow monk to observe that he was rectilinear in his plans, indomitable, and rather intransigent in his ideas and convictions.\textsuperscript{35}

Eventually, despairing of any immediate hope of returning to their native Spain, Serra and Salvado both decided to offer themselves to work in the foreign missions.\textsuperscript{36} Thus, they elected to relinquish the cloistered contemplative community life in favour of frontier missionary endeavour for which their religious formation had little prepared them. Advised of the mission to the Swan settlement during Brady’s European visit in 1845 both men volunteered their services to work in Perth.\textsuperscript{37} Thus, Serra’s decision to depart Europe was driven by the vanguard of the political liberal onslaught on European Catholicism that challenged both the spiritual and temporal

\textsuperscript{33} Rees, ‘The Benedictine Revival in the Nineteenth Century’, p. 324.
\textsuperscript{34} Linage, \textit{Rosendo Salvado}, p. 24.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 22.
dimensions of the Catholic Church. In his experience, both in his native Spain and adopted Italy, the state was hostile to the Catholic Church. His own temperament, in addition to his Spanish formation, disposed him toward the conservative Catholic response to such hostility of asserting an uncompromising defence of Catholic privilege and power. Both Fonteinne’s observations on Serra’s conservative disposition and his subsequent episcopate in Perth can be more easily understood when considered in the light of these personal experiences. Serra’s conservative Spanish and Benedictine Catholic background bequeathed his tenure as bishop with a conservative orientation unyielding to suggestion or opposition that became a mixed blessing for the burgeoning Catholic education system in Western Australia.

From his arrival in Western Australia Serra displayed a proclivity for an administrative role. Subsequent to arriving in the Swan River colony in 1846 Serra, along with Salvador, became occupied in establishing a mission to the native Aborigine people. Indicating his preference, Serra confined his activity at the pioneering mission at New Norcia to administrative duties, and left responsibility for the more practical work like hunting food to Salvador. Indeed, Serra already had lofty visions and harboured an ambition that the monastery at New Norcia might become a future sanctuary for the victims of the Valladolid Benedictine diaspora commensurate with the life-line provided by the monasteries of Counter-Reformation-Europe to the suppressed English Benedictine community centuries earlier.38

Serra’s work as a missionary priest in Perth was cut short when the first diocesan synod of Western Australia held at the nascent Benedictine missionary outpost, later to become New Norcia, on the 13 March 1847 and attended by the bishop and three priests, Joostens, Serra and Salvador, agreed that Serra should take

the first available passage to Europe in urgent quest of funds for the mission.\textsuperscript{39} He sailed in February 1848, but shortly after his arrival in Europe, the curia elected him to pioneer the diocesan mission at a new settlement then planned for Port Essington [Darwin] on the northern coast of Australia and he was accordingly consecrated a bishop on 15 August 1848.\textsuperscript{40}

Serra's European visit coincided with a period of spiralling political turmoil in Western Europe as revolutionary forces inspired by liberal engendered ideologies militantly challenged the authority of traditional monarchs. This had both practical as well as theoretical implications for the Catholic Church.\textsuperscript{41} Witnessing the increasingly polarised contest between the Catholic Church and European Liberalism would further cement Serra's conservative proclivities. Liberal ideologies advocating free middle-class institutions as pivotal to human progress challenged the traditional autocratic structures germane to the \textit{Ancien Régime} including the Catholic Church.\textsuperscript{42} In Italy liberalism generated a nationalism which in turn threatened to destroy the temporal heart of the church, the Papal States. Leading Italian liberals including Gioberti, Mazzini, and Cavour all hoisted the nationalist banner in their efforts to mobilise support for their aspirations to rid the peninsula of Austrian influence and unite the multitude of Italian states, including those under papal control, into a united Italian nation.\textsuperscript{43} Revolutionary activity spread to the Papal States where in addition to organizing revolt against Austrian rule, elements within the nationalistic \textit{Risorgimento} movement, disgruntled at the pace of reform, challenged the temporal authority of the

\textsuperscript{40} Moran, \textit{The Catholic Church in Australasia}; p. 138.
\textsuperscript{42} \textit{Ibid}.
papacy.\textsuperscript{44} The month following Serra’s consecration in November 1848 Italian nationalists, animated by successes against Austrian forces at Bologna, demanded that the government of the Papal States declare war on Austria. Disaffected with the pace of political reform in the Papal States and the progress of negotiations toward a united Italy, extreme elements within the nationalist camp attacked and fatally stabbed the papal Minister of the Interior when he arrived at the opening of Parliament on the 15 November 1848. Fearing for his life Pope Pius IX one week later vacated Rome and sought refuge in the adjacent state of Naples.\textsuperscript{45} Subsequently, on 29 December 1848 the Premier of the Papal States, Joseph Galletti, set up a junta calling for an administrative assembly elected by direct and universal franchise.\textsuperscript{46} The following February the conspirators declared the Papal-States a Roman Republic and reduced the temporal jurisdiction of the Pope to the exercise of his spiritual power.\textsuperscript{47} The republic was short-lived, however, and a French expeditionary force under the directions of Louis Napoleon suppressed the revolutionary forces, occupied Rome and reinstated the Pope in April 1850.\textsuperscript{48}

Nationalist opposition to papal temporal authority continued to ferment and the Risorgimento under the leadership of Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872) increasingly challenged the temporal authority of Pius IX.\textsuperscript{49} The nationalist challenge to the papal temporal authority continued to gain momentum and within a decade the Italian state had annexed the Papal States as part of a unified Italy. Pius IX viewed the action as an

\textsuperscript{44} Holmes & Bickers, \textit{A Short History of the Catholic Church}, p.238.
\textsuperscript{45} John Webb Probyn, \textit{Italy from the Fall of Napoleon I., in 1815 to the Year 1890}, London: Cassell & Company 1891, pp. 112-116.
\textsuperscript{48} Holmes & Bickers, \textit{A Short History of the Catholic Church}, p. 239.
\textsuperscript{49} Hales, \textit{Pio Nono}, p.105
attack on his spiritual as well as his temporal authority. Rome, considering its temporal rule over the Papal States as necessary to its own independence and therefore to its spiritual authority, viewed any move to annex its temporalities as an attack on Catholicism itself. Given these developments it was hardly surprising that the prevalent view among the papal bureaucracy was that the church was under grave threat from political and ideological liberalism.

The emergent popularity of secular philosophies associated with political liberalism deemed this belief all the more credible. In addition to the challenge to its temporal jurisdiction the church simultaneously experienced its greatest external intellectual challenge since the Reformation. In Europe and Great Britain secularist philosophers attacked the social significance of religious beliefs and practices. For example, in his three-tiered paradigm of the evolution of human knowledge, the French philosopher, Auguste Comte (1789-1857) dismissed theology as merely a primitive stage of understanding. Popular secular humanist and liberal ideologies disputed established Catholic doctrines. The growing popularity of rationalism, positivism and empirically-based social inquiry implicitly challenged fundamental Catholic teaching on creation and revelation. Likewise, emerging theories on evolution challenged creationist cosmological theology, and liberal ideals, stressing the uniqueness and ability of the individual, denied Catholic teaching on "original sin" and the necessity for priestly mediation. The liberal emphasis on freedom, including freedom of conscience, could be extended to incorporate religious indifferentism thereby ascribing all denominations equal religious status. For the Pope and his curia

50 Collins, Liberalism in Nineteenth Century Europe, p. 14
52 Collins, Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe, p.15.
54 Edward Schillebeeks, World and Church, London: Sheed and Ward, 1982, p.188.
these challenges represented the realization of the dangers they believed were inherent in the political ideologies that had excited interest throughout Europe since the French Revolution.\textsuperscript{55}

Although condemned in a number of earlier papal encyclicals from the latter decade of the eighteenth century the struggle between the church and liberalism reached its climax during the pontificate of Pius IX (1846-1878).\textsuperscript{56} Confronted by a rising tide of increasingly hostile political and intellectual antipathy, the Pope turned for support for the rest of his reign to the Ultramontanist movement which had undergone a reawakening in the wake of the French Revolution. Originally associated with a conservative cadre of the Catholic hierarchy closely connected with Rome, Ultramontanism or the Ultramontane movement subsequently spread throughout the European dioceses under the careful choreography of strategically-placed enthusiastic bishops including Johannes Von Geissel in Germany, Edouard-Desire Pie in France, Henry Edward Manning in England and Paul Cullen in Ireland.\textsuperscript{57} As the central protagonists these men sought to galvanize fellow bishops, rank and file clergy, and laity against the perceived onslaught of corrosive nineteenth-century secular liberal ideologies through demanding strict loyalty and obedience to an authoritarian centralised administrative church structure with the Pope at its spiritual and temporal apex.\textsuperscript{58}

Thus these early protagonists of Ultramontanism refuted both nationalists and rationalists alike, and commenced a prescriptive program to immunize both clergy and laity against the perceived liberal onslaught.\textsuperscript{59} Having unambiguously placed their

\textsuperscript{55} Max Charlesworth, \textit{Church State and Conscience}, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1973, p.16.
\textsuperscript{56} Schillebeeks, \textit{World and Church}, 1982, p.188.
\textsuperscript{58} Holmes & Bickers, \textit{A Short History of the Catholic}, p. 240.
\textsuperscript{59} Pawley, \textit{Rome and Canterbury}, p. 210
faith in papal authority and determined to enforce unity through centralised uniformity, Ultramontanes embarked on a process of regularization of administration and practice.  

This process included formalizing church government into a centralized administrative management structure. This authoritarian structure permeated down through the diocesan episcopate who were given full control over diocesan affairs, but who in turn were accountable to Rome through the office of the metropolitan Archbishop. Strictly subject to clerical imprimatur, lay participation became church-centred and 'romanized' and Latin the universal ceremonial lexicon. Conservative and authoritarian the Ultramontane movement dismissed any exploration of liberal philosophies. Intent on establishing internal unity Ultramontanes viewed any diversity of spiritual practice or church administration along national boundaries as divisive and therefore debilitating. Thus, Ultramontanes viewed any divergence from recognizing papal primacy as they understood it, such as supporting the authority of episcopal councils or by upholding a more nationalistic concept of church, as unorthodox and jeopardizing the future security of the Catholic Church.  

Much later, in 1863, when Ultramontanism was securely entrenched throughout Catholic Europe, in his classic defence of the Ultramontane position, Manning, Archbishop of Westminster, emphasized the divine authority of the Catholic Church and salvation as obedience to that secure authority.

The presence of the Catholic Church among the civil powers of the world has changed the whole political order of mankind. It has established upon earth a legislature, a tribunal, and an executive independent of all human authority. It has withdrawn from the reach of human laws the whole domain of faith and of conscience. These depend on God alone, and are subjected by Him to His own authority, vested in His church which is guided by Himself. This is the solution to the problem, which the world cannot solve. Obedience to the Church is

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60 Von Arx, *Varieties of Ultramontanism*, p. 9  
liberty; and it is liberty because the church cannot err or mislead either men or nations. If the Church were not infallible, obedience to it might be the worst of bondage. This is ultramontanism, or the liberty of the soul divinely guaranteed by an infallible church; the proper check and restraint of Caesarism [the liberal state] as Caesarism is the proper antagonist to the sovereignty of God.\textsuperscript{63}

Nourished and promoted by the initial nucleus of bishops with the blessing of Pius IX (1846-1878) the policies advocated by the Ultramontane movement gradually spread to become the predominant ecclesiastical and theological influence within the Catholic Church. It reached a climax in the First Vatican Council in 1871 when Ultramontane superiority effected the promulgation of the dogma of papal infallability.\textsuperscript{64}

Externally, Ultramontanes challenged all attempts by liberal governments to provide alternative civil codes governing traditional areas of clerical jurisdiction as attempts to desacralize and erode the perimeters of the church’s social authority and function. The church contended that the extension of state control into areas traditionally viewed as its preserve was in reality a liberal conspiracy to appropriate its social agency. Long the preserve of the Church, state attempts to introduce public educational systems became a particular location of contention. Alarm at the prospect of formal instruction being restricted to secular subjects at worst and denominationally-mixed religious instruction at best, the Ultramontanes refused to cooperate with state systems and wherever possible aspired to maintain the church’s traditional control over the education of its adherents by setting up alternative Catholic schools. The rapid multiplication of religious communities actively involved in delivering education during the first half of the nineteenth-century facilitated the

\textsuperscript{63} Henry Edward Manning, Address to the Academia of the Catholic Religion delivered in 1863, \textit{W.A.C.R.} 6 July 1874.

accomplishment of this objective. Nonetheless, financing schools remained a problem for individual bishops. As European governments expanded their authority into providing public education, the corresponding contraction in the availability of state support for Catholic schools became a particular point of contention between Ultramontanes and the state. Thus resistance to state schooling systems, accompanied by demands for state support for separate Catholic-controlled schools, became, as each contributor to von Arx’s anthology emphasised, a leitmotiv of the Ultramontane ecclesiology.65 Articulating these tensions, all claims by the state to any right to regulate education were listed amongst the errors of the time condemned in the Syllabus of Errors issued by Pius IX in 1864.66

Consequently, when Serra returned to Europe in 1848 the contest between the Catholic Church and political liberalism had intensified and the church’s attitude under Pius IX became inextricably hostile to liberal intrusion in what it regarded as its rightful moral and spiritual sphere. But, notwithstanding the mercurial situation in Italy in 1848 Serra continued to pursue his quest for missionary aid. He succeeded in gaining support from influential patrons, including the youthful Spanish monarch Isabel who, through a strategic alliance with the liberal movement, had managed to succeed to the Spanish throne as Queen Regent in 1833. Reflecting the strong bond that still existed between the Catholic Church and Spanish throne, Isabel conferred upon Serra the honorable title, ‘Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Order of Isabel the Catholic, Honorary Member of the Royal Council of Her Catholic Majesty the Queen of Spain’.67 In addition to securing financial support, Serra also succeeded in

65 von Arx, Varieties of Ultramontanism, p. 4.
attracting a number of missionaries from reinstated Benedictine houses throughout Spain.

However, back in Perth news of Serra's translation to the proposed new diocese at Port Essington on the northern tip of Australia alarmed Brady. Fearing that funds collected by Serra would be redirected to the new diocese in the north he hastily dispatched his only remaining priest, Dom Salvado, to Europe to canvass funds for the now heavily indebted Perth diocese. In particular Brady hoped to secure further funding from the recently established 'Society for the Propagation of the Faith' based in Lyon which generated capital for missionary dioceses. But Brady's plans were again frustrated by the intervention of the Rome when the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda responsible for Catholic missions decided also to consecrate Salvado as bishop to Port Essington on 15 August 1849 and translate Serra, and presumably the funds that he had gathered, back to Perth as coadjutor to Brady. Thus, in one adroit move, Propaganda fulfilled the Congregation's obligations to supply a bishop to the new diocese and resolved the increasingly public financial problems of the existing diocese of Perth. Accompanied by seven priests and thirty-two Benedictine novices Serra embarked on board the Spanish frigate 'Ferrolana' and landed in Fremantle on 29 December 1849.

But Serra returned to a troubled diocese. Subsequent to his return as coadjutor disagreement over responsibility for diocesan debts and legal ownership of church property rapidly deteriorated into a public power struggle that divided the laity into

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two camps.71 Brady’s Gallicanism again became evident when he refused to acknowledge direction from his superiors in Rome and instead sought recourse through the local courts to deter his coadjutor, Serra, from gaining legal authority over diocesan property. This recourse by clergy to civil law implicitly denied Rome its primary position as arbitrator in ecclesiastical issues, and leading Ultramontanes, including Paul Cullen in Ireland were determined to persuade disaffected clergy to direct their grievances to internal Church arbitration rather than resorting to secular courts to resolve ecclesiastical issues.72 Indeed, subsequent to his departure Brady denied Serra the title of Bishop of Perth as he refused to resign his nominal title.

Notwithstanding this uncertainty as to exactly who was their bishop, still predominantly Irish in origin, the Catholic population in the colony had reached 2,034 in 1854 an increasing number of whom were involuntary arrivals. Petitioned by the colonists to alleviate a chronic labour shortage in the faltering agriculture-based economy and to develop an infrastructure of roads, bridges and administrative buildings the introduction of convict transportation to Western Australia began in 1850. From its initiation until its conclusion in 1868, a fettered labour force of 9,668 male prisoners, accompanied by guards, arrived in the colony.

Reflecting the demographic influence of the system a contemporary observer later wrote that the ‘great bulk of the Perth population including Catholics was comprised of the bond class [ex convicts], pensioners [prison guards] their wives and children, and Irish emigrant girls.’73 Throughout this period the vast majority of the settler Catholic population remained firmly tethered to the economic ranks of the

71 This period is covered in both McCarthy, ‘The Foundation of Catholicism in Western Australia 1829-1911’, and Burke, The History of the Catholic Church in Western Australia, 1979.
73 J.T. Reilly, Reminiscences of Fifty Years Residence in Western Australia, Perth: Sands & McDougall, 1903, pp. 31-32.
lower class. Like most of their Protestant counterparts, many worked as servants and farm labourers. Remarking on the settlers’ social status to the Archbishop of Dublin in 1852 Ursula Frayne wrote, ‘The Catholics are all poor people; the greater number of the Protestants are all also poor and but few are wealthy.’

As part of its overall demographic influence the convict system had a significant immediate outcome for the Catholic population of the colony. According to official figures the Catholic population of the colony recorded at 337 in 1848 reached 2,034 out of a total population of 11,743 in 1854, and subsequently increased to 3,354 by 1859. This included 431 prisoners, 279 prison guards and their families. Although there is some variation between the numbers of Catholics recorded in the official 1854 statistics and the independent census collected by Bishop Salvado which returned the total Catholic population of 2107, there is little doubt that the convict system was foremost in accounting for the rise in Catholic numbers. In 1854 John Donovan, the Catholic chaplain to the Fremantle Prison, recorded 550 of its inmates as Catholic. Reflecting the influence of convict transportation on the colony’s Catholic demography the non-convict Catholic population at Fremantle was at that time 450 and exceeded the 420 resident in Perth. The sharp rise in the number of Catholics in Fremantle prison necessitated extra duties for priests and in 1854 Serra successfully sought an increase in the prison chaplain’s stipend. The resident military force also contained a relatively high Catholic population. Petitioning funds to extend the Perth church whilst acting as diocesan administrator during Serra’s

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74 The Irish Catholic representation amongst the convict population only served to reinforce this observation.
76 1854 Census of Western Australia. Battye Library Perth.
77 Catholic Census taken by Bishop Salvado 1854, Salvado Papers, Battye Library, Perth.
78 Salvado to Colonial Secretary, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, A.N. 24, Vol. 298/205.
79 Salvado to Colonial Secretary, Western Australian Archives, Perth, A.N. 24 Vol. 24, Vol. 298/205.
absence, Salvado reminded Governor Kennedy that a large proportion of Perth Catholic constituency consisted of members of the military. In addition to the transportation of convicts a number of passage assistance schemes also influenced the Catholic demography of the colony. In particular schemes to attract young females to the colony ostensibly to work as household servants but also intended to correct the gender imbalance that resulted in exclusively male convict system also had an enduring influence on the Catholic constituency. In the aftermath of famine and dispossession, Ireland proved a veritable hunting ground for agents seeking to profit from their allocated quotas. Euphemistically termed “Irish Needlewomen” a significant number of the women who travelled from Ireland under the scheme were Catholics. Many subsequently married pardoned convicts and settled in outlying communities where they had worked as servants in already established households and to where they were attracted to remain by the offer of small government sub-divisions of land. Offering his advice on the future success of this attempt at social engineering in his district the resident magistrate at Toodyay supported the allocation of small land grants in his area on the basis that ‘as many Ticket of Leave holders are taking allotments of land in the neighbourhood and if opportunity offers are likely to take wives, a liberal number of needle-women could be placed in this district’. A contemporary observer, J.T. Reilly, who saw the influence of these female Catholic immigrants entirely benignly and to Catholic advantage, recorded their positive influence in the subsequent success of this allotment scheme.

What was, however, better than pure mental culture, was their high moral character and their fidelity to the Catholic faith, .... The Irish immigrants carry their faith with them into the interior of this immense colony, and where the Irish girls were, there was Christianity also. Ready and willing to

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80 Salvado to Colonial Secretary, 11 February 1854, Western Australian State Archives An 24 Vol. 298/205.
undertake any class of work, the Irish immigrant girls had no reluctance to go in into the country, feeling as they did that they could easily physically endure any hardships that might be their portion. … The Irish girls married the Bond class freely, and their union, as is the rule, was nearly always happy as well as lasting. 82

Despite its low socio-economic status this demographic expansion of the Catholic constituency augured well for the future success of the mission. Certainly the Mercy decision late in 1852 to construct a new two-storey school complex at Victoria Avenue in Perth indicated an internal confidence in the community’s future in the colony. Reflecting an upturn in the economic fortunes of the colony, the school completed in September 1853 was one of a number of new buildings to appear on the Perth skyline at that time including a new three-storey hospital erected at Goderich Street adjacent to the existing servants-home and poor-house. 83 Having secured a loan of £500 from diocesan funds, and contributions from individuals such as Thomas Little, described as one of the better-off Catholic settlers, and Governor Fitzgerald, and fund-raising ventures including the ubiquitous bazaar the Mercy community completed the construction of the school at a cost of £800 in September 1853.84 Two months later in November 1853 Serra placed Salvado in charge of the diocese and left to attend the promulgation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary in Rome. During his absence Salvado administered the diocese in a period of calm both internally and externally. In testimony to the internal harmony that reigned within the mission throughout this period Ursula Frayne recalled that, ‘during this time nothing interrupted the daily routine. 85

82 Reilly, Reminiscences of Fifty Years Residence in Western Australia, p. 36.
84 Ursula Frayne to Paul Cullen, 18 July 1854, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australia Correspondence Box.
85 Ursula Frayne, Sketches of Conventual Life in the Bush f. 47.
Certainly, from an educational perspective the Mercy community equipped with a new school remained at this stage the centre-point of the Catholic education campaign. Incorporating four classrooms the building was designed to accommodate four mutually exclusive day-schools each intended to cater for the perceived educational needs of children from the different social gradations represented in the colony. Our Lady of Mercy’s fee-paying school provided a primary and secondary education for young ladies; St. Mary’s free school, a basic elementary education for girls from a less fortunate background; Holy Angels for infant boys and girls; and St Joseph’s orphanage school. Evidently, the Sisters believed that this customized school framework complemented the tightly stratified, social structure of the colony.\textsuperscript{86} It also echoed the educational policy that was becoming increasingly associated with other Mercy foundations. The secondary fee-paying day school corresponded with those already established by the Mercy foundations throughout the more prosperous south-eastern region of Ireland where the community was rapidly becoming associated with fee-paying secondary schooling. These schools were aimed at the Catholic middle-class emerging in regional Ireland in the years following Catholic emancipation.\textsuperscript{87} Leaving no doubt concerning the targeted constituency the fees charged at these Irish Mercy schools were, according to a contemporary annalist, intended to educate the children of the better class who were unable to meet the substantial costs at more select boarding schools.\textsuperscript{88} In the same way the tiered structure of the new Perth school aimed to provide each pupil with an education in accord with their perceived social status and thus, as McAuley advised, avoided educating anyone above their future

\textsuperscript{86} This school contrasted with the humble abode subsequently occupied for a number of years in Fremantle by the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

\textsuperscript{87} Catriona Clear, \textit{Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland, Dublin} Gill and Macmillan 1987, p.118.

state in life. This restricted educational philosophy concurred with many contemporary observers who promoted the belief that educating children beyond their station generated undue expectations within the recipient which, if left unfulfilled, harboured negative outcomes both for the individual and society. Thus the poor remained poor but useful and, most importantly with respect to girls, virtuous members of society. Nevertheless, the Mercy Sisters, unlike some of their contemporaries in other religious communities, did attempt to address the plight of poor women seeing their educational efforts at this level more as an antidote to evil than equipping the women for future success. Through instruction in hygiene, morality and housekeeping skills the sisters hoped to inhibit further moral degradation and enhance employment chances, albeit as household servants. This contrasted with the educational efforts in Ireland of other religious female foundations like the Loreto and Ursuline communities who, according to a contemporary Mercy sister, confined their respective teaching work to providing exclusive boarding schools for the education of girls from more well-to-do backgrounds.

It would appear as if our Ven. Foundress wished to confine the labours of the Sisters of Mercy to the instruction of the poor, and therefore in the beginning did not intend to open special schools for the education of the upper and middle classes, leaving such to the Loretto and Ursuline Nuns. This want was keenly felt by persons where the Sisters were located who could not enjoy the advantage of sending their children to such boarding schools either on account of distance or deficiency of means. Rev. Mother McAuley could not feel the want of such schools in the city, yet when it was laid before her she at once acquiesced and sanctioned them.

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91 Clear, _Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland_, pp. 119-120.
92 Sullivan, _Catherine McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy_, p. 47.
Accordingly, the new school at Perth represented a development in keeping with the Mercy's Irish communal and educational culture as it catered for both poor and middle classes.

It was evidently well received and attracted support from across the economic divide so that within a year of opening it recorded a total enrolment of 151 pupils.\textsuperscript{93} Again, reflecting a confidence between the convent and the broader population as well as emphasising the continuing poverty of the general Catholic community the majority of the sixteen pupils attending the ‘Young Ladies School’ were Protestant.\textsuperscript{94} No doubt the parents of these young women, like their contemporaries in regional Ireland, viewed the opening of such a school as an opportunity to educate their offspring, without contamination from their social subordinates, commensurate with their future roles in society. Furthermore, in addition to its immediate educational objectives the school’s middle-class clientele elevated the social status of the Catholic education system, at least as far as the convent was concerned, beyond that of a charitable and elementary school profile. These contingent benefits were not missed by the astute Frayne who hoped to get the unreserved support of Paul Cullen, the Archbishop of Dublin, for the venture by bringing to his notice in 1852 the social and economic benefits of catering to this wealthier clientele.

\textsuperscript{93} Salvado to Colonial Secretary, 30 January 1854, Western Australian State Archives, An 24, Acc, 36, Vol. 298/191.
\textsuperscript{94} \textit{Ibid}
nearly £300, principally from the protestants who value the schools so much that the freely gave what they could afford. It has been calculated that the building will, in this colony, cost over £800.95

The approach to schooling promoted by Governor Fitzgerald between 1848 and 1855 encouraged this conciliatory educational environment. Certainly, unlike his predecessors Fitzgerald displayed no animosity toward the Catholic system. On the contrary he publicly supported the Mercy school. He made a personal contribution to the building fund for the new convent-school and bestowed the dignity of his office when he attended end-of-year student award presentations in the school. Reflecting the growing Catholic populations in the smaller settlements, schools at York and Toodyay were included in the government grant of £149 to the Catholic system in 1853.96

But Fitzgerald was careful not to neglect the public school system. Certainly the success of the General Education Board under the chairmanship of the colonial chaplain, J.B. Wittenoom, in securing state aid for a new purpose-built school designed to accommodate both boys and girls in 1854 went some way to dissipate anxieties regarding a Catholic educational takeover. Thereafter, benefiting from the combination of a permanent school building and the presence of a qualified school-teacher the state system expanded its own horizons to provide education beyond a basic elementary level.97 Thus by the mid-1850s the small population of the main settlement at Perth and its suburbs with a population of 2429, of whom 410 were Catholic, enjoyed access to comparatively advanced systems of both public and

95 Ursula Frayne to Abp. Paul Cullen, 25 September 1852, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australia Correspondence Box.
97 David Mossenson, State Education in Western Australia 1829-1960, Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1972, p. 23.
private elementary and secondary education with elementary schools branching out into the large peripheral settlements.\textsuperscript{98}

This contrasted favourably with other colonies in Australia. In New South Wales, for example, where a dual system of government funding for state and church schools pertained, the education system was increasingly flawed. Despite its buoyant economy and large population, in 1854 the commissioners for education reported that a scarcity of trained teachers, a narrow range of subjects and dilapidated accommodation all contributed to the poor quality of education available in both denominational and state schools.\textsuperscript{99} Significantly, with the exception of a school administered by the English Benedictine community, the Catholic system in New South Wales did not provide higher education for girls until the Sisters of Charity and Mercy opened Schools in Sydney in 1858 and 1859 respectively.\textsuperscript{100} This period of educational prosperity in Perth, however, was drawing to a close. The return of Serra in May 1855 and the arrival of Arthur Kennedy as governor in July of the same year foreshadowed a more turbulent period in church and state relations in Western Australia particularly with regard to education. Although to a degree influenced by local conditions, significantly these developments, as far as Catholic education and church-state relations were concerned, were symptomatic of events concurrently evolving within the European arena.

As we saw, Serra’s extended European sojourn from 1853 to 1855 brought him into contact with new Ultramontanist forces gaining the ascendancy within European Catholicism. From within, the increasingly militant Ultramontists hailed the

\textsuperscript{98} Western Australian Census Returns for 1854, Battye Library, Perth. 312. 94.
\textsuperscript{100} Alan Barcan, \textit{Two Centuries of Education in New South Wales}, Sydney: University of Sydney Press, 1988, p.100.
promulgation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 by Pope Pius IX without any reference to a general council of bishops as representing a victory for their emphasis on the primacy of papal authority. Reflecting deepening divisions within the episcopate on the issue of authority a number of bishops led by Archbishop Sibour of Paris dissented from the majority concurrence to the doctrine. In contrast, Serra’s request that he rededicate the Perth diocese to its honour evinced his unreserved support for both the content and form of the new dogma. Serra did not restrict his extended European visit to Rome but called on a number of metropolitan cities, including London. Here Serra could witness at first hand the ambivalent relations developing between the Liberal Party in power at Westminster and the recently restored, and increasingly Ultramontane, Catholic hierarchy which John Henry Newman dubbed the ‘Second Spring’. Reflecting the widening disparity between Ultramontane Catholicism and Liberal constitutionalism, tensions between the re-instated hierarchy and liberal leaders had already surfaced at the highest level. In 1850 the Liberal Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, vigorously condemned the triumphalistic tone of the flamboyant pastoral delivered by the newly appointed and enthusiastic Ultramontane Catholic primate, Nicholas Wiseman. The introduction of the Charitable Bequests Act in 1853 bringing charitable trusts under bequests under government control was viewed with suspicion by the English Catholic hierarchy who considered the legislation as but another example of the liberal state encroaching on the affairs of the church. From his headquarters in the fashionable Finsbury Square district of London, close to Westminster Cathedral the seat of the metropolitan bishop

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101 Holmes and Bickers, A Short History of the Catholic Church, p. 241.
102 Hales, Pio Nono a Study in European Politics and Religion, p. 148.
104 Ibid, see also Pawley, Rome and Canterbury Throught the Centuries, 1974.
105 Norman, The English Catholic Church, p. 189.
of the recently and re-established English Catholic episcopate, he contacted a number of influential Catholics within the British establishment including Lord Arundel and Lord and Lady Lovatt.\textsuperscript{106}

Having decided against visiting Ireland, long a source of missionaries for Australian bishops, Serra confined his recruiting efforts to France and his native Spain. In France he successfully approached the French congregation of Saint Joseph of the Apparition to establish a foundation in the Perth diocese.\textsuperscript{107} Accordingly, this female religious community became the second influential communal source of Catholic educational development in the isolated diocese of Perth and accordingly brought a new cultural influence to that development.

Although as a religious institute the Josephite community shared a number of founding characteristics with their Mercy contemporaries both communities contrasted in a number of ways. Like the Mercy’s the Josephite community emerged as part of the Catholic revivalism that fermented in Western Europe during the early decades of the nineteenth century and was one of the four hundred female congregations founded in the European heartland between 1800 and 1880.\textsuperscript{108}

Although both communities had their origins in the philanthropic vision of a wealthy heiress, unlike the secular community initially envisioned by Catherine McAuley the Josephite founder, Emile De Vialar (1797-1856), intended from the outset to establish a religious community of women. This contrast in the initial vision of their respective founders shaped each community’s self-perception, for the vision and charisma of its founder distinguishes each religious community and defines and moulds the particular

\textsuperscript{107} Moran, History of the Catholic Church, p. 368.
form of its expression in life and practice. Accordingly, the Josephites, in contrast to the Mercy community which had a secular nativity, emerged within the confines of the spiritual authority of the Catholic Church and was therefore more deferential to episcopal authority. Also, in contrast to the urbane middle-class background of the majority of Mercy membership, the majority of entrants to the Josephite community during the first twenty-five years between 1832 and 1857 came from the peasant population of rural France.

Although undertaking the simple vows of an active congregation the administrative structure of the Josephite community, in contrast with the autonomous diocesan structure of other active communities including the Mercy congregation, observed a centralized novitiate and administration under the direction of a Superior General. Although De Vialar subsequently decentralized the novitiate structure to accommodate aspirants in far-flung missionary foundations the administrative authority remained centred in the office of the Superior General. Again, in contrast with the strict internal membership divisions between choir and lay sisters practiced in Mercy convents the Josephites, after a brief period of practice in which the wearing of a gold or silver cross distinguished the two groups, subsequently relinquished this internal dual membership classification in favour of a more egalitarian system. Stating her reasons for initiating the change in 1856 de Vialar explained that the Christian faith demanded a less discriminatory structure because God did not discriminate along social benchmarks.

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112 Monsignor Muoland to the bishop of Rodez, 10 April 1852 cited by Agnes Cavasino, *Emilie De Vialar*, p. 160.
One day when our venerable mother was in the community room surrounded by her sisters eager to listen to her, her face became sad. Some of them ventured to ask her: Mother what are you thinking about? Tell us about it. as though coming out of a dream or a vision she replied: You are rather curious! But smiling she added: this my dear daughters is what I was thinking about. When we go to meet the good God he will not say to us: You who are a choir sister come up to this throne, and you who are lay sisters go there further down. No my dear sisters, in heaven we will all be the same, we will only have that place which we have merited by our life of holiness, our good works, our charity and the exact observance of our holy rule. From now on you are all to be Sisters.114

Despite these institutional contrasts both communities shared a number of founding principles. Both founders identified education as an important Christian mission and de Vialar, like McAuley, intended her community to focus on the instruction of girls, particularly the daughters of the poor. Like McAuley de Vialar also viewed caring for the sick and aged as a worthy focus for her community.

In the year 1832, Emilie de Vialar founded in the diocese of Albi in France, a pious society of women which she wished to call the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition, in memory of the apparition of the angel with which this Patriarch was favoured; and she laid down that these women should, through the profession of simple vows tend toward their own sanctification and that of others, undertake the pious and religious education of girls, free for those who are poor, and in particular devote themselves to the care of the sick and the infirm. This pious institute, powerfully aided by God, has grown and spread in a very short time and the Sisters have not failed to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to the education of girls and to the care of the afflicted including infidels, even at the height of the ravages of a cruel plague. Nevertheless, the same Emilie de Vialar judged that this would be of little avail for herself and for her Sisters, if her institute were not confirmed by the Apostolic Holy See.115

With a substantial legacy of 300,000 Francs, de Vialar established the initial group in the town of Gaillac, in the diocese of Albi within the Tarn district of regional France in 1833, before finally relocating to the expanding town of Marseilles on the southern coast in 1852.116 Settling in Marseilles, the fledgling community received the

114 Testimony of Marie Flavier, reproduced in Cavasino Emilie De Vialar, p. 204.
115 Cavasino, Emilie De Vialar, p. 299.
116 Langlois, Le Catholicisme au Féminin, p. 277.
enthusiastic support of the local archbishop, Eugene de Mazenod. A keen supporter of missionary communities, de Mazenod personally contributed to the multiplication of religious communities in nineteenth-century France when he founded his own religious order of missionary priests, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1815.\textsuperscript{117} De Mazenod legitimised the canonical standing of the community by bestowing his episcopal recognition on their religious status and personally approved their constitutional statutes. Under his patronage and direction they rapidly matured into a secure diocesan religious community.\textsuperscript{118} The community, however, was denied full papal approval until 1862.\textsuperscript{119} Nevertheless, they did succeed in gaining secular legal recognition under the French civil code, and circumvented prohibitions on property ownership by adopting the existing rules governing the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Cluny who had already received the approval of the French civil authority. On profession, Josephites undertook simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience renewable every five years. Although the sisters performed a range of altruistic tasks their main function was in medicine and education. Here again, despite the initial objective to educate the poor, the Josephites, like their Mercy contemporaries, extended their mission into providing higher education and by 1852 had established a fee-paying school for middle-class girls in Marseilles where, mindful of her bourgeois charges and the support of ‘important ladies of the city, including the prefect’s wife; de Vialar ensured she provided the school with a sister-teacher who had ‘an agreeable accent’.\textsuperscript{120}

\textsuperscript{117} Gibson, \textit{A Social History of French Catholicism}, p. 108.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid, p. 475.
\textsuperscript{119} Cavasino, \textit{Emilie De Vialar}, p. 217.
\textsuperscript{120} Emilie De Vialar to Agnes Petit, 20 October 1852, reproduced in Cavasino, \textit{Emilie De Vialar}, p. 173.
From Marseilles the community expanded to establish schools throughout France and by 1853 extended as far north as Tremorel on the Brittany coastline.\textsuperscript{121} Anxious to attract English-speaking novices the congregation moved west and established a foundation in London in 1854 on the invitation of the local priest, Henry Bringham, contingent on providing a sister sufficiently proficient in English. The language caveat was overcome when the superior of an Anglican community of women indicated that she intended to join the Sisters.\textsuperscript{122} In establishing a foundation in England the community accomplished a much sought after-objective by contemporary French missionary congregations who viewed the establishment of a house in England as a necessary stepping-stone for access into the colonies of the British Empire. These communities realised that it was easier to work from a base in England and establish foundations in the colonies with English or indeed Irish sisters.\textsuperscript{123} Despite these sensitivities to local needs the sisters that were selected to pioneer the Perth foundation were French-born and spoke little English. Indicating her own disapproval of the foundation in Fremantle, the Mercy Superior, Ursula Frayne, drew attention to this language barrier when she refuted charges of disobedience, laid by Serra, to the Irish primate Paul Cullen in 1856.\textsuperscript{124}

This then was the communal Catholic culture of the four representatives of the Josephite community, two professed nuns, Julie Cabagnol and Lucie Fieuzet, and two novices, Emilie Petit and Zoe de Chamouin, who along with Serra and a group of Spanish Benedictine novices and lay tradesmen monks embarked for Perth in 1856. The party also included two Irish clerical students, Thomas Lynch and Patrick

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid, p. 180
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid, pp.186-188.
\textsuperscript{124} Ursula Frayne to Archbishop Paul Cullen, 2 July 1856, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australia Correspondence Box.
McCabe.\textsuperscript{125} The appointed Superior, Julie Cabagnol, aged twenty-five, was the youngest of the community.\textsuperscript{126}

Evidently, Serra’s perceptions of the political and ideological changes that he encountered during his European visit strengthened his respect for traditional authority, for in his letter to de Vialar on the eve of embarking he regretted being unable to visit the exiled Mother of Queen Isabel of Spain during his sojourn in Paris because of the brevity of his stay in the French capital. He proclaimed his allegiance to the Spanish throne even in exile.

I thank you also for the news you gave … concerning the august mother of our beloved Queen Isabel. I stayed in Paris but thirty six hours and you can imagine how impossible it was for me to visit the court in such a short time … There are few Spaniards so independent as I am and it would have been an agreeable duty to me to publicly express my feelings in her present exile … If you find the time to see Queen Christina please convey to her my deepest regards.\textsuperscript{127}

For her part de Vialar affirmed that the Josephites were going with Serra in deference to the authority of his episcopal office. For her the bishop’s request for a Josephite foundation in Perth and divine fiat were one and the same thing.

I have never asked for a particular mission and all our foundations are the result of providential circumstances … I have nothing to fear concerning those sisters I am sending to Australia because it was not my own idea, but that of the bishop of this mission who came to ask me for sisters who would provide a variety of works there. He had been in Paris. It is always divine providence which comes first in my affairs, I have the happiness only to follow it.\textsuperscript{128}

This contrasted with the Mercy’s sense of their own autonomous agency and decision-making culture and, consequently, represented within the isolated Perth mission two different perspectives on the exercise of ecclesiastical jurisdiction at a

\textsuperscript{125} Inquirer, 30 May 1855, p. 3, Clmn. 4.
\textsuperscript{126} Cavasino in Emilie De Vialar. p. 190.
\textsuperscript{127} Serra to Emilie De Vialar 30 January 1955, copy in this writer’s possession.
\textsuperscript{128} Emilie De Vialar to Mr. Cassan 7 July 1854.cited in Cavasino, Emilie De Vialar, p. 156.
time when the issue of authority was emerging as a significant agenda within the international Catholic Church. De Viliar’s deference to episcopal authority was no doubt shaped by her earlier encounter with a bishop brandishing the crosier of arbitrary power in 1839 when the community established their first foundation outside of France in Algeria. Within a short time of their arrival the diocesan bishop Mgr Dupuch attempted to extend his diocesan jurisdiction over the foundation and challenged de Viliar’s administrative jurisdiction as superior of the community. Dupuch had little hesitation in crushing any apparent reproach to the authority of his office by drawing attention to its divine origins when he questioned. ‘Do you agree now and for the future that God, who has watched over your society in the diocese of Algiers, wants you and all persons who constitute it, to be unconditionally under my episcopal authority and that of my successors, and thus we will make the decisions in the said society as we think fit’. 129

Reflecting a degree of timidity, De Viliar, unsure of her own canonical status in the absence of papal approbation, responded with a more earthly approach. She did not question episcopal authority or its suggested divine origins but considered strategies to escape the bishop’s ecclesiastic jurisdiction. In doing so she was forced to contemplate forfeiting the foundation’s religious status and possibly subjecting herself and her community to allegations of forsaking their religious vows for the sake of expedience. She advised her confidant accordingly:

If we go we will be leaving a country in which God has allowed us to do good work. If we remain, either we will throw ourselves entirely into the hands of the bishop, in which case we will be so damaged as to be unrecognisable and he will oblige us to renounce our constitutions, or, should we lay aside the title of religious, we would only be charitable women, and this would be total disgrace. Further we take the risk of

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129 Mgr. Dupuch to Emilie de Viliar, 4 January 1840, reproduced by Cavasino, in *Emilie De Viliar*, p.71.
fuelling public opinion which judges the bishop to be useless. If we go, we remain as we are, and will be able to return sometime. 130

In the consequent struggle de Viliar was forced to capitulate and to relinquish the mission in Algeria in October 1842, just five years after arriving there. Besides this immediate outcome de Vialar’s encounter with episcopal authority had a more long-term influence and delayed the granting of papal approbation to her community. This was evinced in the observations of the clerical consultor appointed by Rome to review the constitutional regulations of the community prior to considering papal approbation in 1842. His report drew attention to the obligation on all religious communities to accept the administrative jurisdiction of diocesan bishops and critically advised his superiors that the community lacked religious profundity.

No community of women, having solemn religious vows is entirely exempt from the jurisdiction of their ordinaries. Even more so a congregation which is not a religious order. Can one call it a profession when vows are only made for five years? The members are, correctly speaking, not religious. No enclosure! Their houses are open to everyone and they themselves are out and about. Their houses can consist of just two people ... The superior general rules with unlimited power ... The dress is not sufficiently religious. It is on these counts that they are judged in Rome where one meets them in the streets and in the churches. Their hat, above all gives them a rather worldly aspect. 131

In short, his review recommended that the rules and regulations of the community needed refinement before any further consideration of papal approbation. Accordingly, at the time of the Perth foundation de Vialar was obliged to conduct the affairs of her fledgling community within the confines of an ill-defined canonical status for papal approbation was not received until 1862. 132 So the pioneering members of the Josephite foundation in Western Australia were, unlike

130 Emilie De Vialar to Mgr. de Gualy, 10 January 1840, Ibid., p. 72.
132 Cavasino, Emilie De Vialar, p. 196.
their Mercy counterparts, far from sure of their status and position within the church.

On his return to Perth on 24 May 1855 Serra lost little time in giving public expression to his sense of episcopal authority. Evincing his self-perception of the status of his episcopal office he constructed an elaborate residence adjacent to the existing Mercy convent, school and small church at Victoria Square. One outspoken member of the Catholic laity got the message, describing it as a ‘grand Palace of Magnificent size’. This perceived need for a palatial residence contrasted with the humble abode occupied by his predecessor Brady. Serra also publicly declared his absolute adherence to the recently defined doctrine of the Immaculate Conception by rededicating the albeit humble church in its honour. While adherence was required from all bishops subsequent to the promulgation of the dogma, there was no doubt that Serra was an enthusiastic supporter of this Ultramontanist doctrine. On Sunday 17 June 1855, before celebrating a pontifical mass to honour the new Dogma of Faith, Serra read the supporting Papal Bull and declared to his congregation that the title of St. John the Evangelist would no longer apply to the church which would be henceforth known as the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. On the same day the Mercy convent previously titled ‘The Convent of the Holy Cross’ rather ambiguously became ‘The Convent of the Immaculate Conception’.134

But Serra did not restrict his renewed missionary zeal to personal expressions of papal loyalty or Spanish episcopal power. He also extended the Benedictine profile in the diocese and engaged his enlarged Benedictine workforce in his campaign of diocesan renewal. In particular, the monks, many of whom were skilled tradesmen,

133 B. Smith to Gibbons, 15 August 1856, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Correspondence Box.
found themselves employed outside of their Subiaco monastery in the construction of Serra’s elaborate diocesan building program. The Catholic school system also received a Benedictine seasoning when he appointed two Benedictine novices, Anselem (Nicholas) Burke and Fredrick Byrne, as the respective headmasters to the Catholic schools for boys at Perth and Fremantle.\textsuperscript{135} The Perth school was subsequently moved to the new palace and renamed the Bishop’s School.\textsuperscript{136} His Benedictising of the diocese continued apace and he retained his fellow bishop and pioneering Benedictine Dom Salvado in diocesan affairs, much to Salvado’s despair as the likelihood of a return to the New Norcia mission daily became more remote. Indeed Serra would later announce his plans to centralise the Benedictine mission at the near-urban Subiaco monastery and relegate the amordian New Norcia to a peripheral supporting role by contributing an annual income from rental lands and buildings.\textsuperscript{137} But Serra’s expansionist agenda received a severe check with the arrival of Arthur Kennedy as governor in July 1855.

On his arrival Kennedy, who was Irish by birth and had worked there as a government official, proceeded to introduce a number of fiscal reforms to the colonial budget in his efforts to reduce public spending. Kennedy insisted that the state’s educational obligations were limited to providing a basic ‘plain and practical’ elementary schooling.\textsuperscript{138} Kennedy’s new scheme of elementary education was tightly modelled on the Irish National School system which he had experienced at first hand.\textsuperscript{139} In an attempt to sway Catholic support Kennedy included a number of

\textsuperscript{135} Serra to Colonial Secretary, 10 September 1855, Western Australian State Archives, Acc. 36, Vol. 329, 44.
\textsuperscript{136} P. D. Tannock, ‘History of Catholic Education in Western Australia, 1829-1929’, (M.Ed.), thesis University of Western Australia, 1964, p. 87.
\textsuperscript{137} George Russo, Bishop Salvado’s Plan to Civilise and Christianize Aboriginals, MA Thesis, University of Western Australia, 1972, p. 108.
\textsuperscript{138} Colonial Secretary to Board of Education 27 November 1855, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, ACC. 36. Vol. 381/73
\textsuperscript{139} \textit{Inquirer}, 12 December 1855, p. 3, clmn., 2.
appeasing considerations in his twelve point programme of educational reform. These included provisions for Catholic representation on the new governing board and the replacement of the bible as a religious education text with the book of bible reading extracts used in the Irish system.\textsuperscript{140} This latter provision was to prove controversial in succeeding years.

Kennedy did little to conceal the severity of his intended reforms. He directed that the curriculum in state schools be restricted in core subjects when he advised the Education Board that, ‘as a general rule, education afforded at the public expense should be available to those only who are unable, through poverty, to pay, and should be confined to a plain and practical education embracing reading, writing, elements of geography, first four rules of arithmetic, with Rule of Three Practice’ etc.\textsuperscript{141}

The publication of Kennedy’s proposed cutbacks attracted cries of protest from all sides involved in providing education in the colony. Responding to his proposal to reduce the scope of the system the members of the Education Board argued for the retention of the existing curriculum and contended that, in the absence of any suitable alternative conditions pertaining in the colony, that the public system provide instruction tailored to suitably equip the ‘future masters of enterprise’ in the colony.\textsuperscript{142} Unyielding, Kennedy forged ahead with his new educational blueprint and insisted that higher grade education was a private and not a state concern.

Presaging future debate on the ubiquitous subject of the role of the Bible in religious instruction in state schools the Board secretary, Francis Lochee, advised the governor that although it acceded to his proposal to replace the Bible with extract

\textsuperscript{140} Colonial Secretary to Education Board, 27 November 1855, Western Australian State Archives, ACC 36, Vol. 381/73

\textsuperscript{141} Colonial Secretary to Board of Education, 23 November 1855, Western Australian State Archives, ACC 36, Vol. 381/73.

\textsuperscript{142} Board of Education to Colonial Secretary, 30 November 1855, Western Australian State Archives, AN 24, ACC 36, Vol 329/73.
readings the matter remained contentious, and the Board only reluctantly agreed to the change. Despite Lochee’s assurances three of the four board members registered their protest by tendering their resignations. Undeterred, Kennedy convened a new three-man board comprising the recently appointed Colonial Secretary, Fredrick Barlee, the original master of the Perth Boys school, Dacres Williams, and a more recent addition from the old dissenting board, W. Hardy. This reconstituted Board declared its concurrence with Kennedy’s proposals early in 1856.

Despite the apparent concessions to the Catholic side including Bible readings in place of the Bible Serra declined to cooperate with Kennedy’s planned scheme and instead demanded that Catholic schools, although independent of the proposed system, receive an allocation of the education budget as operated under the previous governor. Thus, in 1856 proposed education reforms under a politically liberal colonial administration sparked ecclesiastical tensions in Western Australia which were symptomatic of the growing animosity between an increasingly conservative Catholic Church and Liberal states in Europe. Serra’s conservative Spanish background, spiritual formation and personal experience served only to inflate his resolve to resist this liberal challenge to the autonomy of Catholic schools.

Kennedy’s refusal in December 1855 to grant Serra’s request for government assistance in defraying the cost of erecting a proposed Catholic school for boys in Fremantle signalled the commencement of hostilities. Having convened the new Education Board early in 1856 Kennedy forged ahead with his plans to establish a

143 Education Board to Colonial Secretary 30 November 1855, Western Australian Archives, Perth, Acc. No. 36, Vol. 329/73.
144 Board of Education to Kennedy, 11 December 1855, Western Australian State Archives, An 24, Acc. 36, Vol. 329/71.
145 Inquirer, 13 February 1856, p.3 clmn. 3.
146 Serra to Colonial Secretary, 12 December 1855, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, Acc 36/50, Vol. 329.
denominationally-mixed public elementary education system based on the Irish model. Precluding any debate on the issue he severed all government aid to Catholic schools in 1856. In a gesture of defiance in June 1856 Serra emulated the action taken by Paul Cullen in Ireland and declined to accept a place on the new school board. Serra then wrote to Kennedy and entreated the governor to reconsider his position regarding the allocation of financial support for Catholic schools.

Warning in June 1856 of the dangers of promoting a policy of exclusivism Serra raised the stakes and cautioned that Kennedy’s interdenominational educational policy could have wider ramifications. He advised that future historians could interpret his actions as bigoted. He also alleged that Kennedy’s educational policy was detrimental to the colony’s economy as it deterred prospective immigrants from coming to the Swan River in addition to causing many recent arrivals to leave. To emphasise his point Serra drew a comparison with the popularity of the Canadian denominationally educational system amongst prospective Irish immigrants. Serra also acerbically alleged that the local colonial administration was overlooking directives from London recommending an even-handed approach to denominationational relations. In this letter to the Colonial Secretary Serra declared that Kennedy’s policy was a ‘cause of great dissatisfaction amongst a huge portion of the colonists and ultimately drives away from the Swan River hundreds of those good emigrants of both sexes not long arrived from Ireland who did not abandon their beloved country to see the religion of their forefathers slighted in a far distant corner of the World’. He concluded by requesting that the governor and the members of the Legislative Council reconsider a policy he advised was opposed in the colony by both Protestants and Catholics.

You may wish to consider whether the spirit of exclusivism which is forging its way into this colony against the wishes of conscientious

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147 Serra to Colonial Secretary, 3 June 1856, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, C.S.R. Vol. 380/307.
protestants as well as Catholics [note use of capitals] is calculated to cause, when it will be known, the same effect which the address of the Canadians will doubtlessly produce. Hence it is in the interest of the whole Colony that I most respectfully and earnestly beg leave to request that the spirit of impartiality commanded by Earl Grey and, if I do not greatly mistake, recommended by Her Majesty’s present Secretary of State for the Colonies be once more received in Swan River and that in consequence the annual share of public funds votes for educational purposes granted up to the present year to the Catholic schools of the colony be again apportioned to them.\footnote{Serra to Colonial Secretary, 3 June 1857, Western Australian State Archives, C.S.R. Incoming Vol. 380.}

Serra’s entreaty and thinly veiled allegations met with little success, however, and the Catholic school system remained obliged to shoulder its own expenses. Subsequently writing in a more conciliatory tone Serra assured Kennedy that his decision not to participate in the public system was based on universal rather than local reasons and that Catholic doctrine rather than fear of proselytism prompted his non-participatory position. Serra explained that Catholic teaching demanded that religious instruction permeate all subjects and not just an allocated weekly timeslot. He cautioned, however, that the continuing policy would alienate the Catholic constituency from the local administration.

Your Excellency will permit me to observe that fear of positive attempts to change the faith of the people is not what deters RCatholics from having their schools incorporated to the new schools. With the respect which generally speaking, Christians have for each others religion in this colony, it would be enough for the parents to let any master or mistress know that such an attempt would give offence to them to be assured that it would not be made. Others far different are the conscious scruples which induce RCatholics to prefer schools where practical religion is carefully inculcated by books and by verbal instruction not only on Sundays but also in each of the six days of the week. To enumerate these scruples and to try to show their reasonableness would be to pretend to force upon your excellency’s mind and upon those of the Honourable Members of the Executive Council my own convictions which I will not be so proud as to believe myself capable of. I will only beg leave as to ask your Excellency’s attention to the desire expressed in the proposed plan of avoiding offence to the conscientious scruples of any, and as offence, I am very sorry to say, cannot be avoided to the conscientious
scrapes of the RCatholic community if the new plan of schools should continue to be enforced in the colony.\footnote{Serra to Colonial Secretary, 19 June 1856, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, C.S.R. Vol. 380/321.}

Having thus advised Kennedy that Catholics could not in conscience participate in his school system because of its secular orientation he then proceeded to advise that the only alternative was the re-introduction of a measure of government support to the Catholic system.

I most humbly beg to request I that freedom of education be again be re-established in Western Australia as there has been for 12 years that is since public schools were organised up to this time. II That your excellency and the honourable members of the Executive Council be pleased to consider the R, C. schools an integral part of the colonial schools as they had been until lately and consequently III that the R.C. schools be admitted to having as heretofore a proportionate share of the public funds voted for educational purposes.\footnote{Ibid.}

However, Serra’s importunities still met with little success. Kennedy’s reply was brief and to the point. He directed his secretary to advise Serra that, ‘in giving his letter mature consideration the Government in Council are of the opinion that no provision exists for any alteration to the system as at present laid down for the conduct of public schools in the colony which has not the approval of Her Majesty’s Secretary of State’.\footnote{Note attached by Kennedy to the margin of Serra’s letter 19 June 1856, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, C.S.R. Vol. 380/321.}

Serra took up Kennedy’s challenge and, reverting to the tactic established by his predecessor, dispatched a memorial through the Colonial Secretary to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Henry Labouchere, in the end of June 1856 petitioning for the re-establishment of state aid to Catholic schools.\footnote{Kennedy to Labouchere 4 Aug. 1856, Western Australian Archives, CSO 298, 329. 356, & 380.No. 65.} Kennedy also wrote an accompanying despatch acerbically advising the Secretary of State for the Colonies

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that not only was a denominational system of education impracticable and unsuitable to the conditions pertaining in the Swan River but also that Spanish clergy were unsuitable for Western Australia as the Catholic constituency was predominantly of Irish origin.\textsuperscript{153} Thus, Kennedy conjectured that Serra's refusal to cooperate with the Irish National System of education was more to do with his Spanish background than any consideration for the betterment or wishes of his predominantly dependent constituency.

Besides embittering relations with Kennedy Serra's strategy failed to elicit any immediate official response probably because the educational attention of the British government at that time was also engaged in reconstituting and developing an elementary school system acceptable to all denominations. In Ireland, where educational tensions had a decidedly Catholic-Protestant profile, the inter-denominational debate had by that time deteriorated into a caustic and very public harangue between Paul Cullen and Richard Whately the respective Catholic and Anglican Archbishops of Dublin.\textsuperscript{154} Consequently, appeals regarding the educational problems of far-off Western Australia paled into insignificance for the imperial government which enabled Kennedy to proceed undeterred with his proposal to adopt the Irish system. But Serra steadfastly refused to yield and sent another petition to London which suggested thinly veiled claims of sectarianism against the local administration by contrasting the amounts allocated to the Catholic and Anglican community.

The amount granted to the Catholic community for building throughout the whole colony in more than 27 years that the colony of western Australia has existed is only 100 pounds, granted to aid in the building of a very large school house for the Sisters of Mercy where about 200 children attend daily while more than 400 pounds of Public money has

been granted to the section of the community that belongs to the Church of England.\textsuperscript{155}

Relations between Kennedy and Serra deteriorated further when Serra withdrew the Catholic chaplain, Timothy Donovan, from the chaplaincy of Fremantle prison alleging that Protestant teachers were instructing Catholic prisoners.\textsuperscript{156} Thus by the time London eventually replied to Serra’s appeals in 1857 relations between the bishop and local administration were at a low ebb. Furthermore, the belated reply offered Serra little salutary comfort, and although it urged an even-handed approach to all denominations it advised that it had no objection to Kennedy’s system as it offered access to all denominations. As a result the educational framework of government-supported public and self-funded Catholic schools that emerged in the colony in 1856 remained in operation until 1871.\textsuperscript{157}

Although never over-financed the new public education system subsequently went from strength to strength and within a decade had expanded into most rural settlements and had a total of fifty-five schools attended by 2,188 pupils by 1869.\textsuperscript{158} Despite its demographic success the public system, under both Kennedy and his successor, John S. Hampton (1862-68), was far from satisfactory. It remained under-financed and became associated, particularly in more rural areas, with poor facilities and inadequate teaching staff many of whom were ex-convicts.\textsuperscript{159} The introduction of a hands-on pupil teacher training scheme in 1861 did little to overcome the shortage of adequate teachers as few were willing to take up a poorly paid profession and

\textsuperscript{155} Petition of the Roman Catholics to Rt. Honourable Sir William Molesworth, Western Australian State Archives, Perth Acc.

\textsuperscript{156} Serra to Colonial Secretary, 1 April 1857, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, Acc 36, Vol. 380.

\textsuperscript{157} Laadan Fletcher, ‘New Directions in Education in Western Australia in 1856’, \textit{A N Z H E S}. Vol. 9, No. 1, 1980, pp. 42-55.

\textsuperscript{158} \textit{Blue Books} 1869, Battye Library, Perth, 351.2994, p. 25.

\textsuperscript{159} Laadan Fletcher, ‘Education of the People’ \textit{A New History of Western Australia}, p. 558.
complaints about teacher drunkenness and assault continued to occupy much of the deliberations of the General Board charged with administrating the system.\textsuperscript{160}

For its part, the Catholic system, although feeling the economic pinch in the absence of government support, survived the state school challenge. This survival was due in no small share to the input of both the Mercy and Josephite communities who in addition to providing the Catholic system with a backbone of voluntary and highly competent teachers and school administrators also raised much needed funding through a network of bazaars, fetes, raffles and concerts. The nuns also supported their schools through after-school lessons in music, art and elocution.\textsuperscript{161}

Yet despite this commitment internal administrative disharmony, particularly concerning the parameters of episcopal jurisdiction, continued to shadow the Catholic school system during Serra’s administration. In his flurry of episcopal decision making subsequent to his return in 1855 Serra left little doubt concerning the future role of the French nuns within the mission when he notified the Colonial Secretary that the girls school in Fremantle was now under the ‘immediate superintendence of Sister July (sic) Cabagnal, (sic) Superior of the Sisters of that Town’.\textsuperscript{162}

The Mercy’s did not regard the introduction of a second educational provider with equanimity and Frayne regarded Serra’s motives with more than a little suspicion. When Serra subsequently attempted to rationalise his reasons for introducing a new religious community of teachers to the diocese on the grounds that Frayne had refused to undertake responsibility for the Fremantle school when previously requested by him Frayne’s suspicions appeared justified.\textsuperscript{163} Never one to

\textsuperscript{160} Minutes of the Board of Education Western Australian State Archives, 1847-1871, CONS, 527.
\textsuperscript{161} Blue Book 1870, Battye Library, Perth, Q 351.29941, p. 124.
\textsuperscript{162} Serra to Colonial Secretary, 1 Sept 1855, Western Australian State Archives, Acc 36, Vol. 329/44.
\textsuperscript{163} Serra to Colonial Secretary 1 September 1855, Western Australian Archives Acc. No 36, Vol. 329/43.
avoid facing up to the vagaries of episcopal authority, and reflecting her assertive disposition in her response, Frayne made little attempt to conceal her disappointment at the bishop’s allegations, and pointed out that his actions accentuated his unfavourable attitude to Irish ecclesiastics and religious.\textsuperscript{164} In her forthright letter to the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Paul Cullen, in 1856 she refuted Serra’s allegations that he had unsuccessfully invited her to open the Fremantle school and explained that the community had approached Serra as early as 1850 requesting him to allow them to return to Fremantle and to rent a cottage for a convent and school. She also felt free to challenge the wisdom of Serra’s judgment in selecting his more recent missionary additions as he had failed to procure the services of an Irish priest for the predominantly Irish Catholic settler community.

His lordship Dr. Serra after an absence of nineteen months arrived here about the end of May last. He was accompanied by two Spanish Benedictine priests, four lay brothers also Spanish three young Irish ecclesiastical students. A lay brother of the Trappists [Ireland] and four French Sisters of Saint Joseph. No Irish or English priests-no one to be of the slightest benefit of the poor Catholics in the colony all of whom are Irish. The French Sisters occupy for the present a cottage at Fremantle …His lordship says they are to teach a poor school and also a school for the rich; how they can do so without being able to speak one word of English remains to be proven … Five years ago I earnestly requested Bishop Serra to rent a small cottage at Fremantle for the accommodation of three or four of our community whom I offered to send at a great inconvenience for the sake of the poor children who are there in great numbers … I could not prevail upon his lordship to comply.\textsuperscript{165}

In short Frayne felt secure enough in her position as the Mercy Superior to challenge the decision-making ability, as least as far as the West Australian mission went, of a very authoritarian diocesan bishop. Furthermore, she skilfully enlisted the ear of one of the most powerful prelates in the church at that time, the archbishop of her native

\textsuperscript{164} Frayne to Archbishop Cullen 2 July 1856, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Correspondence Box.

\textsuperscript{165} Frayne to Archbishop Cullen 2 July 1856, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Correspondence Box.
Dublin, Paul Cullen. The Josephites in the absence of access to such powerful connections were obliged to place their trust in God.

Having stayed with the Mercy community the four Josephite Sisters, in accord with Serra’s design, assumed control of the Catholic elementary school at Henry Street, Fremantle, then under the administration of a lay teacher since the abrupt recall of the Mercy Sisters by Bishop Brady in 1849. Colloquially known thereafter as ‘The French Sister’s Convent’ the school enrolled both male and female elementary students many of whom were the sons and daughters of pensioner guards attached to the local prison. As there are few primary records relating to the founding years, with the exception of a few copies of letters available at the present-day Josephite convent in Fremantle, I have recovered much of the foundation’s early history from an assortment of short essays, monographs and more recent newspaper clippings, commemorating the pioneering community and their school.

Despite their limited English, the ‘French Nuns’ set about the task at hand and rapidly gained popularity for their teaching standards. In their teaching practice the sisters were guided by their founder’s educational directives in the congregation's Manual for the Administration of Christian Schools Directed by the Sisters of St Joseph. The advice on teaching skills offered in this guide indicated that the sisters were aware of, and no doubt practiced, predetermined, uniform and ordered pedagogic methods. Amongst other things the manual advised all teaching members to exercise silence as a means of calming agitated pupils and bringing tranquillity to the classroom. Evenness of conduct toward pupils, good example, vigilance and assiduity were also emphasised as rewarding teaching practice.

\[166\] Reproduced extracts from the manual have survived and are contained in a cardboard box in St. Joseph of Apparition Convent, Fremantle.

\[167\] Chapter 7 of the Manual for the Administration of Christian Schools. copy received from St. Joseph of Apparition Convent, Fremantle.
Allocating the Josephites responsibility for providing education to the Fremantle area was one thing but providing for their physical needs was another and the community, left to fend for themselves, were soon reliant on divine rather than episcopal intercession. Although a two-story building, the disadvantages of Henry Street rapidly became obvious and the Sisters were obliged to accept the hospitality offered by the proprietors of the nearby Francesco Hotel when winter tides flooded the ground floor of their convent-school.\textsuperscript{168} The small community endured great hardship during these early years and at times they were obliged to depend on the charity of the local population.\textsuperscript{169} Despite these hardships, they stoically persevered and continued to maintain a free day school for infant boys and girls at Henry Street.

Indeed, the ebullient Serra appeared oblivious to the community’s circumstances, and in a typically buoyant letter in 1856 to their Superior in Marseilles highlighting developments but silent on their hardships he requested additional missionaries.

I have forgotten to tell you that Sister Azo and Sister Emile Petite are already professed. I had the pleasure of receiving their vows in the presence of a large number of Catholics and Protestants on the Sunday after Easter. The ceremony was very moving. The community had welcomed an Irish postulant or rather she is an Australian as she was born here of Irish parents. The sisters would like her to be admitted to the Novitiate next month.\textsuperscript{170}

In an attempt to supplement their income in the absence of any state support, the sisters moved to a rented cottage in Queen Street in 1858 where they established a fee-paying school for young ladies. Although Serra agreed that a purpose-built convent was an immediate necessity he appeared unwilling to embark on such a

\textsuperscript{168} Julie Cabaginol to Reverend Mother, 21 June 1863. Copy in papers received from St. Joseph of the Apparition Convent, Fremantle

\textsuperscript{169} Unpublished monograph Titled ‘The Spirit of Australian Catholicism’ unsigned and undated copy received from St. Joseph of the Apparition Convent Fremantle

\textsuperscript{170} Serra to Emilie, copy St. Joseph of the Apparition Convent Fremantle
project because of the high costs, estimated at £3,172 in 1858.\textsuperscript{171} A convent was eventually built in 1863 at Adelaide Street where the sisters established three mixed infant schools and a free primary school for girls. In addition, they began a fee-paying school for girls providing primary and secondary education for both day and boarding pupils.\textsuperscript{172} The new convent-school remained incomplete for some time, however, and both the sisters and their pupils contended with the most basic living conditions. Writing to her Mother Superior in France in 1863 one of the Sisters painted a far bleaker picture of the school than did the bishop.

we have changed houses since the 5\textsuperscript{th} of this month. We have not to worry now about the water. We thank the Lord even though we have only got the walls yet, for to tell you the truth not one of the rooms, classrooms or even the parlour have been whitewashed. We dont need any ornaments on our mantelpiece because there isn’t any. There is just the place to make a fire, but that reminds of the vow of poverty. the class for the young girls has not any ceiling nor the two other classrooms. We must wait until we have the means to do it. I must have more than £100 to get it done. We will have to wait.\textsuperscript{173}

Relations between Serra and the Mercy community and particularly with Frayne had by that time deteriorated beyond repair. This conflict revolved around issues of authority and became particularly pronounced subsequent to the foundation of a Mercy branch convent and school at Guildford toward the end of 1855. In September 1855 Frayne advised Serra of her intentions to establish a school and branch convent in rented accommodation in the small settlement at Guildford. As an upriver landing point for smaller boats, Guildford, situated on the banks of the Swan River about ten miles east of Perth, had, by the mid-1850s, developed into a thriving hamlet complete with the mandatory convict hiring depot. Having received Serra’s tentative imprimatur, Frayne and two of her congregation, now numbering fifteen sisters,
established a small convent and school which opened on 17 September 1855. In the months following its establishment both the convent and attached schools attracted support from the local community. In addition to pupils many residents in the vicinity converged on the small convent chapel for Sunday mass. The popularity of the attached school soon warranted the opening of a fee-paying school for Young Ladies.

Despite its success and local popularity, and notwithstanding his previous approval, Serra soon appeared to view the establishment of the Guildford branch-convent as an attempt to evade his immediate authority. Determined to maintain his episcopal jurisdiction Serra, under threat of canonical sanction, subjected the sisters residing at Guildford to a number of regulatory directives. He advised Frayne that his permission was necessary regarding the movement of sisters between Perth and Guildford and directed that all correspondence regarding fund-raising for the venture be submitted for his approval. The publication of a notice without this approval in the local Gazette newspaper in November 1855 advertising the Guilford school solicited an authoritarian response from Serra. He accused Frayne of insubordination by failing to subject the advertised notice to his scrutiny prior to publication. Consequently, he executed his threatened official reprimand and excluded her from participating in the sacraments of confession and communion. This excommunication lasted a short time, however, and was removed when Serra acknowledged that the offending notice was in fact placed by ‘a young man in a private printing office” as Frayne had previously represented to Archbishop Cullen.

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174 Frayne to Archbishop Cullen, 25 July 1856, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Correspondence Box.
175 Ibid.
176 Ibid
177 Ursula Frayne to Paul Cullen, 2 July 1856, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Correspondence Box.
Again, in October 1855, Serra withdrew permission for a tabernacle in the Guildford branch convent, and insisted that the sisters attend religious services in the Perth church. Frayne’s response to this dictate was typically far from deferential and she wrote to Rome to adjudicate on the legitimacy of Serra’s prohibition. As a result, Serra was obliged to withdraw his interdict and provide a tabernacle for the convent-chapel. This allowed the congregation in the convent a degree of autonomy, as the convent-chapel complete with tabernacle was suitable for the celebration of mass. As a consequence, the community had less occasion to travel to Perth and hence rendered restrictions imposed by Serra on their movements, to some degree at least, vacuous. But Serra’s attempt to extend his control over the community extended to the community’s close relations with the most powerful civil representative in the colony.

Much to Serra’s annoyance relations between Governor Kennedy and the Sisters of Mercy remained cordial throughout this period. Indeed, the regular visits made to the convent by the governor’s wife caused Serra concern and he was drawn to believe that both parties were conspiring to undermine his position. Frayne felt these episcopal allegations obliged her to defend the visits and explain to Cullen in July 1856 that the governor’s wife visited the convent particularly because she enjoyed the opportunity to interact with other Irish ladies on matters more becoming than politics such as education, religion and charitable work. ‘Now, Mrs Kennedy is an Irish lady, a nice person, and she is pleased to say that we are the only ladies in the place with whom she likes to converse. Our conversation is generally about our schools or some poor persons whom we wish to assist; sometimes we speak on religious subjects and very

often on matters quite indifferent, but we never settle the affairs of the Colonial Government.\textsuperscript{179}

Despite this assurance Serra continued to question Frayne’s motives and the close relations between the convent and the governor’s residence. Arguably, Kennedy’s plan to contract the public system to a minimalist education framework favoured the Mercy congregation’s educational structure. It left the Mercy post-elementary schools better placed to take advantage of the departure of government schools from this field. On the other hand, by providing a secondary education option to those willing to pay the Mercy foundation lent credence to Kennedy’s argument that this level of schooling was a matter of private choice and funding. Furthermore the congregation was positioned to dominate a fee-paying secondary system at least as far as girls’ education was concerned.

Moreover, from its introduction in Ireland in 1831 the Mercy congregation had incorporated their primary schools in the National Education system including, as has already been highlighted, the use of the prescribed texts. The congregation’s founder, Catherine McAuley, endorsed the system on the more pragmatic grounds that it provided salutary financial support to the congregation’s efforts to educate the children of the poor. Commenting on the Mercy’s Carlow school which used the system and where Frayne worked before leaving for Australia McAuley reflected that she found no compromise necessary regarding religious or moral education in participating in the system as practiced in Ireland.

\textsuperscript{179} Ursula Frayne to Rev. Sir, 25 July 1856, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Correspondence Box.
inspectors are equally unobtrusive. The priests and our Sisters are in full authority, sometimes three priests teaching in the school at once. 180

But the association of the Mercy community with the Irish School System particularly through the use of its texts became a concern for Serra. Toward the end of 1855 he directed that the Perth convent discontinue the practice of using Irish National School texts. The Mercy community had employed these texts as school readers since 1833. 181 As indicated by a list of supplies requested by the Education Board these books were also the standard readers used in the new public system introduced by Kennedy. 182 Serra had earlier evinced his concern with Irish National School texts in 1855 when he advised the Josephite foundation before leaving Europe that they would use texts produced by the Irish Christian Brothers as an alternative to those in use in the public school system. 183 After a brief period of cooperation the Irish Christian Brothers had terminated their association with the National System in 1836 and thenceforth conducted a parallel school system complete with their own lesson books. 184 Openly confessional, these texts inculcated a strong sense of faith and fatherland through stressing the uniqueness of both the Irish people and their Catholicism. 185 In doing so, they contrasted with the readers authorised by the commissioners of the Irish National system which sought to develop a harmonious social consensus and purged any mention of Catholicism or Irish culture. 186

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181 Ibid
182 Central Board of Education to Colonial Secretary 1858, Western Australian State Archives, ACC. 36, Vol. 381/4.
183 Monograph titled *The Spirit of Australian Catholicism, unsigned and undated*, p.4, Convent of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, Fremantle. Byrne, 'Ursula Frayne Mother of Mercy', p. 32
185 Ibid, pp. 54-57.
These internal tensions concerning education between the Mercy foundation and the bishop spilled over into the public arena in December 1855 when Serra interpreted seating arrangements at the annual-prize giving ceremony in the Mercy Ladies College attended by the wives of the governor and colonial secretary to be a further attempt by Frayne to undermine his episcopal status. Having insisted that he would participate in the occasion as the recognised President of the school, Serra delayed subsequent ceremonies by not turning up on time thereby embarrassing both Frayne and the other invited guests, including the governor and his family who were obliged to wait on the bishop’s arrival.\(^{187}\) Thus Serra was intent on delivering a very public message that as far as the catholic school system was concerned the spiritual still dominated the secular power.

Relations between Serra and the Mercy community subsequently deteriorated to an unprecedented level and eventually in December 1855 Serra placed an interdict on the community restricting the Sisters to receiving communion within the confines of the convent. The severity of Serra’s censure against the Mercy community drew cries of outrage from amongst the Catholic constituency. Indicating the rising discontent at Serra’s behaviour a prominent member of the local Catholic laity, C.B. Smith, told a correspondent that he considered the bishop’s behaviour toward the Mercy community an act of suicide as far as the mission in Perth was concerned and alleged that the nature of Serra’s relations with the diocesan clergy was ‘despotic’.\(^{188}\)

Eventually Frayne had enough of episcopal interference and resigned her position as the Mercy superior in June 1856. She retired to the Guildford convent where she remained until January 1857 when, accompanied by Sister Joseph Sherlock

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\(^{187}\) Frayne to Archbishop Paul Cullen, 2 July 1856, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Correspondence Box.

\(^{188}\) Smith to Gibbons,
and Ann Xavier Dillon, at the invitation of Bishop James Alipius Goold, she packed her bags and set out to establish a Mercy school and convent in Melbourne. Frayne’s successor as Mercy Superior in Perth, Mary Baptist O’Donnell, remained in charge of the Perth foundation until her death in 1862 when another of the pioneering group, Mary Aloysius Kelly, succeeded to the helm of the, by then, relatively secure Mercy foundation. 189 Serra’s tenure as bishop of Perth also came to a dramatic end before the close of the 1850s. However, it was internal Benedictine conflicts that knelled his departing bell.

Since his return from Europe in 1855 Serra had insisted that the monastery at Subiaco would become the centre of the Benedictine activities in Western Australia and that New Norcia and its lands should be rented and used as a supporting resource for the diocese, thus eclipsing the Benedictine foundation’s primary missionary focus to the native Aboriginal people. However, Salvado did not agree and appealed to the Prefect of Propaganda at Rome, Cardinal Barnabo, to place New Norcia directly under papal authority and hence outside of Serra’s jurisdiction.190 In April 1859 Rome ruled in favour of Salvado and proclaimed New Norcia independent of diocesan control.191 Leaving his Vicar General, Martin Griver, in charge Serra embarked in 1859 to plead his case personally in Rome. He met with little success, however, the Roman authorities favouring a return to the native mission at New Norcia. Faced with this rebuff Serra retired to his native Spain where he died on 18 September 1886.

Serra’s Lenten Pastoral Letter in 1859 contained his final statement on education before departing the colony never to return. In it Serra drew heavily on the

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189 See Byrne, ‘Ursula Frayne’ McLay, Women Out of Their Sphere, and Killerby, Ursula Frayne, for details on individual issues.

opposition articulated by the increasingly Ultramontane Irish episcopate against state sponsored interdenominational schools to support his own educational stance. In doing so he concurred with the Irish bishops that state schooling represented little more than an attack on Catholic education and was part of a general anti-Catholic liberal ideology. Serra advised his predominantly Irish flock that such liberal hostility to Catholic education was not merely local, but part of an international attempt by liberal regimes to attack the Catholic Church.

Since we had the opportunity of addressing you last dearly beloved a document on a very important subject reached our hands which we took care should come to your notice without delay. We make allusion to the address of the Fathers of the Provinces of Tuam on freedom of education. It is a more transcendent one than may have been perhaps believed by some of you heretofore and that all of the projects of Protestant Governments to educate youth from the time of the foundation of the charter schools to the present day are an undisguised hostility to pure Catholic education. We are indebted to the Fathers of Tuam for our having been confirmed in the idea we began to entertain some time since that the hostility to Catholic education does not come from any special government as we observe that the same hostility is experienced simultaneously in many colonies though governed by men of different tendencies. That it does not proceed ever from the personal character of any secretary of state for the colonies since we see that secretaries for the colonies of different polities and representing opposite principles succeed each other and that hostility to Catholics is always a part of the creed of the ministry whatever that ministry may be. 192

Thus by the time of his departure Serra’s ecclesiastical disposition was firmly aligned with the Ultramontanists at least as far as educational policy went. Although the majority of the Irish episcopate had initially supported the introduction of public schooling this position was reversed under the influence of the Ultramontanist movement. As we shall see in the next chapter this Ultramontane influence on the

192 Joseph Mary Benedict Serra, Lenten Pastoral, 4 March 1859, Perth Archdiocesan Archives, Serra File. The reference to the fathers of Tuam may be either an erroneous reference to the Synod of Thurles in 1850 in which the clergy led by Cullen opposed the Irish National System or it may be a reference to the stand taken by the Archbishop of Tuam John McHale who vehemently opposed the system from its introduction.
development of Catholic education in Western Australia was destined to become more pronounced throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century when it took on a decidedly Irish flavour.

It has been suggested by historians concerned with Catholic education in Western Australia that Serra rejected Kennedy’s educational scheme because it represented a watered-down version of the system currently operating in Ireland and omitted pertinent regulations with regard to religious education. But Serra’s opposition to Kennedy’s public education system did not proceed entirely from local circumstances. It had an external inspiration springing from his conservative Spanish Catholic background that caused him to view the local colonial government’s opposition to Catholic schools as part of an international liberal agenda. Serra’s conservative Spanish Catholic background spliced with the reactive, militant Ultramontane movement that emerged gained ascendency within the metropolitan Catholic hierarchy during his tenure as bishop of Perth. His long sojourn in Europe between 1853 and 1855 brought Serra into close contact with the advocates of Ultramontanism who were by then prevailing within the European Catholic Church. Ultramontanes viewed state schooling as little more than an attempt by liberals to undermine the traditional authority of the Catholic Church. This belief fed the Catholic opposition to state during the second half of the nineteenth century particularly with regard to Catholic schools. It would subsequently underpin the Catholic hierarchy’s refusal to co-operate with state schooling throughout Australia. Serra’s opposition did not spring from discontent with Kennedy’s particular programme but from opposition to state-run education systems in general.

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193 See for example Fletcher, ‘New Directions in Education in Western Australia’, p. 48 also Byrne, ‘Ursula Frayne’, p. 32.
194 Von Arx, Varieties of Ultramontanism, p. 4
In the same way Serra’s conservative Spanish Catholic background and Ultramontanist influence exacerbated his high understanding of the supremacy of his episcopal office. This orientation set him on a collision course with the superior of the Mercy foundation. In contrast to the deferential requirements implicit in Serra’s authoritative ecclesiastical approach and self perception of the elevated rank of the bishop’s office, Frayne’s spirited resistance to arbitrary episcopal authority was a product of her liberal ecclesiastical formation and middle-class social background. She personified the well educated, articulate and evangelical characteristics identified with the founders of religious communities in Ireland in the early decades of the nineteenth century and like them she was not afraid to stand up to bishops who attempted to extend episcopal authority across the threshold of the convent door.

This contrasted with the more deferential approach of the Sisters of Saint Joseph that Serra brought from France. Unlike the Mercy’s the Josephites did not tread on the firm ecclesiastical ground that came with papal approval. Consequently the Josephite community was obliged to negotiate the as yet uncharted and often turbulent waters of colonial ecclesiastical jurisdiction. This position was all the more insecure in an exclusively male dominated hierarchical administration. Unlike the Mercy community the Josephites had no access to powerful figures within the metropolitan Catholic hierarchy like Paul Cullen. In short they were very much as their foundress, de Vialar, had pronounced ‘in the hands of God’. This, as we shall see was not the situation with the next Catholic congregation to become involved in education in the Perth diocese.

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195 Callaghan, *The Catholic Church in Spain*, p. 106
197 Cannon Law was not codified until the early twentieth century.
CHAPTER V.

1860-1890

‘The Faith of Ireland and the Gospel of Erin’
Matthew Gibney, an Ultramontane’s Ultramontane.

Subsequent to Serra’s unexpected decision in 1859, in the absence of a suitable outcome to the controversy surrounding the future of the New Norcia mission, to remain in Europe and retire to his native Spain responsibility for diocesan administration fell upon the shoulders of Martin Griver, his fellow countryman and Vicar General. Griver had already attained a decade of experience in the Perth diocese before taking on his new responsibilities as diocesan administrator. Attracted to Perth by Rosendo Salvado during his visit to Europe in 1849 in quest of missionaries and funds, Griver, recently ordained, arrived in Perth in December of the same year as part of a large missionary party recruited by Salvado that included seven priests and thirty-two unprofessed Spanish Benedictine Brothers. A devoutly religious man, he exemplified a model of humble piety throughout his career in the Perth diocese. Ever willing to assist the less fortunate members of the community Griver earned respect from all levels of colonial society.

Born in 1814 at the end of the Franco-Prussian war, Griver grew up in Grannolers near Barcelona in North Eastern Spain. The anti-clerical pogroms that emerged following the civil unrest surrounding the struggle for succession to the Spanish throne obliged him to delay his planned theological studies. Unable to

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1 This sub-title refers to a comment attributed to a young French missionary nun on hearing a particularly ‘green sermon’ from an Irish born Bishop. cited by Yvonne Magaret McLay, *James Quinn First Catholic Bishop of Brisbane*, Armadale (Vic.): Graphic Books, 1979, p. 70.
pursue his primary ambition to become a priest Griver turned his academic attention to more scientific study. Accordingly, he entered the University of Barcelona where he took a degree in philosophy in 1841 and subsequently qualified in medicine and surgery in 1845 and 1846 respectively. The more tolerant political climate that followed the accession of Isobella to the Spanish throne in 1843 permitted Griver to pursue his primary calling and having completed his theological studies he was ordained to the priesthood in 1847. He subsequently worked as a diocesan priest in Spain before leaving for the remote mission in the Swan River Colony in 1849.

Subsequent to his arrival in Perth Griver witnessed the internal disharmony that beleaguered the early mission. Indeed, on one occasion he became an unwilling participant in the bruising power struggle between the inaugural bishop, John Brady, and his newly appointed coadjutor Dom Serra when he was forced to physically contest with Brady for entry to the sanctuary of Fremantle chapel. He was later to witness the disagreement between Serra and Salvado regarding the future role of New Norcia. These experiences had a deep influence on Griver and, despite his background and close association with the Spanish Benedictine mission, he abandoned his inclination to join the order.

Following Brady's controversial departure in 1851 Serra appointed him

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5 W.A. C.R. 11 November 1886, P. 22, Clmns. 1, 2, 3 and 4.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
Cathedral Administrator where he remained until taking over diocesan administration as Vicar-General. In this capacity Griver became aware of the more practical problems confronting the fledgling mission, particularly the inadequacy of diocesan facilities in outlying settlements. His three-month mission on horseback to the settled perimeters of the diocese, north to Champion Bay (Geraldton) in 1858 and south to King George’s Sound (Albany) in 1859, convinced him of the necessity for undertaking a church-building programme. His appointment as diocesan administrator provided Griver with the opportunity to achieve this objective and was also accommodated by his close friendship with John Stephen Hampton, governor of the colony from 1862 to 1868. This friendship was no doubt enhanced by Hampton’s own medical background prior to embarking on a political career and provided a conversation piece during Griver’s frequent visits to the governor’s residence. Reflecting this more conciliatory climate in church-state relations Griver made a number of successful personal representations to the local colonial administration on behalf of both the Mercy and Josephite communities. In April 1862 he gained permission for the Mercy community to maintain a private burial ground within the precincts of their Victoria Square convent, and in July of the same year he requested the governor to lift import duties on goods shipped to assist the Josephite foundation to raise money to build a school room. Griver also successfully applied for a number of land grants for his extensive church-building campaign. In addition to churches in Fremantle, Guildford, York, Northampton, and Kojonup he

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14 Martin Griver to Colonial Secretary, 28 April 1862 and 3 July 1862, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, Acc. 36/498/139 and Acc. 36/298/7.
15 Martin Griver to Colonial Secretary 4 February 1862, Western Australian State Archives, Perth Acc., 36/498/172, and Martin Griver to Colonial Secretary, 10 September 1862, ACC., 36/498/143.
commenced the construction in 1862 of a new cathedral in Victoria Square. Completed in 1865 at a cost of £4000, most of the labour having been supplied by the Benedictine monks, many of whom were tradesmen, the inaugural celebration of mass was preceded by a triumphal processional transfer of the Eucharist from Brady’s little chapel in Lord Street [Victoria Avenue] to the less humble surroundings of the new cathedral. The candle-lit procession headed by the high cross borne by acolytes included a number of Benedictine monks, the Mercy and Josephite sisters and their students clothed in white as well as members of the local clergy. The rear of the solemn procession, as it wound its way up the hill to the cathedral singing the Pange lingua, was heralded by ‘a rich canopy, the gift of a suppressed monastery in Spain, carried by the most pious and respectable Catholics under which the devout Griver, attended by diocesan priests had, in his own words, “the inexplicable consolation of carrying the God of Glory”’.

Despite his humility, Griver could not contain a note of Spanish triumphalism in his description of the ceremony.

In a word as far as our scanty resources permitted nothing was omitted to have these ceremonies as brilliant and public as if we were in the most Catholic country in Europe. As the colonists have never seen such an august procession, because they are not permitted in Great Britain, this caused a great joy, inspired reverence and edification and provided piety without any opposition or censure on the part of the government or the Protestant population.

The cathedral remained the primary Catholic structure in Perth until it was superseded by the present building which commenced erection in 1926. Again reflecting his benign administration the canonical status of the monastery at New Norcia, which had been declared independent of the Perth diocese in April 1859, was finally resolved.

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16 Martin Griver to Monsieur Le President, 25 August 1865, Perth Archdiocesan Archives.
17 Ibid.
when Rome conferred it with the status of an Abbey Nullius with its own diocesan
territory in 1867.\textsuperscript{19}

Yet, despite his popularity in Perth and his devout piety, Griver was not the first
choice of successor bishop to Serra and received Rome’s approval only after Salvado,
who wished to remain at the helm of the New Norcia monastery, had declined Rome’s
invitation to the position.\textsuperscript{20} Griver’s consecration at Rome in 1870 coincided with the
convening of the first Vatican Council in the Eternal City.\textsuperscript{21} He returned as bishop of
Perth in July 1871 to continue his work of consolidation and by 1881, five years
before his death, the number of Catholic churches in the diocese had increased to a
respectable ten.\textsuperscript{22}

However, even under the benign administration of Griver the far from secure
Catholic education system did not escape from the torment of internal dissention.
Early in 1863 Griver had written to the De La Salle community in Singapore and
requested that the brothers establish a foundation in the Perth diocese. In response, the
Superior of the community advised Griver that he would be happy to comply as soon
as he had two or three members to spare on condition that Griver would undertake to
pay the travelling costs.\textsuperscript{23} Two members of the De La Salle community subsequently
arrived in Perth in 1864. Established in 1684 in the historical provincial city of Rouen
in Normandy as a teaching community by the scholar-priest John Baptist De La Salle
the officially titled Brothers of the Christian Schools rapidly spread throughout
Europe and became known under the more familiar label of the De La Salle Brothers.
Despite the anti-clericalism of revolutionary France the community had regained their

\textsuperscript{19} Russo, ‘Bishop Salvado’s Plan’ p. 108.
\textsuperscript{21} W.A.C.R. 11 November 1886, p. 3 clmn. 1.
\textsuperscript{22} Blue Books 1881, Battye Library Perth, Q351.209941, p. 70.
\textsuperscript{23} Brother Venere to Martin Griver, 10 October 1863, Perth Archdiocesan Archives, Griver Letters.
official status before the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century as school teachers and administrators and were incorporated into the French National school system under the terms of an imperial decree issued in 1808. One of the first religious communities to recognise the necessity for professional instruction the Brothers established a teacher training college at Rouen in 1829. Subsequently, under the extended Superior Generalship of Philippe Bransart (1838-1874) the community extended its network of schools beyond the French-speaking world, first into North America and, subsequently, within the rapidly expanding perimeters of the British empire where they provided a system of elementary and intermediate education for the sons of diplomatic and military families. The community arrived to establish a foundation in Singapore in 1852.\(^{24}\)

On their arrival in Perth Griver allocated Brother Bothian to the boys school in Perth and Brother Amphian to the boys school in Fremantle.\(^{25}\) However, this arrangement contravened the regulations of the community which demanded that the members live a communal life. Consequently when the community threatened to remove the brothers from Perth Griver was forced to recall his Fremantle placement and leave both brothers in control of the Perth school. This precipitated an outcry from the Catholic parents in Fremantle who not only condemned the withdrawal but more significantly threatened to withdraw their support for any future expansion of the Catholic school system. Writing to Griver in March 1864 on behalf of the aggrieved Catholic parents of Fremantle Peter Gibbons, the father of one of the students, did little to restrain his frustrations at the recall of the brother within one week of his appointment as principal in Fremantle. He advised that he 'very much

\(^{24}\) This background detail has been garnished from a number of sources, particularly the official website of the De La Salle community in Australia.

\(^{25}\) The primary sources gives no indication regarding which of the two brothers was allocated to Fremantle.
regretted feeling obliged on behalf of the Catholic parents of Fremantle to protest against the injustice lately done to us in the opening of a Catholic school for one week and inducing parents to remove their children from other schools which was no sooner done than the teacher takes himself away without explanation or apology'. In a robust display of lay Catholic dissention from clerical authority he then went on to challenge the wisdom of Griver’s decision to abide by the accommodation requirements of the De La Salle community to the apparent disadvantage of Fremantle Catholic parents.

It is incredible that you would sanction such a proceeding-is it likely the amount of good expected to result from it at Perth will equal the amount of evil already done here, when the people look upon themselves as having been made fools of and insulted and from a quarter whence they looked for kindness and candour. It is certainly said that the Perth teacher required his colleague back but why did he part with him in the beginning. His conduct was most unwise and he has done more harm than he is aware of and you may rest assured that he is the means of truthfully extinguishing any desire for a Catholic school here, and if both teachers volunteered their services tomorrow at Fremantle, they would not get six pupils. I am very sorry that the first start of the Christian Brothers as teachers in this colony has been in every way discredited to their character as regards the treatment of Fremantle Catholics.  

In short, Gibbons’ letter exhibited a reluctance amongst the Fremantle Catholic community to acknowledge the legitimacy of the De La Salle ecclesiastical requirements when the contradicted their own, lay, ones. Not withstanding this confusion, Griver attempted to explain the complexity of the situation and wrote to the local priest L.M. Martelli to advise the lay constituency by way of his Sunday sermon that he, Griver, was informed of the relevant regulations subsequent to his decision to place a brother in charge of the Fremantle school. He also advised the

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Fremantle parishioners that he was committed to supply a ‘respectable and well qualified teacher’ for Fremantle.\textsuperscript{27}

Reflecting his personal administrative orientation Griver’s letter was forthright in content and contained not the least hint of authoritarian administrative tone. He neither challenged the position of the Fremantle laity nor the De La Salle community and merely stated that he acted as he did not from a personal decision but in response from an ultimatum from the superior of the De La Salle foundation. In his letter he explained that ‘it grieved me very much when I saw the Brother superior determined not to continue the school of Fremantle on the plea that according to their rule they could not live separated; and that he threatened repeatedly to leave the colony immediately if they were not allowed to live together; and therefore I yielded but reluctantly to his determination’. He then went to almost apologetically explain why he decided to allocate the two brothers to the Perth rather than Fremantle school.

That having in view the general good of the mission in the case of being able to keep up only one school I took into consideration the greater amount of good which the two brothers could effect in one town than in the other; and accordingly I would have deprived of the consolation of having the said brother at Perth and I would have them then placed at Fremantle, if they were to be more useful at that place. But considering that the former contains a larger number of boys and more particularly by the statement made by the brother superior that they are sent to begin to establish in the town where the head of the mission resides and after having consulted intelligent persons I gave the preference for the Perth school.\textsuperscript{28}

Notwithstanding the tone and content of Gibbons’ letter Griver succeeded in his efforts to keep the Fremantle school open under the tuition of a lay school master and by 1870 it had sixty eight pupils enrolled.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{27} Griver to Martelli, 23 March 1865, Perth Archdiocesan Archives, Griver Letters.
\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{29} Griver to Colonial Secretary, 28 March 1870, Western Australian Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council 1870-71, pp. 109-111, Battye Library Perth.
But, the disaffection of Fremantle parents represented only part of the De La Salle saga and Griver’s inability to meet the more practical demands of the foundation continued to generate internal tensions. Reflecting their professional approach to education the brothers demanded adequate funds to set up a proper school and accommodation for themselves. Dissatisfied with Griver’s failure to provide promised conditions Amphian departed from the diocese in July 1866, Bothian having agreed to remain on a promise that his demands for improved accommodation including a salary of £100 per year for two brothers be met.\textsuperscript{30} However, his limited financial resources restricted Griver from meeting these demands and Bothian having advised his superior of the situation, followed the path of Amphian and departed the colony in November 1866 having been obliged to sell his English dictionary for the sum of £2 to alleviate the cost of his passage.\textsuperscript{31}

Yet the departure of the most recent addition to the Catholic education effort cannot be left entirely on Griver’s shoulders. Significantly, prior to his departure Amphian apparently had no complaint about Griver but advised his superior that the diocesan administrator Father Gibney was ‘a very interfering priest’.\textsuperscript{32} This comment points to Gibney’s crucial role in the Catholic school system. Both contemporary observers and subsequent scholars agree that from the 1860s to 1890 it was Matthew Gibney who was the pivotal figure in the Perth diocese regarding the development of the Catholic education.\textsuperscript{33} This association with the cause of Catholic education in

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\textsuperscript{30} Bothian to Griver 2 September 1866, Perth Archdiocesan Archives, Griver Letters
\textsuperscript{31} Bothian to Rev. Fr. Bourke, 26 October 1866, Perth Archdiocesan Archives, Griver Letters.
\textsuperscript{32} Amphian to Brother Superior, October 1966, Perth Archdiocesan Archives, Griver Letters
\textsuperscript{33} Moran, A History of the Catholic Church, J.T Reilly, Reminiscences of Fifty Years Living in Western Australia, Perth: Sands and McDougall, 1903, David Mossens, State Education in Western Australia 1829-1960, Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1972, p. 82. James Bourke, ‘Mathew Gibney Promoter and Defender of Catholic Schools’ in Pioneers of Education in Western Australia, Laadan Fletcher, (ed.), p. 105 described Gibney as less scholarly and more energetic than his Vicar General, Griver. P.D. Tannock, Catholic Education in Western Australia, 1829-1979, in Education in Western Australia, W. D. Neal, (ed.), Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1979, p. 139.
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Western Australia earned Gibney the panegyric of architect of the Catholic school system in Western Australia from his fellow missionaries:

In the cause of Christian education he was a tireless worker and his Herculean efforts to protect the faith of the little ones of the Church will ever remain a bright tradition in the Catholic Church in the West. From small beginnings he hammered out a system that has been the means of giving to the Church to-day, under the guidance of our beloved Arch-bishop a glorious chain of schools that compete with the best of our rich public seminaries. How well he fought the good fight for Christian Education the public records of other days will disclose.  

Indeed, both public and private records of the period bear ample witness to Gibney’s high profile in the Catholic education crusade. However, these records do not connect what was happening in colonial Perth with events developing in the metropolitan Catholic Church. This wider contextual analysis of Gibney’s contribution is necessary to fully explain the forces behind his work on behalf of Catholic education in Western Australia. Such an analysis indicates that his pastoral, ideological and political orientations all conformed to the classical European and Irish Ultramontane model.  

Appointed Cathedral Administrator soon after his arrival in 1863 the position, in addition to necessitating close liaison with the diocesan administrator, Martin Griver, introduced Gibney to the administrative affairs of the diocese. Thus positioned Gibney lost little time in demonstrating his inclinations to extend the Catholic mission’s ecclesiastical authority. He accomplished this through a number of pastoral initiatives. In 1864, the year after his arrival, he successfully negotiated with Governor Hampton to transfer all male Catholic orphans from the government

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34 *W.A.C.R.* 27 June 1925, p. 3 clmn. I.
35 These criteria were adopted from Roger Aubert’s work on Pius IX by Emmet Larkin in his study of Cardinal Paul Cullen in *Varieties of Ultramontanism*, Jeffrey Von Arx, (ed.), Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1998, p. 62.
36 Bourke, ‘Mathew Gibney Promoter and Defender of Catholic Schools’, p.105 described Gibney, after his arrival, as less scholarly and more energetic than his Vicar General.
establishment in Murray Street to the converted Benedictine monastery at Subiaco which thenceforth served as a Catholic orphanage. Four years later in 1868 all Catholic female orphans in state wardship were also placed under the care of the Mercy Convent at Victoria Square.\(^\text{37}\)

Gibney also moved to involve the laity more directly in church affairs and he established the Catholic Young Men’s Society (C.Y.M.S.) in 1864, ‘to foster Catholic opinion and sentiment’ onto which he ‘grafted’ the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul the following year.\(^\text{38}\) These organisations were later followed by the Hibernian Australian Catholic Benefit Society in 1878.\(^\text{39}\) The Record described the role of this latter society in terms of settling new immigrants by supplying support and friendship to ‘settle the mass of immigrants in a young country unsupported by the many ties of blood and marriage which ran in every direction through society in older countries’.\(^\text{40}\) Throughout his tenure as a diocesan priest Gibney continued to encourage the formation of these sodalities and confraternities to regularise an expanding auxiliary network of workers amongst the Perth laity. Meeting regularly, these groups provided the mission with an animated and acquiescent auxiliary that encouraged lay participation, promoted piety, and reinforced solidarity between the laity and clergy. Thereafter the number of local Catholic societies in the Perth diocese multiplied and the colourful procession assembled to publicly hail the arrival of Cardinal Moran to Fremantle to officiate at Gibney’s consecration as bishop of Perth in 1887 bore testament to their continued popularity amongst both young and old sections of the Catholic constituency.\(^\text{41}\)

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\(^{37}\) *W.A.C.R.* 27 June 1926, p. 3, Clmn. 2.


\(^{39}\) *W.A.C.R.*, 6 January 1875, p. 4 clmn. 3.

\(^{40}\) Ibid

\(^{41}\) Reilly, *Reminiscences of Fifty Years*, p. 289.
But the contemporary popularity of these societies was by no means unique to the Perth diocese or uniquely attributable to Gibney’s personal missionary zeal. In Catholic dioceses throughout Europe, these lay associations became associated with attempts by Ultramontane bishops to insulate their constituencies against the advance of secular society.42 These devotions and confraternities had also taken off within the English Catholic Church by the middle of the nineteenth century.43 In Ireland the promotion of these sodalities, in combination with a number of devotions of Roman origin, was intended to consolidate pastoral gains regarding regular attendance at confession and communion, communalise and regularize spiritual practice and promote passive acceptance under a religious director.44 Furthermore, this popular Catholicism and the militant public demonstration of devotions associated with these societies became a recognised leitmotiv of Ultramontanism.45 In the same way Gibney’s motivation to place Catholic orphans under diocesan rather than government care also represented the characteristically Ultramontane inclination to address social problems with a ‘specifically Catholic response’.46 Just as these initiatives represented the pastoral planks in the construction of Gibney’s Ultramontane missionary platform, the campaign for government support for a separate Catholic education system symbolised the ideological dimension of the same structure.

Gibney’s arrival in Perth coincided with a period of elevated tension between the increasingly Ultramontane European Catholic Church and the state over education. In his Papal Encyclical titled Quanta Cura and the attached Syllabus of

46 von Arx, Varieties of Ultramontanism, p. 4.
Errors issued in 1864 Pius IX forthrightly denounced the full spectrum of liberal tendencies, not least the growing trend toward academic freedom and secularism, as deceitful and contradictory to the right order of society. The encyclical directly condemned what it termed, the ‘impious opinions and machinations [by which] these most deceitful men, [liberal leaders who promoted secular education] chiefly aim at this result viz., that the salutary teaching and influence of the Catholic Church may be entirely banished from the instruction and education of youth and that the tender and flexible minds of young men may be infected and depraved by every most pernicious error and vice’. ⁴⁷

Thus advised the Ultramontane hierarchy stepped up their anti-state education campaign throughout the Catholic world. In Ireland during the years of Gibney’s formation the Ultramontane campaign became synonymous with the episcopal career of Paul Cullen. Throughout his tenure as Archbishop of Armagh and Papal Legate from 1850-1852 and thereafter Dublin 1852-1878 Cullen, who received a cardinal’s hat in 1866, resisted all attempts by the state to develop a denominationally-mixed public education system. Shortly after his translation from Rome to Ireland Cullen heralded his future education policy when he ensured that the issue of education was placed high on the agenda of the first national synod of Irish Catholic bishops, which he convened in the regional centre of Thurles in August 1850. The council’s subsequent pronouncements formed the canonical framework for future generations of Irish Catholics.⁴⁸ In particular, the Council passed sixteen articles regarding education. Many disagreed with the state-run denominationally-mixed elementary school system. In Article VI of its pronouncement, for example, the Council

⁴⁸ Larkin, ‘Cardinal Paul Cullen’ in Varieties of Ultramontanism, p. 69.
condemned denominationally mixed education and declared it dangerous for Catholic children to attend schools run by Protestants.\textsuperscript{49} Thenceforth the Irish Catholic episcopate worked directly to replace the existing state-run mixed national education system with confessional-based schools.\textsuperscript{50} In addition the council accepted a rescript from Rome issued in 1847 and rejected the university system recently introduced into regional Ireland by the British government titled the Queen’s colleges.\textsuperscript{51} Thus, despite the periodic emergence of the odd dissenting episcopal voice, subsequent to Thurles the response of the Irish episcopate to the issue of education was \textit{ipso facto} generated in Rome.

On his translation to the Dublin Archdiocese in 1852 to replace the deceased Archbishop Daniel Murray, Cullen publicly proclaimed his opposition to state schools and declined to occupy the seat on the educational board governing the Irish National School system vacated by his more accommodating predecessor. Thus, throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, the predominant educational disposition held amongst the Irish episcopate was that schools and universities under state control were anti-Catholic, secular in curricular emphasis and threatening to the faith of their flock.\textsuperscript{52}

The increasingly Irish-born missionary clergy subsequently adopted this position in the Australian mission where the issue of state education manifested as a major issue in church-state relations throughout the nineteenth-century. In particular, the bishops demanded a proportional share of the state education budget for Catholic schools. The Pastoral Letter issued at the conclusion of the second provincial council

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Ibid}
\textsuperscript{52} Akenson, \textit{The Irish Education Experiment}, p. 157.
of Australian bishops held in Melbourne in April 1869 roundly condemned any attempt to preclude denominational instruction from the classroom, and alleged that the secular emphasis of state schooling denigrated the primary importance attributed to religious instruction by the Catholic Church. In the letter the Australian bishops argued that because the state school system failed to meet the requirements of the Catholic population the government was obliged to support their calls for a separate grant for Catholic schools. The bishops alleged that failure to meet these demands alienated the Catholic population who felt a sense of grievance over the issue. Furthermore, the bishops argued that the continued failure to allocate a just proportion of public funds to Catholic schools was a prevention of a right which amounted to persecution:

a privation of right which is no less a persecution than the infliction of positive wrong; seeing that Catholics cannot, without detriment to conscience, avail themselves of the public schools, they are virtually deprived of the use of the portion of the funds voted for Education and to which according to their numbers contributed and to which they are justly entitled. They, therefore, suffer under a privation which is a grievous wrong, from which the first principles of religious and civil liberty alike require them to be delivered.  

In Perth, where tensions over the issue of public schooling was never far from the political debate, the old chestnut of confessional religious instruction re-entered the public arena in December 1868 when the Anglican bishop, Mathew Blagden Hale, in a letter to the *Inquirer*, called for a reintroduction of instruction, based on direct Bible readings into the public school system.  

This had long been a controversial point in the issue of public schooling as Catholic dogma prescribed that Bible reading, at least in regard to particular sections, demanded clerical interpretation. Accordingly, Hale’s call elicited a predictable response from the Catholic side. In his letter to the

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54 *Inquirer*, December 1868, p3, clmn, 4.
*Inquirer* in January 1869 Griver, in articulating the Catholic position rejected Hale’s demands, registered a number of Catholic concerns about the Western Australian public school system. He alleged that individual schoolteachers, particularly in some rural schools, flagrantly ignored the safeguards intended to protect pupils against proselytism and obliged Catholic children to attend instruction in Protestant devotion. Griver disputed Hale’s demands for the necessity of a return to bible reading classes and advised that, although Catholics were not forbidden from reading approved translations, prescribed sections of the Bible were adjudged to need the clerical mediation. He then registered Catholic opposition to the whole concept of denominationally-mixed state schools. He pointed out that the Irish system on which the West Australian scheme was modelled had proved unsatisfactory to the Irish Catholic hierarchy and urged the system of allocating a proportion of the education budget, operated so successfully in other Australian colonies and in England, should be adopted in Western Australia.\(^55\)

In his reply published in the *Inquirer* on 13 January 1869 Hale defended his position on bible reading and refuted Griver’s proselytising allegation. He attested that he was aware of only one case where Protestant prayers were used in a country school. Hale recalled that the West Australian system provided for Bible readings without note or comment from its introduction until 1856 when, under the terms of Governor Kennedy’s educational review, the scripture lessons used in the Irish system were adopted in a failed attempt to court Catholic attendance; but, according to Hale, no provision for dissenting pupils to absent themselves was acknowledged until 1858. Furthermore, Hale claimed, this provision expired in 1862. Hale drew attention to the controversy surrounding the scripture reading extracts based on the Douay and

\(^{55}\) *Inquirer*, 6 January 1869, p. 3. clmns. 4-5.
Authorised versions of the Bible devised for the Irish system by the Anglican Archbishop of Dublin, Richard Whately. However, these readings, which were accepted by a majority of the pre-Cullenite Irish Catholic hierarchy, were withdrawn from the Irish National School curriculum in 1853 in response to representations from Cullen and his suffragan bishops in the Dublin Archdiocese. Whately consequently resigned from the governing board of the national school system.\textsuperscript{56} In other words, Hale alleged that despite the introduction of several amendments regarding religious instruction in both constituencies Catholics remained defiant in their opposition to state schooling. The controversy appeared then to temporarily ebb from the public forum at least, but by July a concerted Catholic campaign demanding a proportion of the public education purse was in full swing. Gibney emerged as a central figure in this campaign.

Public meetings were organised in July 1869 under the auspices of a central committee to press the Catholic claim. The committee lobbied the Legislative Council on 7 July 1869 with a memorial supported by 1,985 signatures outlining Catholic objections to the state school system and demanding that a proportionate share of the annual education vote be allocated to Catholic schools. However, the Legislative Council rejected the memorial on a number of grounds, not least the claim that such an allocation would draw scarce funds away from the existing state school system.\textsuperscript{57}

Undeterred, the Catholic committee called a public meeting in the cathedral four days later on 11 July 1869. The ensuing discourse centred on the comparisons and contrasts between the alleged sectarian trends in the Western Australian public school system and its Irish primogenitor, and speakers identified Catholic educational demands with freedom of conscience and personal liberty. Called to address the

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid, 13 January, 1869, p. 3, Clmn. 4.
\textsuperscript{57} Inquirer, 21 July 1869, Special Supplement, p. 3, clmn. 7.
meeting Matthew Gibney presented the problem in an Irish context. He drew attention to Catholic objections to provisions adopted from Ireland by the West Australian system that already had attracted censure from the Irish hierarchy. Furthermore, Gibney described the Irish model as anti-Catholic and tactically avoided any reference to the initial compliance of a majority of the Irish episcopate, asserting that it was never accepted by a council of Irish bishops. Consequently, he advised the committee that he could not in conscience accept any Western Australian version of the Irish National school system. Continuing, he drew attention to the success of O'Connell's triumphant crusade in overcoming anti-Catholic legislation in Ireland and, reverting to the inductive argument articulated by the Melbourne Council and its Irish precursor at Thurles, he condemned the existing public education system as an invasion on the liberty of conscience.  

Accentuating the Irish Ultramontane influence, Gibney again drew attention to the controversial involvement of Richard Whatley in the Irish National School system. The Anglican Whately had evidently assumed the same role as the personification of liberal evil in Gibney's demonology as he had for Paul Cullen in Ireland for, according to Gibney, Whately's texts, referred to earlier by Hale, were, as Cullen had alleged in Ireland, merely thinly veneered sectarian works intended to proselytise Catholic pupils. Whately, according to Gibney, revealed his true sectarian colours when he withdrew his support for the Irish National system in 1853 in protest against the Cullen-generated amendment granting pupils permission to absent themselves from bible-extract reading classes if they so desired. Gibney conveniently omitted to advise his Western Australian readers that Whatley's resignation was prompted more from indignation against a decision to accede to demands from Cullen and his

58 Reilly, Reminiscences of Fifty Years, p. 141.
59 Inquirer, 7 July 1869, p. 3, clmns. 4 and 5.
suffragans in the Dublin Archdiocese in 1853 to withdraw two of his self-edited recommended texts *Evidences of Christianity* and *Scripture Lessons* from school reading lists.\(^{60}\)

A combination of Anglican clergyman and liberal philosopher Whately proved a controversial figure and personified the conspiracy that Irish Ultramontanes believed had been contrived between the Anglican Church and anti-Catholic liberalism. This claim was not without foundation. Contemporary liberal intellectuals noted Whatley’s contributions. John Stuart Mill acknowledged Whatley’s scholarship in his philosophical work titled *Elements of Logic*.\(^{61}\) But Catholic misgivings were not entirely based on Whatley’s tendency toward rationalism. As editor and contributory to an anthology of essays titled *Cautions for the Times* published in 1853 Whately challenged a number of fundamental Ultramontane Catholic teachings.\(^{62}\) Questioning Catholic claims to doctrinal homogeneity, Whately drew attention to disagreement within the Irish hierarchy over the suitability of his earlier work *A Tract on the Evidences of Christianity* as a suitable text for inclusion on the Irish National school curriculum.\(^{63}\) He also suggested that the title of ‘Roman’ Catholic was by definition a contradiction as Catholic implied universal and Roman particular. In doing so Whateley implicitly challenged the cornerstone of Ultramontanism by implying that a Rome focussed Catholicism was a contradiction in terms.\(^{64}\) According to Whately’s

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\(^{60}\) Bowen, *Paul Cardinal Cullen*, p. 135.


\(^{62}\) Richard Whately, *Cautions For The Times*, London: John W. Parker and Son, 1853, p. 13-14

\(^{63}\) Although Cullen had succeeded in having the offending *Evidences of Christianity* removed from the curriculum, initially a majority of the Irish Catholic episcopate including Cullen’s predecessor in the Dublin Archdiocese, Daniel Murray had found the text acceptable as had the Mercy community who continued to operate the schools within the framework of the state system. Bowen, *Paul Cardinal Cullen*, p. 135.

\(^{64}\) *Ibid*, p. 24. Considering the rising popularity of anti-Catholic public sentiment current in Britain subsequent to the reinstatement of the Catholic hierarchy, including allegations of papal aggression. Whately could be interpreted as being more than a little mischievous and attempting to bait Cullen into a sectarian storm.
logic the term, 'Roman suggests a necessary connection with one place, and Catholic
denotes having no necessary connection with any one place more than another.
However, as the term is an inoffensive way of describing those who think that the
whole church should be subject to the bishop of Rome, there can be no harm in using
it in that sense, instead of needlessly exasperating them and ourselves by such terms as
Popery and Papists, which they consider (though without just reason) words of
reproach.\textsuperscript{65}

Although representing standard Anglican apologetics statements such as this did
little to enhance Whately’s standing amongst the Irish Catholic episcopate. For his
part Cullen had long challenged the true agenda of his mitred Anglican counterpart in
the education debate in Ireland.\textsuperscript{66} From his translation to Dublin in 1852 Cullen
viewed the liberal Whately’s prominent role in architecting the Irish national school
system as part of the anti-Catholic liberal Anglican alliance which he believed
conspired against the Catholic Church. As early as 1851 Cullen sought to have two of
Whately’s works, \textit{Evidences of Christianity} and \textit{Scripture Lessons} placed on the index
of books condemned by Rome as contrary to Catholic teaching. Despite the
conviviality that existed between his predecessor in the Dublin archdiocese and the
Anglican bishop Cullen maintained a deep suspicion of Whately. When Whately
condemned convent life and structure in 1853 Cullen’s suspicions appeared justified.
In his pastoral response Cullen not only defended the nuns against Whately’s claims
but also questioned the legitimacy of the Anglican diocese which he claimed had
benefited from appropriated Catholic funds. ‘We cannot conceal our astonishment and
regret when a high Protestant dignitary who resided in our city for nearly thirty years,
enjoying ample revenues left to this see by our Catholic forefathers and well

acquainted with the advantages conferred upon the poor by the religious communities of Ireland, became an assailant of these Sisters.\textsuperscript{67} But as a body the Catholic hierarchy viewed Whately's position as indicative of a more profound Anglican agenda. The increasingly Ultramontane Irish Catholic episcopate believed that Protestant churchmen such as Whately were intent on masking doctrinal differences to promote a climate of religious indifferentism. Such a \textit{via media} harboured obvious threats for the future of the Catholic Church in a political jurisdiction which subsequent to the political union of Ireland with Britain in 1800 had an overall Anglican majority. Accordingly, in their pastoral issued in 1859 the Irish Catholic episcopate condemned the use of scripture extracts in national schools to promote what they identified as 'the singular modern device of common Christianity'.\textsuperscript{68} Thenceforth the abrasive relationship between the two bishops continued until Whately's death in 1863. This anxiety was not lost on Gibney who underwent his formation in Dublin during the latter part of Whately's episcopal career in the Irish capital.

Established by a recent graduate from Maynooth seminary, John Hand, in 1842 All Hallows college was primarily intended to produce ordinands for the missions especially for Irish emigrant communities. With assistance from prominent Catholics in Ireland, including Daniel O'Connell, Hand succeeded in acquiring a suitable estate on the North side of Dublin for his intended college. The seminary subsequently gained a reputation for producing 'men of action rather than scholars'.\textsuperscript{69} Recruited from the less well off sectors of Irish society All Hallows men gained a reputation as

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.


somewhat less polished than their Maynooth counterparts. Although the course of study varied over time the emphasis remained on the theological. Under the stewardship of David Moriarity, later to become bishop of Kerry, the length of the course was set at six years. English classes including Rhetoric were subsequently introduced to counter complaints of inadequate English proficiency against its ordinands from missionary bishops. This deficiency has been attributed to the rural and sometimes Gaelic speaking background of its students many of whom had attended local secondary schools where tuition in classical Greek and Latin was viewed as more important than English. Remarkling on the poor standards of English amongst students a tutor at the college later recalled that entrants to the college were ‘utterly unformed and unpolished as a general rule. I knew men who could teach any professor in the house in Greek and Latin classics but were unable to compose correctly a dozen sentences in English’. Nevertheless, after completing their six year course at all Hallows ordinands viewed themselves as having overcome their initial short comings. A near contemporary of Gibney’s who also attended the same secondary or preparatory school in County Longford later applauded the college on its ability to refine its charges to acceptable standards.

Unsophisticated and untravelled, we brought to All Hallows the raw habits of our native environment. In consequence, we had much to learn and not a little to unlearn. But if the timber were in the log rather than in the board, it was sound and sizable, and, if ungrained and unvarnished, it was of fine texture and capable of cabinet finish.\footnote{Ibid, p. 146.}

All Hallows rapidly accomplished its founder’s vision as a principle resource of clergy for overseas missions. This was particularly evident in the case of Australia where by 1865 it had placed 80 priests, and by 1880 half of the Catholic parish clergy
were All Hallow’s men. As testament of its continued commitment to the Australian mission a new Australian wing was under construction at All Hallows in 1887. Gibney’s formation at All Hallows from 1857 to 1863 coincided with Cullen’s rise to dominance within the Irish Catholic Church. Cullen’s Ultramontane crusade in Ireland included a ‘progressive tightening’ of control over seminaries and internal discipline. Gibney’s tenure in the Perth diocese as both priest and bishop reflected a combination of his practical training at All Hallows Seminary leavened with the Ultramontane Catholicism that became prevalent in Ireland during the second half of the nineteenth century and which set the tenor of his spiritual formation. Certainly, Gibney addressed the education debate from a standard Irish Ultramontane perspective. Amplifying this Irish Ultramontane influence in his historical review of the state school system Gibney explained to his Perth audience that in contrast to the Irish model, the Western Australia system introduced in 1847 provided for instruction in Bible reading without comment and, unlike the Irish system, did not employ selected extracts until 1856. Further amendments introduced in 1863, according to Gibney, provided for a more balanced approach to religious instruction but regulated against emphasising confessional differences. In short, Gibney rejected the proposal that had been presented by Hale and described the public school system in Western Australia in terms of the Ultramontane argument already constructed against state schools in Ireland by Cullen. Gibney pointed out the ‘conscience clause’ included in the Irish system which permitted dissenting children to absent themselves from Scripture reading classes was never introduced in Western Australia.

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72 *The Catholic Standard*, February 1887, p. 605.
74 *Inquirer*, 13 July 1869, p.3, clmns. 3-4.
Despite the public show of solidarity the Catholic argument became confused under a weight of detail and interpretation, and subsequent statements by members of the committee indicate a less than homogenous understanding of the Irish system within the Catholic camp. In his address to the meeting Terrence Farrelly who, as has been pointed out in Chapter III, was formerly a teacher trained in Ireland, appeared to support the Irish system. He alleged that unlike in Ireland the model pertaining in the colony was administered by a sectarian board composed entirely of non-Catholics, and asserted that any comparison between the two systems was ‘odious’. Farrelly, who had arrived in Western Australia as part of Brady’s 1846 missionary group, testified to the conditions surrounding the introduction of state education in the colony and recalled the divisive role of the sectarian letter penned by the original schoolmaster in the Perth school, Dacres Williams, published in the Inquirer on 1 December 1847. Furthermore, Farrelly declared that in order to satisfy Catholic demands the system currently operating in England and Scotland which, in addition to promoting the state schools allocated a proportionate grant to denominational schools, was a more suitable model for Western Australian conditions.

When the meeting reconvened on Tuesday 13 July 1869 another member of the central committee, J.T. Reilly, disputed similarities with the Irish model, and advised the meeting that any attempt by the local administration to compare the local school system with that operating in Ireland was spurious as the one in Ireland was in effect nothing less than a Catholic system of education. Reilly drew on the English novelist William Thackery who, he said, observed that at a local level the Irish system was closely attached to the local Catholic church and often operated from it under the

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75 See Chapter III regarding Williams’ letter.
76 Inquirer, 21 July 1869, p. 5, Clmn, 5.
guidance of the priest to support his point. In his account of his travels in Ireland in the 1840s, Thackery had noted as early as 1843 that the Irish National school system was predominantly a ‘Catholic one directed and fostered [in each parish] by the priest’.

Despite these interpretive discrepancies the committee left the local Legislative Council in little doubt as to their sincerity and resolve of purpose when they returned their rejected memorial to the governor’s office for transmission to Whitehall for consideration for the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Earl Granville. The committee registered its discontent with the colonial administration by adding the additional codicil that the exclusively Protestant membership of the local Legislative Council rendered it incapable of unbiased deliberation.

The following week Gibney again felt obliged to address Catholic grievances in the pages of the local paper. In his letter to the Inquirer in 28 July 1869 he identified sectarian trends in the West Australian education system. In doing so he drew on Farrelly’s argument and again cited Williams’ letter of 1847 to support his point and alleged that the General Board of Education had since 1862 operated a system which obliged pupils to attend scripture readings without permitting children to be absent on conscientious objection grounds. This procedure, according to Gibney, contravened written regulations which prescribed that ‘no children were required to attend [religious instruction] without their parents sanction.’ Again Gibney presented Catholic objections to the state school system within an Irish context by quoting a statement in which Cullen’s old adversary, Whately, allegedly revealed that the Irish National School system of denominationally-mixed education was little more than a

77 Inquirer, 21 July 1869, p.3 clmm. 7.
80 Ibid.
proselytising vehicle that was intended to eventually undermine the Irish Catholic Church. According to Gibney Whatley reported that:

the education by the National Board is fast supplanting the vast fabric of the Irish Roman Catholic Church; that mixed education enlightening the man of the people and if we give it up we give up the only hope of weaning the Irish from the abuse of popery, but I cannot venture openly to express this opinion, I cannot openly support the Education Board as an instrument of conversion. I have to fight its battle with one hand tied behind my back.81

Taken from an biographical sketch of Whatley’s life published by his daughter subsequent to his death in 1863, this claim, according to Gibney, demonstrated that Whatley viewed the Irish National School System as a tool for supplanting the Catholic Church and further evinced a Liberal Anglican educational conspiracy.82 In short, Gibney subtly suggested that the Western Australian School Board had, in practice, adopted the proselytising spirit that Ultramontanes alleged lay behind the introduction of the National School system in Ireland. Gibney reiterated this argument in August in his reply to claims by the editor of the Gazette that he was guilty of propagating sectarian tensions himself.83

Gibney’s campaign received a welcome but unanticipated fillip in the last days of September 1869 with the arrival of Frederick Aloysius Weld as governor (1869-1875).84 Weld, a member of a prominent West Country English Catholic family, had spent several years in New Zealand where he led a leading political role as Premier prior to his new appointment in Western Australia.85 On his arrival in Perth on 29

81 Inquirer, 28 July 1869, p. 5, clmn, 3.
83 Inquirer, 11 August 1869, p. 5, Clmn. 4.
84 Scholars agree that there is little direct evidence available to make any empirical connection between Catholic complaints regarding educational arrangements in Western Australia and Weld’s appointment as Governor in 1869 D. Mossenson., ‘History of State Education in Western Australia’, (Phd.) University of Western Australia 1961, pp. 94-95, also Maree Seeto, ‘The Significance of the Catholicism of Frederick A. Weld for the Development of Education in Western Australia’, (Phd). University of Western Australia, 1989.
September 1869 Weld declared his intentions to progress the political and economic standing of the colony which was currently undergoing an extended period of economic stagnation. Weld displayed his enthusiasm by making several fact-finding trips to the outer limits of colonial settlement. He set about compiling an inventory of the potential mineral and agricultural resources available and undertook a number of pioneering initiatives to invigorate the flagging economy including developing the timber industry. But Weld's attention was also focussed on social issues and soon after his arrival he received directions from Lord Granville to examine Catholic allegations contained in the July petition. Accordingly, he turned to resolve the vexed and protracted education issue in the colony. In doing so Weld made little attempt to disguise his intent that his prescribed remedy would include a more sympathetic consideration of the Catholic position in combination with a more close alignment with the Irish national School system. Accordingly, he advised the influential Catholic convert and undersecretary for the colonies, Lord Monsell, that the system of education operating in the colony had little in common with its alleged Irish model.

Two days later he requested information on the Irish system and advised that the issue required an amount of careful study before any further initiatives should be undertaken. Weld then proceeded to compile an inventory on all schools, both Catholic and state, operating in the colony.

In March 1870 he requested Griver to provide details on Catholic schools regarding staffing, curriculum, access and pupil numbers. He then turned his attention

87 Weld to Monsell, 10 October 1869, Battye Library, Perth, Acc. 1031A
88 Weld to Monsell, 12 October 1869. *Ibid*
to the public school system and requested the General Board of Education to supply particulars regarding provisions affecting children who wished to abstain from instruction in the prescribed scripture lessons. Weld questioned the veracity and the practical operation of the existing conscience clause and diplomatically indicated what might have been construed as a degree of cynicism at its practical application by referring to the unambiguous terms of the conscience clause currently operating in Ireland. Furthermore, he emphasised his point by quoting the provisions of the relevant Irish clause in full. This clause, in essence, provided protection against proselytising by forbidding children from receiving religious instructions from a teacher professing another religion.\footnote{Akenson, 	extit{The Irish Education Experiment}, p. 160} He then qualified this point by advising the members of the General Board that he demurred from any argument that the system operating in Western Australia bore any similarity with the current Irish system and stated that, ‘the government makes these references to the Irish system because it has sometimes been erroneously assumed that a resemblance exists between the Western Australian and the Irish National System.’\footnote{Akenson, 	extit{The Irish Education Experiment}, p. 160} Thus rather than endorse Gibney’s Ultramontane public pronouncements alleging that both systems of public education were inherently sectarian Weld appeared to agree with the lay Catholic position presented by Farrelly and Reilly.

Nevertheless, in their response, the members of the board indicated their indignation at the implications of Weld’s remarks and suggested formula, and asserted that conditions prevailing in Western Australia differed from Ireland and prohibited the introduction of a similar conscience clause on practical grounds. They supported this claim by drawing attention to the practical problem of superintending and accommodating pupils wishing to withdraw from religious instruction classes in
single-teacher one-room schools. Nevertheless, the board conceded that they would consider introducing such a clause on condition that Catholic participation in state schools would result. Indicating the presence of a less accommodating position the Anglican Bishop Hale, the most prominent board member withheld his signature and advised Weld on an attached letter that he could not in conscience cooperate with an amendment that could potentially compromise his right to enter a school room and provide pupils with instruction based on direct Bible readings.⁹²

Despite these rumblings of discontent from the Anglican establishment, Weld proceeded to prepare legislation to reform the existing school system along the lines he had suggested. Although supporting the two central Catholic demands for state-aid and a conscience clause Weld dismissed any possibility of a publicly-financed denominational model on purely demographic grounds. He advised the Secretary of State for the colonies in April 1870 that patterns of settlement rendered such a system unsuitable for Western Australia. He did indicate, however, the necessity to acknowledge the significant contribution made by the Catholic schools in Perth and Fremantle to education in the colony. Accordingly, he advised Earl Granville that he was of the opinion that all worthy schools, no matter what persuasion, should obtain a fair proportion of state support.

Moral and religious training should be at the root of all teaching; the object of the state being to make good citizens, but were we in a country circumstanced like this, to endeavour to attain this end by a resort to a simple denominational system large districts should be left without a school at all and minorities in most parts of the colony should either be entirely without instruction of any kind for their children or obtain it by sending their children to schools of other denominations. ... Western Australia is under the present system, fairly provided with schools- but that the government schools without further extension did not meet the requirements of the population in Fremantle and Perth without aid

afforded by Roman Catholic schools ... but were we, in a country
circumstanced like this to endeavour to attain this end by a resort to a
simple denominational system large districts would be left without schools
at all ... I would lay down as a principle of action that all schools
containing a fixed number of pupils and attaining a certain standard of
secular instruction should receive a proportionate grant. 93

Thus, Weld advocated the foundation of a hybrid that, in effect represented a partially
dual system of education with the state supplying funding to qualifying Catholic
schools in the main centres of population but avoiding competition between two
school systems in less populated areas of the colony by restricting government
support to state schools. This proposal, however, opened up old sectarian sores and
rumblings of discontent regarding any concessions to the Catholic system again began
to surface to become a central issue in the local Legislative Council elections held that
year. Reflecting the minority status of the Catholic vote the poll resulted in a complete
victory for the candidates who had declared their opposition to any concessions to the
Catholic school system. 94 Thus, Weld faced with a hostile newly elected Legislative
Council was obliged to return to the educational drawing board.

However, Gibney, who was Diocesan Administrator during Griver’s absence in
Rome from March 1870 to August 1871 for his episcopal consecration and attendance
at Vatican Council I, proved an able proponent for the Catholic side. 95 In consultation
with the Weld inspired and now more accommodating Colonial Secretary, Frederick
Palgrave Barlee (1855-1875), Gibney agreed to a compromise position that
recommended a one-off payment to the Catholic system based on the estimated
savings that Catholic schools in Perth and Fremantle brought to the educational

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93 Weld to the Right Honourable Earl Granville, 25 April 1870, No. 124, Votes and Proceedings of the
Western Australian Parliament, 1870/71- 1880, Battye Library Perth, 328.941 WES. .
94 Inquirer, 10 August 1870, pp. 2-4, clmns. 1-2
95 Inquirer, 9 August 1871, p. 2, clmn. 2. During his absence in Rome Griver, in addition to his
consecration attended the first Vatican Council 1869-70 and also visited a number of countries
requesting missionaries.
budget of the colony. In his negotiations, Gibney agreed with Barlee that a figure of £500 was adequate compensation. Based on the number of Catholics resident in the colony at that time, estimated at 28.79 per cent of the total population, this figure represented a proportionate percentage of the current education budget then recorded as £1231.  

Weld indicated his concurrence with this compromise solution and advised Salvado at New Norcia, with whom he was concurrently negotiating a scheme to reform juvenile Aboriginal offenders, that he believed it represented some progress at least as far as Catholic demands were concerned as he did not envisage getting support from the current members of the local assembly for any major concessions to the Catholic system. Providing an insight for Barlee’s transition from his previously anti-Catholic position, Weld advised Salvado in November that he had succeeded in getting the Colonial Secretary to adopt a more accommodating approach toward Catholic claims for state aid but cautioned that the political appointments in the recent council elections rendered any hope for gaining support for better concessions tenuous. Moreover, despite his expressed wish to assist the Catholic cause Weld appeared to support a compromise position where a little was better than no gain.

Mr Barlee to agree to propose and support a grant for the Catholic Schools at Perth and Fremantle and as the result of the elections leaves no hope at present of my being able to carry a change of system I think it would be wise to take a little which I think may be carried. Of course I could order Mr. Barlee to introduce any measure I choose, but I could not get it carried and in that case we should lose all- whereas if without giving up our principles or opinions of what is right and just we take at present something –that something would be a great help to the church- and in a few years we might be in a position to take all we ask and fruitless agitation would be avoided at a time when there is no chance of reversing the effect of the recent elections.

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96 Barlee to Weld, 16 November 1870, Votes and proceedings of West Australian Parliament 1870/71 Battye Library Perth, 328.941 WES.
97 Weld to Salvado, 19 November 1870, Battye Library, Perth, Acc. 1732A.
In other words, Weld was advocating of a compromise outcome that preserved the impartiality of his office. But, despite Weld’s guarded optimism even this minimalist concession to the Catholic system met with resolved opposition from the exclusively non-Catholic assembly. When he presented the proposal, dubbed the ‘Barlee-Gibney Compromise’, on behalf of the governor to the newly elected Legislative Council in December 1870, Barlee assured the house that the introduction of a conscience clause and a separate grant for schools catering for 30 or 40 children would satisfy Catholic demands.\textsuperscript{98} But the senior member of the house, Mr Steere, a leading Anglican, rebuked Barlee and alleged that the Colonial Secretary was incorrect in his assurances to the assembly that Catholic agitation would cease subsequent to the granting of the payment. Steere declared that, ‘he also had authority for making a direct contradiction to the statement of the honourable gentleman that the Roman Catholics would be satisfied. He could assure honourable members that in his part of the colony the proposal would not be accepted and that if the house agreed to it the agitation would still continue and ill-will still be engendered’.\textsuperscript{99}

Realising the divisive potential of the issue the \textit{Inquirer}, seeking to take some of the heat out of the debate, argued that a compromise undertaking from the Catholic side was necessary to appease the concern of the Anglican majority. Accordingly, it advised that any compensation to Catholic schools should be accompanied by a caveat obliging the nominated schools to provide a reciprocal undertaking that allowed access to state inspection and a conscience clause that provided a safeguard against discrimination to non-Catholic students, including provision for non-attendance at religious instruction classes. In short, the \textit{Inquirer} demanded that a conscience clause

\textsuperscript{98} Western Australian Parliamentary Debates, December 1870, Battye Library Perth, 328.9412
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid.
should be applicable across the board and apply to Catholic schools in receipt of
government support as well as public schools.

If a shell had fallen and burst on the council table it could not have
cause greater confusion and dismay-soon, however, succeeded by
equally as manifest expressions of derision ... We have ever held that it
was a hardship to take money out of the pockets of Roman Catholics to
pay for a teaching which they believe to be erroneous, and we alone of the
local journals opened our columns to communications from the aggrieved
parties. We cannot altogether ignore the principle that minorities are
bound by the majorities, and that it is quite, if not more unjust to expect
that Protestants, a very large majority in this colony, should pay for a
teaching that they believe to be erroneous. But after giving the subject our
most anxious and serious consideration, we see but one way of settling a
question that has caused the most damaging estrangement between the
Protestant and Roman Catholic members of our small community- and
that is, a compromise, no doubt involving a great sacrifice of consistency
on behalf of the Protestant community; but we were not prepared for, and
never will consent to any compromise except under the most stringent
conditions. We think that the memo of the Colonial Secretary proposing to
place £500 on the Estimates to be at the disposal of the Roman Catholic
Clergy-without conditions securing the right of government inspection as
to the sufficiency of secular instruction afforded, and a conscience clause
attached-is inadmissibl.¹⁰⁰

The defeat of the Barlee-Gibney proposal animated Weld to consider a more direct
political approach and he requested Salvador to exert his influence to sway the support
of his local Legislative Council member to support the Catholic campaign. He advised
Salvador that ‘Our friend George Shenton is a young man and on the whole desirous of
doing right but at the same time he is one who might be much benefited by good
advice and I think if your Lordship thought fit of taking an opportunity of advising
him on the education question he would be very likely to be influenced by you’. ¹⁰¹ A
member of a prominent Wesleyan family Shenton was the representative for the
Greenough district and subsequently Toodyay from 1875-1890. In addition to his
public life Shenton inherited a general hardware business on his father’s death in
1867. This business was the main source of supply for New Norcia for everything
from ploughshares to buttons. In return for this business Shenton acted as Salvado’s agent in Perth. In this capacity as well as securing stock and produce he subsequently represented Salvado in his many grant applications.102

Weld did not allow the extended recess of the Legislative Council (it did not reconvene until July 1871) to deflect his attention from the education debate and he applied himself to drafting an education bill. In doing so he framed a new bill on legislation concurrently under review in the English parliament. Presented to the parliament in February 1870 and colloquially titled Forster’s Bill in recognition of its chief protagonist W.E. Forster, Vice-President of the Education Department, the British Elementary Education Act sought to extend the existing voluntary-based school system throughout England and Wales by a two-pronged means; offering government assistance to the existing voluntary schools in addition to establishing a government school network. The British act included provision for allocating state aid to existing voluntary schools (including Catholic) that met the required standards of teacher qualification, school accommodation and pupil attendance. The legislation, which received parliamentary approval in June 1870, also sought to generate local participation and stipulated that members of the public registered on the electoral roll would elect school boards.103 The new system included a number of significant provisions regarding religious instruction and attempted to accommodate all denominations by including provision for children to absent themselves from religious instruction on conscientious objection grounds. Bible reading, although allowed, was not compulsory, and religious instruction or reading material distinctive to any

100 Inquirer, 26 July 1871, p. 2 , clmm. 3.
101 Weld to Salvado, 21 December 1870, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, C.O.18/165.
102 Salvado letters to Shenton, Battye Library, Perth, Acc, 354A.
particular denomination was prohibited. In addition the new British system incorporated a results-based payment scheme.

In Perth Weld’s draft legislation echoed its British blueprint. In addition to allocating administration to an elected Central Education Board the intended legislation also included provision for government assistance to designated Catholic as well as state schools. This represented a limited concession to Catholic claims as only the Catholic schools in the two main centres at Perth and Fremantle were intended recipients of government assistance. He advised the Secretary of State for the Colonies that he considered this the only reformist avenue available as the Legislative Council had previously refused to approve either of the two former proposals of a hybrid system or the £500 grant.

that there appeared no chance after the election of carrying the education bill either on the basis of a dual system, such as now prevails in England or on the Irish plan. They [members of the Legislative Council] were in favour of a perpetuation of the present system. I therefore agreed to a compromise under which the Catholic schools at Perth and Fremantle would have a grant equal to the sum saved by the government by the children educated at these schools. The council very unexpectedly threw this out. The popular feeling now is setting in the direction of the recommendations made in the dispatch and Mr Keenan’s much abused memo so I am not unlikely to carry out my views in the long term.

When the Legislative Council reconvened in July 1871, Weld advised the assembled members that he intended to introduce an Educational Bill to reform the existing arrangements. This reform would cover both the state and voluntary educational systems then in operation. Both systems would receive grants from public funds and

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105 Introduced to the English Parliament in 1870 The Elementary Education Act which proposed a results based system of teacher payment in essence instituted a dual system which provided for the allocation of state funds to denominational or voluntary as well as state schools, and included a conscience clause which restricted religious instruction to the commencement or termination of the school day and allowed parents to withdraw their children from religious education if they so wished. S. J. Curtis & M. Boulwood, *An Introductory History of English Education*, pp. 75-76.

106 Weld to Granville, 25 April 1870, Western Australian State Archives, Perth, C.O. 18/165.
would be subject to inspection from central and district board officers. He advised the members of the assembly that his intended legislation would invest denominational schools with virtual freedom of instruction but would confine the government school curriculum to secular subjects within the allocated school attendance timetable. He drew attention to the accountability bestowed with the recently granted measure of representative government, which he was largely responsible for, to exhort the council to follow the English model and allow public control over the system through an elected central administrative board. In practice this measure would extricate the new system from the clutches of a powerful few. He exhorted the council to devote:

attention to an Education Bill which is intended to bring our educational system into a more complete conformity with the spirit of representative institutions by committing to an elected board the chief control of educational matters by confining the direction of the state to secular instruction and at the same time by assisting voluntary efforts and affording facilities for religious instruction.\(^{107}\)

Weld’s proposed legislation once again precipitated rancorous debate both inside and outside of the Legislative Council. His recommendation to secularise all education within the state system, whilst accepting religious instruction within denominational schools, was particularly alarming to the Anglican side who viewed state schools as their rightful ascendency inheritance and therefore subject to confessional religious instruction. Emulating Catholic tactics, Hale chaired a meeting held in the town hall to protest against the proposed legislation.\(^{108}\)

But Gibney was again marshalling the Catholic minority voice to exercise maximum leverage and several representatives presented the assembly with memorials from the Catholic populations of their individual constituencies. Faced

\(^{107}\) Western Australian Parliamentary Debates, 10 July 1871, Battye Library, Perth, Acc. 328.9412, also Inquirer, 12 July 1871, p. 3, clmn, 2-3.

with these memorials totalling 4,554 signatures, including forty-two from the Protestant population of the Champion Bay district, the assembly agreed to send Weld's draft legislation to a select committee for scrutiny subsequent to its second reading in July 1871.\textsuperscript{109} The six-man committee composed of Frederick Barlee, James Le Steere, P. Newman, J. Logue, J. Bussell, A. Monger and W.E. Marmion presented their recommendations to the council on the 28 July 1871.\textsuperscript{110} Having secured a number of amendments to the proposed legislation, including: provision for non-sectarian religious instruction in state schools; power to appoint and dismiss teachers transferred to district boards from the central authority, which was reconstituted as a nominated rather than the proposed elected body, and the withdrawal of a proposal by the Colonial Secretary to have the recommended per capita sum allocated to Catholic schools increased from £1-7-6 to a par with the £2-15-0 available to the state system opposition began to wilt.\textsuperscript{111} The members of the council reluctantly agreed to support the third reading of the proposed legislation and, despite an application from Mr. Steere for a six-month cooling off period, the bill passed into law on the 9 August 1871.

Thus, the new Elementary Education Act, which became effective from January 1872 represented, in practice, a compromise and a success for Weld's negotiating skills. It included a conscience clause and provision of state aid to denominational schools identified in the legislation as 'assisted schools'.\textsuperscript{112} In addition, the act, which remained the framework for state schooling until 1895, provided for a number of significant changes to the existing public school administrative structure. An elected

\textsuperscript{109} Western Australian Parliamentary Debates, 18 July 1871, Battye Library, Perth, 328.9412; Inquirer, 26 July 1869, p. 2, clmn. 2.; Herald, 10 July 1869, p. 1 clmn. 6.

\textsuperscript{110} Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council 1870-1871, Battye Library, Perth,

\textsuperscript{111} Western Australian Parliamentary Debates, 2 August 1871, Battye Library Perth, 328.9412.

\textsuperscript{112} Acta Regina, The Statutes of Western Australia 1871, 35 Victoria No. 14 pp 2-5. Battye Library Perth.
Central Board of Education replaced the existing appointed General Board and thereby dismantled any remaining vestiges of Protestant ascendancy. Though not explicitly mentioned, the Act implicitly introduced a payment by results regime to all participating schools. The *per capita* grant allocated to the Catholic system under the terms of section 26 subsection 3 of the act provided £1-7-6 to each full-time pupil between four and sixteen years. This represented half the grant available to state schools. Despite this significant disparity and its failure to meet Catholic demands for a full denominational system, Gibney embraced Weld’s legislation because it contained a number of implicit as well as practical provisions favourable to the Catholic side. Although it also favoured the state system in areas of less concentrated population it, nevertheless, recognised the Catholic position through the insertion of an unambiguous conscience clause which permitted pupils to elect to withdraw from classes for religious instruction. But most importantly, by providing a measure of financial support it implicitly acknowledged the legitimacy of Catholic claims for state support for a separate educational system.\(^{113}\) Thus the new legislation, drafted and negotiated through a less than sympathetic Legislative Council by Weld, represented a significant triumph not only for Gibney and his committee but also for the long term future of the Catholic school system. This was all the more significant when considered in the light of what was happening in the eastern colonies where local administrations were intent on discontinuing existing state support systems to denominational schools. For example, in New South Wales in 1866 Polding alleged that the Public Schools Act recently introduced by Henry Parkes which further restricted assistance to denominational schools was ‘the heaviest blow that could be struck against the welfare and true liberty of our people … by destroying gradually

\(^{113}\) This contrasted with other Australian colonies the local administration in both South Australia and New South Wales had steadfastly refused to acknowledge robust demands from the Catholic side.
our denominational education'. Tensions between church and state over education in New South Wales deepened in the succeeding years and by 1869 the Colonial Secretary, Henry Parkes, accused the bishops of transgressing the liberty of the Catholic laity by demanding under pain of excommunication that they boycott the state system. In Victoria the issue of state support was a central factor in the demise of the brief premiership of Charles Gavin Duffy in 1872. The education act introduced by the new ministry the same year abolished state aid to Catholic schools.

In reviewing Weld’s selection as governor, historians have generally accepted that political rather than religious imperatives advised his appointment to Western Australia. Yet they have agreed, however, that Weld’s Catholicism was a paramount influence on his personal and political decision-making deliberations. Indeed one scholar concluded that his Catholicism was the primary force behind Weld’s crafting of the 1871 Education Act. This deduction conformed with contemporary observations. For example, in reviewing Barlee’s about-face in support for the proposed legislation to allocate £500 to the Catholic system, the Herald questioned Weld’s impartiality in the education debate and his ability to influence Barlee’s more compromising approach to the issue of allocating state aid to Catholic

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116 Ibid, p. 166.
118 Maree Seeto, ‘The Significance of the Catholicism of Frederick A. Weld for the Development of Education in Western Australia 1869-1875’, (Phd.) U.W.A. 1989
schools. In doing so the *Herald*, in a thinly disguised nuance, pondered the possible contrast in outcome had a non-Catholic governor been appointed instead of Weld.

Had Sir B. Pine or Captain Sawyers arrived as our Governor would he have counselled them to make the present concession to Matthew GIBNEY, and ignored Matthew [sic] Perth? [Mathew Hale, Anglican bishop of Perth]. it is a very suspicious circumstances that Mr WELD is a Roman Catholic, and leads us to infer that the Colonial Secretary’s conversion is mainly due to this circumstance, added to too much confidence in his own ability and too little in the members of the new council.\textsuperscript{119}

Weld himself was less circumspect than the *Herald* concerning the primary influence of his religion on his political decision-making. Long before he reached the Swan River he advised his family in England of his recent appointment to the New Zealand government in 1854 and jubilantly wrote that he believed that although his new position restricted his love of the outdoor life he believed it was heavenly blessed and he intended to serve Catholic interests in New Zealand.

more in my element in the saddle than at the desk-lastly I should have to give up all attention to my private business-On the other hand it puts me in a position possibly to benefit my religion … I cannot help feeling that there is a design of God in this sudden unsought for and unexpected crisis in my affairs-what it may end in I don’t know-but what with Clifford as Speaker myself minister and several of the members Catholic I must say the prospects of full fair play for religion in NZ seem secure even should I find it impossible or inadvisable to remain in office.\textsuperscript{120}

This religious influence remained evident in his personal reflections of his political career. Far from waning, the influence of Weld’s faith on his political decisions appeared to crystallise over time. This was readily apparent in his correspondence concerning his intended reform of the Western Australian education system and he informed Earl Granville in April 1870 that he agreed that ‘moral and religious training

\textsuperscript{119} *Herald*, 13 December 1870, p. 2 Clmn. 2.

should be at the root of all teaching. Although this anti-secular position was not exclusively Catholic it nevertheless questioned the secular education promoted by the state apparatus of which he was a part. Four years after presiding over the introduction of the 1871 Education Act in Western Australia he expressed the same anti-secular sentiment to William Rolleston, the current Canterbury Superintendent, concerning the development of education in New Zealand. In his letter Weld revealed his personal understanding of church-state relations, protested against the growing acceptance of scientific method such as positivism, and called for a return to a God-centred system of schooling where religious instruction took precedence over all else as an educational objective.

I quite go with you in thinking that railroads, and national prosperity are not the main things in a nation’s life, though they are valuable accessories. My opinion of the highest national life is public spirit, patriotism, self-sacrifice, justice—all that can raise mankind in this world and prepare it for the next.

Furthermore, Weld appeared to support the idea of a free church in a free state that was often identified with a more liberal Catholic outlook.

The union of the state with true religious principle; the Statesman and the Churchman walking hand in hand and not interfering with each other’s province. This was the ideal of the Christian brotherhood of nations rudely shattered by the Reformation. This was the ideal of Alfred the Great and Charlemagne and of the greatest Popes and of such men as St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventura, whose wonderful intellects seemed to have solved so many problems that are still disputed over by those who scorn to refer to any but 18th century lights, and reverence only the infallibility of doubt, uncertainty, and their own crude theories.

Weld saw education as a Christian domain where pupils were induced to save their souls rather than engage in profit-making or enterprise and thus avoiding any challenge to the status quo with regard to social structure. The rich man remained

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121 Weld to Earl Granville 25 April 1870, Western Australian State Archives, Perth CO 18/165.
in his castle whilst the less fortunate should be content with their position at the gate in expectation of a more egalitarian after life.

Now you would remedy this by “Education”. So would I, but my education would not mean teaching the mass of the people to read and write (good things in themselves) and a smattering of “ologies”, which is the very most the people as a mass can possibly be taught; but in civilising them and making them know that there is something higher than money and worldly advancement, making them good Christians with a knowledge of their duty to God and to the state as constituted by God, and a sense that the dignity and happiness of man is not to be measured by wealth and position, but by fulfilling duties, respecting superiors, equals and inferiors-as being placed in their respective positions by God-as being part of the order He has established-as well as being equal in His eyes-as being, if the worthily fulfil their duty this world from proper motives, all alike called to a reward in that world in which a poor beggar’s state may be greater than that of “Solomon in all his glory”.123

He then spelt out his educational prognosis for delivering this social mindset.

No secular education can properly do it-only faith can. It is quite true that my ideal the Christian Catholic ideal—is impossible at this moment. We must accept facts, and, accepting them honestly and loyally, work out the best honest compromise we can. But, bureaucratic secular education is to my mind not at all the best compromise. It handicaps the religion of the majority for the benefit of the doubters, the irreligious and the unbelievers—the minority, I hope.124

This prescriptive theocentric educational philosophy concurred with that contemporaneously promulgated by Catholic clergy identified as Ultramontane.125 It articulated the Ultramontane opposition to secularism, reiterated demands for a church free from state interference and advocated acceptance of a hierarchal social order which, although not exclusively an Ultramontane concept, underpinned its Rome-centred administrative orientation. Indeed, Pope Pius IX acknowledged Weld’s

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123 Weld to William Rolleston[Canterbury Superintendent], 10 July 1870, Graham, Fredrick Weld, p. 192.
124 Ibid
125 von Arx, Varieties of Ultramontanism, p. 4.
orthodoxy with contemporary Vatican perspectives the same year when in 1875 he conferred upon him the Knighthood of the Order of Saint Pius.\textsuperscript{126}

However, despite these affirmations of the undoubted influence of his religion on his political decision making, scholars who have focussed on Weld have made little attempt to identify the particular Catholicism in which Weld was formed.

Born in 1823 Weld experienced the Catholicism of the English gentry, the traditional Catholic culture in England since the Reformation. In contrast to Gibney’s Irish tenant and clerical Ultramontanist background Weld represented the tight-knit English Catholic aristocratic lineage of provincial England. The third son of Humphrey Weld of Chideock Manor and his wife Christina Maria, daughter of the sixth Baron Clifford of Chudleigh, the Weld’s family interests included large estates in the rolling Dorsetshire countryside in Southern England and were one of the foremost English Catholic families of the day. His uncle Thomas Weld of Lulworth Castle 1773-1837 became a priest following the untimely death of his wife and was the first English Cardinal appointed to the Roman Catholic Church (1830) since Philip Thomas Howard (1629-1694). His grandfather, also Thomas Weld (1750-1810), represented an important figure in the small English upper class provincial Catholic constituency and was prominent in the struggle for Catholic emancipation from the penal laws. In 1794 he settled a group of exiled Jesuits from France in the house and grounds of his Lancashire estate which was to subsequently become the prestigious Stonyhurst College.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{126} Graham, Fredrick Weld, p.192.

As a member of this group Weld came from a background of widely scattered aristocratic Catholic families who to a large degree had represented and maintained the Catholic Church in England over the past three hundred years. In fact as the primary eighteenth and early nineteenth century clerical patrons these families represented the core of lay authority within English Catholicism and gave it its English character.

But Weld was born into a church in transition. This transition marked the change from a provincially-based church dependent on the generosity of its small landed gentry constituency to an urban-based working class church. At another level, but at the same time, the authority of the English Catholic Church was relocating from its traditional regional landed gentry base to an urban-based episcopate. Nevertheless, in the years approaching Catholic Emancipation in 1829 English Catholicism retained many of its traditional features and represented a somewhat retiring institution. This timidity was clearly demonstrated by the Vicar Apostolic and Bishop of London, William Poynter, in 1821 when he advised that the Pope’s delegated authority in England was chiefly exercised in ‘appointing bishops and in giving them powers for the spiritual government of the Catholics in their respective Dioceses or Districts; in superintending the religious conduct of the Catholics; and in granting dispensations from the ecclesiastical impediments of matrimony when necessity requires.’

In contrast to the triumphalism that came to be associated with Ultramontanism these ‘Old English’ Catholic families presented a withdrawn form of Catholicism based on an English understanding of spirituality and liberty and an ‘antipathy to

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centralized authority'. Although representing a denominational sub-society barred under the provisions of the penal laws from public office, this upper class Catholic country gentry was ever anxious to dismiss the suggestion of anything less than exclusive political allegiance to the crown and its public institutions. They carefully negotiated the robust Protestant antipathy to Roman Catholic participation in English public life. The passing of a number of acts in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century effecting religious toleration and withdrawing many of the economic prohibitions on Catholics appeared to give credit this conformist political approach.

By the mid nineteenth-century, however, the English Catholic Church was undergoing a number of dynamics that invigorated the changing fortunes of English Catholicism. Increasing immigration from Ireland expanded the working-class stratum of the English Catholic constituency on the one hand, and on the other a number of conversions from the Church of England endowed the upper echelons of the English Catholic clergy with an intellectual elite that reinvigorated doctrinal debate and raised the public profile of English Catholicism. Yet The ‘Old English Catholic’ gentry, despite the accompanying decay in their power following the shift of focus from country to city, tended to retain a near seigneurial understanding of their obligations to the Catholic Church.

This English gentry Catholic background had little in common with Gibney or the majority of Irish immigrant families who composed the Catholic constituency of the Perth diocese. In contrast to Weld’s experience their Catholicism represented the

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religion of the disadvantaged Irish Catholic population. Moreover, Irish Ultramontanes such as Cullen viewed England as an infidel land and English Catholicism as somewhat tainted. As early as 1842 Cullen advised that English Protestants had ‘never heard of Christ, and scarcely knew there was a god … what happy effects of the Reformation’. He later advised the same correspondent that ‘Even the Catholics in this pagan land were influenced by this spiritual contagion, as was demonstrated by the fact that no more than one Catholic in ten ever attended mass’. 135 Indeed Weld, in common with his fellow Victorian English Catholic aristocrats, harboured deep misgivings about the true political affiliations and objectives of lower and middle class Irish Catholics, particularly as represented by radical leaders such as O’Connell. 136

Writing to Monsell, recently titled Lord Emily, in the wake of the Liberal defeat in the 1874 British elections Weld did not distinguish between Catholic or Protestant voters in his forthright declaration of his disappointment at the Irish electorate’s swing toward the Conservative party. However, his comments were especially intended for Catholics as the Anglican component of the Irish electorate could hardly be chastised for their lack of gratitude for reforms which, presumably, included the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland by the defeated Liberal party which had held office since 1868. Weld, however, maintained the diplomatic middle ground and whilst implicitly castigating the unthankful response from Irish Catholic voters he drew attention dimensions of Liberal Party policy which offended the Irish Catholic hierarchy. Weld viewed Catholic calls for a denominational University system on the

136 Edward Norman for example argued that Irish Catholics sought entry into a new world whilst English Catholics sought re-entry to the old. Norman, The English Catholic Church, p. 41.
one hand and Liberal support for the Italian nationalists as indicative of this ideological polarity.\textsuperscript{137}

But even in 1869 I thought that Ireland would never be bound to the Whigs because the lower classes hate the English and care nothing for any English party [and] because I felt sure that Mr. Gladstone would not be able to carry his party with him in doing justice to the Irish Catholics in the matter of education-the University question, [and] because a great proportion of his party are in favour of the revolutionary party on the continent and consequently anti-Catholic in politics.\textsuperscript{138}

But whereas Ultramontanists were deeply suspicious of political Liberalism, Weld had little difficulty in reconciling his religion with accepting a political post from a Liberal government. In short, Weld like his contemporaries within the English Catholic nobility maintained a respectable deference for domestic British politics and its representatives. Weld’s measured observations on English statecraft contrasted with the contemporary Irish Ultramontane position articulated by Cullen who, in a less measured outburst, described liberalism as a seedbed for ‘infidelity and revolution’.\textsuperscript{139}

This Irish Ultramontane perspective identified a close proximity between English politics and anti-Catholic Liberalism. In fact Cullen viewed support for the Risorgimento in Italy by individual English politicians such as Gladstone as evidence to support this perspective.\textsuperscript{140} For his part Gladstone laid responsibility for losing the Irish vote squarely on the shoulders of the Irish Catholic episcopate who had triggered his downfall by lobbying the Irish members of parliament to vote against his proposed Bill to introduce a publicly financed Irish University system.\textsuperscript{141}

\textsuperscript{137} Weld to Emily, 18 May 1874, Battye Library Perth, 1031A. Monsell received his Irish peerage in 1873.
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{139} Cullen to Kirby, 25 January 1875, cited in Desmond Bowen, \textit{Paul Cardinal Cullen and the Shaping of Modern Ireland}
\textsuperscript{140} Bowen, \textit{Paul Cardinal Cullen}, p. 199.
\textsuperscript{141} Norman, \textit{The English Catholic Church}, p. 310.
Cullen’s political and spiritual authority resided in Rome while Weld looked to Rome for spiritual leadership his authority resided in England as far as politics went at least. Weld’s ‘Old English’ Catholicism tempered the Roman focus of his religion as compared with Ultramontanists like Cullen or Gibney. For as Weld himself recorded he had little difficulty reconciling his Catholic religion with his admiration for all things English.

I have always recognised that there is a spiritual and temporal sphere, and with this special mission; that each should support the other as far as circumstances render it possible; that neither should invade the province of the other, but that the moral should nevertheless rule the political, and that the exposition of the moral law—though not the direction of matters in purely temporal exigencies—must rest with divinely constituted authority. … Moreover I was always an ardent admirer of the English character when seen at its best and I believe I have understood it as well as appreciated it. To this much my success in life is due. God made me an Englishman heart and soul; thus only could I approach the ideal which was ever before me, and thus only deal with my fellow countrymen.¹⁴²

In other words Weld believed that the British liberal state could accommodate his religion as well as his aristocratic status. This compromise position was by no means unique to Weld at that time and was facilitated by a more moderate interpretation of the Syllabus of Errors.¹⁴³ This was not the belief of Ultramontanism. On the contrary, Ultramontanists believed that the liberal state and the Catholic church were mutually antagonistic as indicated by Rome’s refusal to acknowledge any possible compromise suggested by liberal Catholics such as Montlambert.¹⁴⁴ Weld’s advocacy for the Catholic education crusade in Western Australia was to a greater degree inspired from his belief in religious equality rather than in any aspiration to Catholic ascendancy. Accordingly, he wished to acknowledge the Catholic

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.
contribution to the overall educational development crusade in Western Australia.

Significantly, this acknowledgement contravened trends already emerging in the Eastern Australian states. Commencing in South Australia in 1851 followed by Queensland in 1860, Victoria in 1862 and New South Wales in 1866 a succession of secular education acts opposed to allocating state support to denominational schools gradually replaced the preceding de-facto dual system arrangements with a unitary denominationally-mixed public school system for both boys and girls.\textsuperscript{145} This trend toward a mixed state system proceeded despite determined resistance and demands from the Catholic episcopate for a denominational school system. These demands became more robust with the appointment of a number of secular bishops directly from Ireland, many under Paul Cullen’s patronage, early in the second half of the nineteenth-century and the question of state support for denominational schools rapidly emerged as a primary ecclesiastical issue.\textsuperscript{146} Representing the second wave of Irish missionaries, this group of bishops leading the denominational education charge included James Quinn to Brisbane in 1861, James Murray and Matthew Quinn to Maitland (NSW) and Bathurst (NSW) respectively in 1865 and William Lanigan to Goulburn (NSW) in 1867.\textsuperscript{147} In addition to their secular status, this Irish-born and generally Rome-educated missionary hierarchy shared with their Irish counterparts a unifying suspicion of state-administered education.\textsuperscript{148} Reflecting their faithful

\textsuperscript{148} In contrast, many of the earlier generation of Irish bishops were members of religious communities. For example, in addition to the early English Benedictine influence Goold (Melbourne) was an Augustinian, and in Adelaide both Geoghegan and his successor Shield were members of the Franciscan Order.
adherence to the Ultramontane ideology ascendant in Ireland, under the Cullen administration, they all aspired to provide a network of Catholic schools as a bulwark against the rising tide of liberal secularism recently condemned by papal decree. Consequently, these bishops, animated by a clerical assertiveness that reflected the confidence of post-famine Irish Catholicism, aligned their combined ecclesiastical forces in a joint effort to pursue their educational goals and establish a Catholic school network qualifying for what they perceived as their fair share of the public education purse.

However, unlike their patron Cullen who, over time, succeeded in reshaping the denominationally-mixed state system in Ireland into a de-facto denominational framework the Australian bishops faced a more a more difficult proposition. In contrast to Ireland, the Catholic constituency of Australia represented a minority of the total Australian population and was less demographically defined along specific geographic borders. Nevertheless, as a party the ‘Irish bishops’, representing a formidable force within the Australian Catholic Church, were determined to push education to the front of the ecclesiastical agenda as far as church-state relations were concerned at least. Accordingly, education ranked as primary issue on the agenda of the second Provincial Council of Australian Bishops which they compelled their reluctant Metropolitan, Bede Polding, to convene in Melbourne in April 1869.

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150 Both acknowledged by von Arx as ‘leitmotif’ of nineteenth century Ultramontanism. von Arx, Varieties of Ultramontanism, p. 5. Pius IX refuted the right of the state to monopolise education in the Syllabus of Errors issued in 1864.


Having concentrated their combined deliberative efforts on the education issue
the eight assembled bishops emulated the earlier council of their Irish counterparts
who gathered at Thurles and devised the policy framework for Catholic education for
the remainder of the century. The seven decrees issued by the Melbourne council
accentuated the Ultramontane sympathies of their architects. Addressing the issue of
education, the bishops cautioned their flock on the dangers of denominationally-
mixed schooling and condemned the secular emphasis practiced within the state
educational system which, they alleged, relegated responsibility for religious
instruction to the home without considering parent’s ability to instruct their children.
The bishops declared that schools with a good blend of secular and religious
instruction were a more appropriate alternative. Reiterating the inductive
Ultramontane argument already articulated by their episcopal brethren in Europe, the
bishops alleged that state attempts to supplant denominational with confessionally
mixed secular schooling represented an invasion of human liberty. The bishops then
proceeded to demand a proportionate share of the government’s educational purse to
support a separate Catholic school system and to address recent allegations
concerning the comparatively poor standards obtaining in Catholic schools. The
council’s pastoral condemned the:

...evil of mixed schools, or of what comes nearly to the same thing, schools
in which religious teaching and discipline are withdrawn from the
guidance of the Church, it is so obvious, and is so gross an invasion of
common liberty of conscience, that it is difficult to believe how, under
such Government, as ours, genuine denominational education could have
been refused, if too many Catholics had not been lukewarm and
indifferent ... It is said that poor children for whom our primary schools
are intended may learn the specialties of their religion at home in their
families, or from the visits of their priest at the school, deny it at once,
positively and wholly. In the first place, Catholics have no separate
specialities in their religion; it is one living whole, and each part is in vital

153 Subsequent councils referred to and stated their adherence with the educational perspective
contained in the pastoral letter, described by Ronald Fogarty as the charter of Catholic education in
and mutual connection with the whole. Next, those who really know the homes in which the children come in many instances, know also that it is a mockery to expect in them religious training such as Catholic's account training. ... It is said that denominational schools have not attained in secular teaching the standard which ought to have been attained, the simple reply is, give us the means of obtaining any desirable standard, as you give them to others, and we will show at least equal results. ... And lastly it is said that a State cannot regard sect, we have to reply, that the public schools themselves are, in the most restricted sense of the word, sectarian; they offer to some all that is desired, and deny to others that which is accounted necessary.¹⁵⁴

As was the case with Irish synods following Thurles, subsequent Australian episcopal councils would restate their adherence to the Melbourne decrees. Thus the Australian bishops at the 1869 Melbourne council harmonised the educational policy of the Australian Catholic mission with the abstentious stand against state education taken by their mitred brethren in Ireland who, in turn, were increasingly influenced by the Ultramontanism that animated similar debate throughout Catholic Europe where opposition to state control over education and demands for a share of the public purse for Catholic schools had become a central tenet of Ultramontane ideology.¹⁵⁵ Thus, the 1871 Education Act represented a degree of success, albeit a limited one, for this ideology in Western Australia at least as far as Gibney was concerned.

The positive impact of the reintroduction of state support to the Catholic system in Western Australia became apparent in the years immediately following the passing of the 1871 Education Act. In contrast to the seven returned in 1870 the Catholic system had expanded to include schools located at eighteen different centres of population throughout the diocese by the end of 1875.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ The Pastoral letter of the Archbishop and Bishops of the Province, 1869, Copy Perth Archdiocesan Archives.
¹⁵⁵ von Arx, Varities of Ultramontanism, p. 6, states that research has shown that this opposition to state education manifested under Ultramontane influence throughout the metropolitan dioceses.
¹⁵⁶ Blue Books 1875, p. 39, Battye Library Perth, Q351.209941.
In Fremantle the Adelaide Street convent-school of the Josephite community had by this time secured its position within the Catholic education mission and included a free elementary school for girls, a mixed school for boys and girls under seven and an upper class school for young women. In order to accommodate pupils outside of its immediate catchment the school provided accommodation for primary and secondary level boarders as well as day pupils. Indicating the community’s ambitions to attract middle class enrolments the school offered in addition to the core subjects of reading, penmanship, spelling arithmetic, English and French grammar, tuition in the social graces including, music, art of speech, drawing, painting and fine needlework. Under the charge of Sister Emile the ladies school attracted a mainly non-Catholic clientele who aspired to become acquainted with the more delicate of the social graces deemed appropriate to their social calling within the upper echelons of colonial society.\footnote{Archives of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, Fremantle Convent.}

Reflecting their confidence in the future of their schools within the diocese, the Josephites also decided to branch out from their Fremantle base and in 1878 established a convent school in Albany. Originally the military outpost from which Robert Darcy had bemoaned the want of a priest, Albany had become an important settlement and port of call for ships on their voyage to the Eastern Australian colonies.\footnote{See Chapter 1, p. 1 of this thesis with regard to Mooney.} In addition to endowing the Catholic system with a competitive edge through providing a valuable and cost effective back-bone of capable administrators and competent teachers these convent schools were significant landmarks the Catholic landscape of Western Australia.

For his part Gibney, despite the notable success in his campaign to secure state assistance, maintained his Ultramontane ideological vigil on behalf of Catholic
education. Subsequent to his appointment as Vicar General to Griver in 1871 he continued to demand a more egalitarian system of state funding. His demands achieved a measure of success in 1874 when the Legislative Council increased the per capita grant to Assisted Schools to thirty five shillings. Catholic schools continued to benefit from state funds and by 1881 the grant allocated to Catholic schools totalled £1284.160

This success allowed Gibney to momentarily deflect his missionary energy in other directions. In 1874 he set up a printing press at the Subiaco Orphanage and established a Catholic newspaper, *The Western Australian Catholic Record*. In doing so Gibney emulated Cullen who had set up his own newspaper *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record* in Dublin a decade earlier in 1864. Cullen intended his newspaper to ‘foster closer relations between the Holy See and the Church in Ireland as well as raising the intellectual life of the Irish priests through the reading of approved scholarly writings’.161

Gibney expressed similar ambitions for his publication and the inaugural edition printed in July 1874 asserted that in addition to its role as a local correspondent the newspaper intended to keep its readers abreast of developments in Europe and thereby unify the diocese with its Roman head.

Some means for the diffusion of Catholic intelligence has long been a desideratum. *The West Australian Catholic Record* will endeavour, in a limited way, to supply the want. It will be its work, in the first instance to glean from the information afforded by European Catholic papers such facts as are of leading interest to our brethren in the old countries. The phases in the life of the Church, the progress it makes, the conflicts it sustains, the loses it suffers, the state of its august Head, and of those who

159 *W.A.C.R.*, 6 August 1874, p. 3, clmns. 2-4.
share with him the difficulties of its government, are matters of deep concerns to Catholics of countries even the most remote.\textsuperscript{162}

Gibney’s Ultramontane understanding of what constituted Catholic intelligence was clear in the serialising of an address by the Archbishop of Westminster, Henry Cardinal Manning, recently delivered to the Catholic Academy.\textsuperscript{163} An acknowledged Ultramontane, Manning had founded the Academy in 1863 to provide English Catholics with ‘intellectual defences against the modern age’.\textsuperscript{164} In his address, titled \textit{Caesarism and Ultramontanism}, Manning charted the historical struggle between the spiritual authority of the Christian Church and the civil authority of the state (Caesarism). In each historical epoch, Manning claimed, the civil power attempted to realise its historical ambition and extend its secular legislative power into the spiritual jurisdiction of the church. The contemporary tensions between the Liberal state and the Catholic Church represented, according to Manning, the most recent version of this power struggle between the sacred and the secular. In this struggle the state sought to ensure compliance by appropriating responsibility for and thereby controlling education. Manning explained that:

for the last three hundred years and especially in this century it is a world departing from Christianity which uses the civil powers for the oppression of the church. … Caesarism is to be found in all ages and countries, but the Caesarism of the nineteenth century has a character all of its own. … It by necessity excludes God, His sovereignty and his laws. The sole fountain of law is the human will, individual or collective. Caesar finds the law in himself and creates right an wrong, and just and unjust, the sacred and the profane. It has no statute book but human nature, and Caesar is the sole interpreter and expositor of the natural law. Therefore law morals politics and religion all come from him, and all depend upon him. The Sovereign Prince or State legislates, judges, executes by its own will and hand. This sovereign power creates everything: it fashions the political constitution; it delegates jurisdiction, revocable at its word, it suspends or measures out personal liberty; it controls domestic life; it

\textsuperscript{163} Holmes & Bickers, \textit{A Short History of the Catholic Church}, p. 224.
claims the children as its own; it educates them at its will, and after models and theories of its own.  

Manning proceeded to explain that this historical conflict between state and church flowed from the state’s inability to accept the primacy of the spiritual over the profane: of the church over the state. Manning drew attention to the divine paternity bestowed on the Catholic Church through the incarnation of the Son of God as Jesus Christ as its founder. This divine association *a priori* endowed the pope with infallibility in judgements of faith and therefore bestowed precedence on the Church as final arbitrator.

The greatest of Divine acts is the incarnation of God. ... but the political consequences of the Incarnation constitute the moral, social, domestic and civil life of man and of nations. ... There can be no Caesarism where Christ reigns. ..... The state may imprison the body and even take its life but it has no jurisdiction over the soul. By the coming of Christ into the world the kingdom of God was set up amongst the kingdom of men. ... He [The Son of God] divided the two powers spiritual and civil and gave them into different hands so that they could never again be united except in one person, Himself and His Vicar upon Earth. ... The presence of the Catholic Church among the civil powers of the world had changed the whole political order of mankind. It had established upon earth a legislature, a tribunal and an executive independent of all human authority. It has withdrawn from the reach of human laws the whole domain of faith and of conscience. ... This is the solution to the problem which the world cannot solve. Obedience to the Church is liberty; and it is liberty because the church cannot err or mislead either men or nations.  

Thus, Gibney, through the pages of his recently founded newspaper, acquainted his readership in the remote diocese of Perth in Western Australia with orthodox European Ultramontane perspectives. But Gibney also allowed the pages of his paper to savour this Ultramontane orientation with an Irish political seasoning and so, for example, the *Record* covered in detail the proceedings of a meeting called to celebrate

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the centenary of the birth of Daniel O'Connell including his speech as chairman of the convening committee.¹⁶⁷

The announcement in 1875 by Weld's successor, William Cleaver Francis Robinson (1875-1877), to the closing sitting of the Legislative Council that he intended, in response to representation from a number of members of the Legislative Council, to introduce a state-aided intermediate school for boys animated Gibney to extend his Ultramontane educational vigil beyond the elementary-school horizon.¹⁶⁸ Gibney vehemently opposed the proposed state-sponsored intermediate school. In December 1875 he amplified Catholic grievances by way of a resolution read to a meeting of concerned Catholics. He alleged that that the proposed school advocated a secularised curriculum, contravened Catholic directions on education and accordingly discriminated not only against the Catholic population but also against all Christian residents. The resolution proposed that:

the meeting having duly considered the paragraph in his excellency's the Governor's speech to the Legislative Council delivered on the 30th of November last in which his excellency has expressed his intention of introducing a bill which would have the effect of establishing higher education in the colony on strictly secular principles receive that declaration with the deepest regret because education on purely secular principles cannot be accepted by the Roman Catholic portion of this of this community, nor would it, in their opinion be acceptable to the majority of their brother colonists.¹⁶⁹

Gibney's allegations were not without foundation and the debate in the Legislative Council on the pedagogic focus of the proposed school specified its secular orientation. Moreover, a proposal to have all denominations represented on the governing board was defeated in the assembly.¹⁷⁰ The ensuing Catholic debate on

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¹⁶⁸ *W.A.C.R.*, 6-12-1875, p. 5, Clmn. 2.
¹⁶⁹ *W.A.C.R.*, 6 December 1875, p. 3 Clmn. 2.
¹⁷⁰ Western Australian Parliamentary Debates 1876, Battye Library, Perth, 328.9412.
the issue was again given an Irish context when a meeting convened the following January 1876 to receive a memorial objecting to the proposed college drew attention to the opposition articulated by the Catholic bishops of Ireland to secular-orientated state schooling. The memorial was subsequently forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies requesting that her Majesty withhold her royal assent to the bill.\footnote{\textit{W.A.C.R.}, 6 April 1878, p. 6, clmns., 1, 2.} Despite this formal opposition from the Catholic population the proposed public high school received the support of the British authorities and opened its doors in 1878 under the terms of the 1876 High School Act. But Gibney remained defiant and his response was immediate. He proceeded to organise the construction of an alternative Catholic intermediate school for boys and again pronounced the Irish influence by selecting 17 March 1878, St Patrick’s Day, as the date for laying the foundation stone on the selected Irwin Street site. In his address to the assembled faithful Gibney made no mention of the controversy surrounding the state school but rather presented the Catholic school as a symbol of religious endeavour and a light to guide the rising Catholic generation.

The necessity of a boy’s school has long been felt and we have undertaken to supply it now. We are neither numerous nor rich but we are full of courage in undertaking a good work like this, that is calculated to effect so much good. It is of course for the benefit of the little ones of whom we have charge and who will be taught in this building the useful knowledge which is necessary and that moral and religious knowledge which is indispensable. We therefore do trust that the work we have undertaken will succeed to the internal satisfaction of all those that are interested in the well being of the rising generation.\footnote{\textit{W.A.C.R.} 11-I-1876, p. 2, clm., 2, The escape of six Fenian prisoners aboard an American whaling ship from the colony in April 1876 momentarily distracted official attention away from the education debate.}

Completed at a cost of £1500 the school survived under the auspices of a number of schoolmasters until it came under the control of the Christian Brothers subsequent to their arrival in Perth in 1895. Two additional secondary schools also appeared on the
Perth horizon during this period. Founded in 1877 by the Anglican bishop Henry H. Parry the ‘Bishop’s Girls School’ was intended to offer secondary education to female pupils but was closed within a decade.\textsuperscript{173} Financed by the Church of England, The Fremantle Grammar School For Boys, opened in 1882 had a greater measure of success but was obliged to merge with the state secondary school system before the end of the decade.\textsuperscript{174}

By the last decades of the nineteenth century Gibney’s Ultramontanist resolve to provide an alternative Catholic education system obliged him to develop secondary education for boys as well as girls into the Western Australian Catholic school network. Consequently, by the 1880s the Western Australian Catholic school system was securely positioned to meet the demands of its expanding constituency and provided a legitimate alternative to all levels of state education available in the colony.\textsuperscript{175} This contrasted with the eastern colonies where Catholic school systems, bereft of government support, were struggling against their state-run counterparts.\textsuperscript{176}

Thus, by the concluding decades of the nineteenth-century the foundations of the Catholic school system were secure enough to carry the unprecedented demands that were brought to bear on its resources subsequent to the rapid population expansion that resulted from the opening up of new agricultural and pastoral regions. A number of improvements in the transport infrastructure accompanied this economic development. Following the construction of a central railway station in Perth in 1880, there was eastward expansion of the railway line connecting smaller outlying towns of Guildford and Chidlow with the main port at Fremantle and in 1884 a line running south connected the port town of Albany with Perth. After the discovery of gold

\textsuperscript{173} Mossenson, \emph{State Education}, p. 62.
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{175} \textit{W.A.C.R.,} 4\textit{September} 1884, p. 4, clmm. 2.
\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.
deposits in the Kimberley region in 1885 and the eastern goldfields in the 1890s the population of the colony rapidly increased from just under 30,000 in 1881 to 48,500 in 1890.\textsuperscript{177} The Catholic population witnessed a proportional numerical increase from 8,413 in 1881 to 12,602 in 1890.\textsuperscript{178}

During this period the Catholic education system also experienced significant expansion to meet growing demand. The Mercy community, having received eight new members from Ireland in 1883, fanned out from their Perth base and established convent schools in the more distant harbour towns of Geraldton to the north and Bunbury to the south. The following year in 1884 the community expanded their educational presence further east to the settlement at Toodyay, then called Newcastle.\textsuperscript{179} These towns marked the outer fringes of the main settlement catchment area in the colony. Reflecting their institutional success in the colony each of the new Mercy foundations included local girls who had joined the community subsequent to attending the Victoria Square school. These strategically placed community members included: Baptist Joseph Palmer (York), Stanislaus Morrisey (Geraldton) and Placida Hayes (Bunbury).

Again reflecting their growing reputation as educators the Josephites had also begun to attract local girls to join their ranks. In May 1885 Miss M.A. Stone became a postulant at the same ceremony held in Saint Patrick’s church Fremantle at which her sister Kate, having joined the order as a postulant two years earlier, undertook her final vows.\textsuperscript{180} The following year another local girl, Alice Townsend, joined the

\textsuperscript{177} F. K. Crowley, \textit{A Short History of Western Australia}, Melbourne: Macmillan & Co., 1961, pp. 46-54.
\textsuperscript{178} Figures compiled from statistics registered in \textit{Blue Books} 1800 and 1890, pp. 71 and 185, respectively Battye Library, Perth, 351.209941 and Western Australian Census of Population returns, Battye Library, Q312.941.
\textsuperscript{179} Ann Mc Lay, \textit{Women Out of their Sphere A History of the Sisters of Mercy in Western Australia}, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{180} \textit{W.A.C.R.}, 7 May 1885, p. 5, Clmn. 1.
Fremantle convent as a postulant. Thus, by the mid-1880s, the future of both the Mercy and Jopsephite foundations appeared secure within the expanding Catholic school network. Inspector’s reports consistently praised the schools run by both religious communities and the Mercy foundation benefited from the teacher training undergone by more recent arrivals from Ireland. In addition to these core community-administered convent schools in the foremost towns, the Catholic system also incorporated a number of less prominent elementary schools in more marginal settlements staffed by lay-teachers.

Gibney’s successes did not go unnoticed amongst his contemporaries in the Australian episcopate, and when he attended the first Australasian Plenary Council held in Sydney in 1885 as Griver’s theological adviser the assembled bishops agreed with the aging Griver’s request and appointed Gibney Coadjutor Bishop of Perth with right of succession. Demonstrating its continuing significance the issue of schooling maintained a central position on the agenda of the assembled Australian and New Zealand hierarchy. Reflecting the increasing Irish influence within the Australian mission the council was presided over by Patrick Francis Moran who had been appointed to the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Sydney directly from Ireland in 1884. Moran’s appointment as Cardinal in 1885 sealed the triangular Irish-Roman connection within the Australian mission. An acknowledged Ultramontane, Moran had served as secretary to Cullen, who was his uncle, before his appointment as Archbishop of Sydney and Primate of Australia in 1884. From the outset, Moran

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181 W.A.C.R., 3 June 1886, p. 4, Clmn. 1.
182 The Dublin community had extended their premises at Baggot Street by this time to include a teacher training college titled Sedes Sapiente. The foundation stone having been laid in 1877 this school became the first training college for female Catholic teachers in Ireland in 1883 Archives of the Mercy International Institute, Baggot St. Dublin, Education Box.
184 Moran to My Dear Lordship, (probably William Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin), 20 December 1885, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian Box.
viewed the Australian mission as an Irish sphere of operations. He did little to
disguise his Hibernian bias, having on one occasion described the Australian Catholic
mission in terms of the 'Irish spiritual empire'. Marking the predominant Irish
influence Moran also structured the proceedings of the council along the framework
of its Irish predecessor held at Maynooth in 1875. Moran advised Walsh 'You will be
glad, I am sure to learn that our Council was in every way a most happy one. All were
united, and the public Ceremonial was as solemn and imposing as we could devise.
My experience at the national synod at Maynooth made the arrangements for the
Congregation and Committees and Public Services a comparatively easy matter.'

Indicating their compliance with the Ultramontane educational position of non-
cooperation with the state the assembled bishops reiterated their opposition to
denominationally-mixed education as expressed at previous councils and, going a step
further, ordained that the establishment of Catholic schools should henceforth
constitute the primary focus of diocesan activity within the Australasian Catholic
mission. Schools before chapels became the dictum of the Australian Catholic
hierarchy and, thereafter, one building served as both church and school in many
dioceses. The council marked a watershed in the history of Australian Catholicism
and, in addition to codifying the framework of Australian Catholic education, the
assembled bishops also made it incumbent for present and future generations of
Australian Catholics to send their children to Catholic schools.

Having returned to Perth from the Irish-dominated Sydney council, Gibney

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186 Moran to Walsh, 20 December 1885, Dublin Archdiocesan Archives, Western Australian
Correspondence Box.
188 Edmund Campion, *Australian Catholics, The Contribution of Catholics to the Development of
Australian Society*, Ringwood (Vic.) 1987, p. 65. Livingston, *The Emergence of an Australian
Catholic Priesthood*, p. xiv-xv.
must have felt quite secure about his future as a member of the Irish-born missionary
clergy. His tenure as bishop-elect proved brief, for shortly after returning from
Sydney Griver succumbed to old age in 1886. Gibney’s succession brought the see of
Perth into the fold of the Australian Irish-born episcopate and conformed to what was
by then a pronounced trend that established all ranks of the Australian Catholic clergy
as predominantly Irish and the entire mission as practically an Irish province.189

Although already taking shape by mid-century, this trend became pronounced in
the years following a wave of episcopal appointments to newly established sees in
1865.190 This Irish ascendency was accentuated in the isolated Perth diocese when
Moran travelled to Western Australia to consecrate his countryman on 23 January
1887.191

Following his ascendency to the see of Perth Gibney ensured that the laity were
kept well focused on the Irish connection filtered through an Ultramontane lens. The
Catholic Record gave full coverage to Moran’s lengthy statement on the education
issue delivered during the symbolic foundation-stone laying ceremony for a new
school in New South Wales in October 1887. Rallying his audience Moran cited the
enactments of ancient church councils which placed the whole issue in what was
increasingly becoming the customary Irish context. In doing so Moran accentuated the
historical association between Irish missionaries and the spread of Christian learning
throughout their homeland and Europe.

that religious schools should be erected in every town and village’ and
that gratuitous instruction should be imparted to all children. So too in the
Acts of the third General Council of Lateran we read the golden words

189 Moran, History of the Catholic Church, p. 144.
    (ed.), Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1971, p. 36. MacLay places the origins of this dominance as far
    back as 1851 when MacEncroe recommended that Rome appoint Irish bishops to the Australian
    colonies. McLay, James Quinn, p. 103.
The Church of God is bound as a pious mother, to provide that every
opportunity for learning should be afforded to the poor...
In the ages of faith when the hills and valleys of Ireland were lit up by the
sunshine of their blessings which her apostle had brought to her, piety,
science, and charity went hand in hand, and her schools won for her the
first place among the nations of Europe in zeal for education and
learning.... So many were the scholars and saints who went forth to the
Continent with their honeyed store that they were compared to swarms of
bees quitting their present hive...\textsuperscript{192}

Having warmed up his undoubtedly Irish audience with this peppering of
nostalgia he then cut to the chase and reiterated the Ultramontane position when
he condemned not only secularism but also latitudinarianism by emphasising
inadequacy of uncertain definitional parameters.

But some may ask, why it is that we do not avail of the many educational
opportunities which the public schools present? Far be it from us to speak
disparagingly of these schools, or to underrate their efficiency. So far as
they go, we prize them, and it is our whole endeavour to remove from
them the defects which their best friends find in them. But we do not avail
ourselves of those schools for the reason that we cannot conscientiously
approve of the divorce of education from religion which underlines their
system, nor can we consent that our children shall grow up uninstructed in
the truths of divine faith, and in deference to those blessings which are
their priceless inheritance. (Cheers) there are some men that tell us that
our Public schools are religious schools; and, indeed in the present state of
irreligious confusion that prevails outside of the Catholic fold we may
admit that in a certain sense they may have their religious standard. The
great difficulty, however, is to define in what that religion consists.
Atheists now-a-days claim a religion. The Agnostics boost of their
enlightened religious tenets; but their religion consists in denying the
existence of God and rejecting all religion.\textsuperscript{193}

In Perth, however, Gibney was about to experience a less monolithic Catholic
approach. Prepared to leave no stone unturned in his advocacy for Catholic education
he was determined to make education a central issue in the political debate
surrounding the forthcoming Legislative Council elections. In doing so Gibney sought
to persuade the Catholic constituency to vote for the candidates most sympathetic to

\textsuperscript{192} \textit{W.A.C.R.}, 10 November 1887, p. 7, clmn. 1-2.
\textsuperscript{193} \textit{Ibid.}
Catholic educational demands. However, his attempt to procure support from Bishop Salvado in New Norcia in favour of the preferred candidate met with little success, which highlighted the contrasting priorities that had begun to emerge within the Western Australian Catholic mission. Salvado declined Gibney’s representations and instead elected to support a candidate sympathetic to the Benedictine community’s pastoral endeavours. This episcopal cleavage was not a result of a wish to insulate the community against the taint of political interference but had a more practical and expedient economic basis. Salvado was not adverse to seeking political patronage on behalf of the Benedictine settlement at New Norcia, which, by that time, included a farming enterprise based on a 25,000 acre lease making it one of the most significant farming enterprises in Western Australia. Indeed, in requesting his assistance to register a land claim in 1874 Salvado advised his agent and political ally, George Shenton that he did not know when he would ‘quit buying land’ as he could not help it. The same year forty horses and fourteen ploughs were engaged in seeding at New Norcia. Clearly by this time Salvado had decided to set New Norcia on a course independent of the Perth diocesan landscape. His commitment to developing a large commercial farming enterprise restricted his efforts on behalf of the Catholic mission in Western Australia and obliged him to place responsibility for the Catholic education crusade squarely on the Ultramontane shoulders of his episcopal contemporary in Perth.

For his part and in contrast Gibney viewed the development of a Catholic school network as his primary objective. The laying of the foundation stone for a convent school at Greenough as part of his expansion of the Catholic school system northwards

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November 1889 provided such an opportunity. The ceremony conducted with maximum pomp including the laying on of a special train from Geraldton and presentation of a silver trowel by the local Catholic Young Men’s Society provided an opportunity for Gibney to publicly declare his absolute adherence to the ‘schools before chapels’ pronouncement of the Sydney council. Echoing the council, he outlined his educational plans to his assembled audience and declared the establishment of schools a diocesan priority. Gibney threw the full majesty of his office behind Ultramontane orthodoxy and alerted his audience to an impending danger for future generations of Catholics if obliged to attend government schools. He reiterated Catholic objections to state schools by accentuating the necessity for moral as well as an intellectual instruction.

Believe me when I say my love for the children, my anxiety for the future well being of the rising generation, and my consequent desire to see facilities provided for giving them suitable education has led me to make the resolve, that I will not allow a Catholic church to be erected where a school house is needed. I would far rather give the children a sound Catholic education such as the nuns are able to impart and do impart to the children than anything in my power to bestow.  

Indicating a sensitivity to the Catholic minority position within the state and anticipating sectarian based objections he advised that the new school would advantage those outside as well as inside the Catholic church as no child would be excluded from the proposed school on either religious or economic grounds. He then praised the work of the religious communities and advised that their members were divinely motivated to teach rather than for pecuniary reward. ‘The great motive which actuates them is not a money making one. They do their work for the love of it and the love of God’.  

195 Salvado to Shenton, 7 March 1874 and 16 May 1874, Battye Library, Perth, Acc. 354A.
196 W.A.C.R., 21 November 1889, p. 8 clmns. 8 and 9.
197 Ibid.
Yet, despite this rhetoric Gibney’s strict Ultramontane adherence to the ecclesiastical authority of his office stamped his administration. This adherence to an exalted, centralised episcopal authority resulted in a negative outcome for at least one of the religious communities that he invited to the diocese to assist in his educational crusade. Subsequent to his consecration in 1887 Gibney successfully approached the Superior General of the Australian-founded Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart community, Mother Bernard Walsh, to establish a foundation in Western Australia. As a result four members of the community, Sisters Ursula Tynan, Mechtilde McNamara, Irene Ryan and Camilla Doran, arrived to set up a foundation in the Perth diocese in October 1887. The Catholic Record marked the occasion of their arrival in Perth by acclaiming the institute’s work in isolated country schools throughout the eastern dioceses.

Changes in the demography of the Catholic population in the diocese, and notification from the resident schoolteacher at Northampton, Mrs McAuliffe, of her intended resignation, advised Gibney, who was considering a new diocesan strategy for developing the Catholic school network, to allocate the new arrivals to Northampton. Located about five hundred kilometres north of Perth in the Victoria Plains district, Northampton was one of a number of smaller settlements surrounding the main port town of Geraldton. Having secured accommodation in a rented house the sisters took charge of the school which was attended by pupils from non-Catholic as well as Catholic backgrounds. Reflecting its flourishing popularity the school had enrolled eighty-seven children by 1888.

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200 W.A.C.R., 22 December 1887, p. 3, clmn. 1.
201 W.A.C.R., 30 August, 1888, p. 6 Clmn. 1.
The same year Gibney, determined to execute the schools before chapels policy promulgated by the 1885 plenary council, embarked on a reinvigorated expansionist educational policy and divided the diocese into regional catchments which he allotted to each congregation. Accordingly, he requested the Josephite foundation at Northampton to extended its mission, into Geraldton to administer and staff the school attached to the Star of the Sea convent already established there by the Mercy community who, in accord with Gibney’s new sphere of operations strategy, returned to their mother house at Perth. Two lay apprentice teachers, Harriet Agnes Postans and Kate Tuohy, who had been pupils at the school augmented the Josephite staff in Geraldton which was under Ursula Tynan’s charge. The following year two additional sisters arrived from Adelaide to assist the already overstretched foundation in Geraldton. Germaine Scanlon, who arrived in February 1889, subsequently took charge of the Geraldton school relieving Tynan to supervise Postans and Tuohy who had decided to join the community as novices. In addition to stretching their resources the Geraldton assignment also obliged the sisters to depart from established custom and run the fee paying school established as part of the Mercy ‘Star of the Sea’ convent-school enterprise.

Despite their commitment, however, the institute’s centralised administrative structure was about to embroil the foundation in a divisive ecclesiastical dispute with Gibney. Subsequent to their arrival Gibney decided to reconstruct the foundation as a local diocesan community. On the surface at least Gibney presented his planned change as little more than a strategy to establish a local novitiate and thereby attract local girls to join as novices. Anticipating a favourable response to his plan from the

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203 W.A.C.R., 11 October 1888, p.3, clmn. 2.
204 Although they took over the running of an established upper class school, technically they did not breach their own regulations aimed at educating the poor as they had not established it.
institute's General Chapter which convened in December 1889 Gibney did not push the issue. But, contrary to Gibney's expectations and encouraged by Rome's recent decision in favour of their centralised structure, the chapter decided against Gibney's proposal for the immediate future. Dismayed at this outcome Gibney arbitrarily informed the local foundation that they were no longer affiliated to the mother-house whereupon their Superior appealed to Moran's metropolitan authority. In response Moran advised Gibney that he was obliged to follow the direction from Rome and that his episcopal power to erect a diocesan congregation did not extend to compelling the members of an already established religious community to transfer to the new foundation. Moran directed Gibney that:

Your Lordship has, of course, authority to erect any diocesan institute that you may deem useful in the interests of religion, but the Sisters of Saint Joseph can no more take part in it than the Sisters of Charity or any other approved sisters. Even though the sisters, when asked by your Lordship, may have said that they would remain in the Diocesan Congregation, you will easily understand that such a promise has no force. The sisters erred in making it and they would err still in carrying it into effect.

In short, the sisters were at liberty to choose between remaining in Perth and becoming part of a diocesan-governed foundation or returning to their mother house in Sydney and remaining within the fold of the original founding community. When Gibney proceeded to exercise his decentralising mandate and establish a diocesan novitiate all but one of the sisters, Ursula Tynan, and the two novices, Postans and Tuohy, opted to leave the diocese. Gibney made little attempt to conceal his exasperation at this apparent indifference to his diocesan jurisdiction, and he was uncompromising when he advised Moran that he presumed that 'I will be

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205 Moran to Gibney, 3 February 1890, Perth Archdiocesan Archives, Gibney Letter Box  
206 Moran to Gibney, 3 February 1890, Perth Archdiocesan Archives, Gibney Letter Box.  
credited with knowing my own mind better than anyone else would know it’. He further advised Moran that although he waited ‘patiently for an answer’ the General Chapter put off his request for a diocesan novitiate indefinitely. His response to this was arbitrary as he explained in his letter, ‘My time for action had come and then I lost no time’. Describing the foundation’s decision to leave the diocese Gibney castigated the ‘offending’ members as selfish and foolish virgins and haughtily maintained the majesty of his office by alluding to his own forbearance in the matter despite the apparent affront to his episcopal jurisdiction.

The five foolish virgins – there are five of them returning to the Mother House – and have used their liberty to return with a vengeance. They have not showed the smallest regard for my convenience. And only the good Sisters of Mercy were willing to take their place in the abandoned schools I would teach them a sharp but useful lesson. I would make them act at least as becomingly as seculars would and give me due notice. Although it is as clear as light to me that I am within my rights in the action I have taken in this matter and I neither retract or regret anything I have done, yet should your eminence still think it your duty to acquaint propaganda thereof, I unreservedly submit to whatever propaganda may decide in this as in all other matters affecting my diocese.

In defence of his remaining member of the institute, Ursula Tynan, who was Irish born and the niece of the bishop of Dublin, Gibney advised Moran that her decision to stay had to be correct as she best served God’s calling when ‘she did not unite with the mother house and had kept her disposition unfettered so as to serve the diocese in the manner God’s providence would dispose’.

Presumably, Gibney acknowledged his role in shaping this providence. Tynan appeared to have been less secure in her decision than Gibney’s letter suggested and

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208 Gibney to Moran 24 February 1890, Perth Diocesan Archives, Gibney Letter Box.
some years later she advised Gibney’s Vicar General, Anselm Bourke, that she was ‘depressed and felt like running away’.\textsuperscript{210}

With the foundation numerically depleted Gibney’s sphere of operations strategy was no longer viable and Tynan and the two novices returned responsibility for the Geraldton school to the Mercy community in March 1890 and curtailed their work to the original school in Northampton.\textsuperscript{211} Gibney proclaimed his episcopal jurisdiction over the little foundation (then known as Black Josephites in reference to their black rather than brown garb of the Adelaide primogenitor institute) the following year when he officiated over the profession of Tuohy and Postans.\textsuperscript{212}

But this was not merely a storm in the Perth diocesan teacup and sprang from more than local diocesan or personality problems. It represented the local manifestation of an ongoing tension between the Josephite community and the Australian episcopate revolving around the issue of episcopal jurisdiction that had ecclesiastical connotations far beyond Australian borders.

Founded by a local schoolteacher of Scottish descent, Mary MacKillop, and an English missionary priest, Tenison Woods, in the town of Penola in South Australia in 1866 the Institute of Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart was primarily a response to the educational and economic conditions pertaining throughout rural Australia at that time.\textsuperscript{213} Through providing staff and administration for schools in the poorest and most isolated settlements the founders intended the new institute to fill a gap at the bottom rung of the then emerging Catholic school network. This was to provide and staff schools throughout the patchwork of small settlements in rural

\textsuperscript{210} Foale, \textit{The Josephites Go West}, p. 56.
\textsuperscript{211} \textit{W.A.C.R.}, 30 January 1890, p. 8, clmn. 1.
\textsuperscript{212} Although the Perth community retained the Josephite title the black dress distinguished the diocesan community from the brown dress worn by the parent institute which was by then colloquially known as the Brown Josephites
Australia. However, tensions concerning ecclesiastical jurisdiction over diocesan foundations rapidly emerged and became an enduring problem.

From the outset, both Woods and MacKillop’s determination to tailor their institute to complement the social, economic and demographic conditions prevailing within the contemporary colonial society from which it emerged bestowed the new community with its own communal culture and identity. Accordingly the community brought its own colonial influence to the ‘wide ranging spectrum of charismatic, spiritual and structural cultural traditions which had already been transported from Europe to form the heritage of religious women who worked in nineteenth-century Australia’. However, the institute’s insistence on a centralised structure proved controversial. To Gibney and his contemporaries amongst the new wave of Ultramontane influenced Irish born bishops it appeared to undermine the diocesan authority of their episcopal office and was therefore viewed as dangerous.

Animated by his recollections of a community of Catholic women encountered during his unfinished formation at a Marist seminary in France two years prior his arrival in Australia in 1855, Woods, in drawing up a rule for the institute, insisted that the members reflect as closely as possible the poverty and humility of their constituency. Although it has been suggested that the new institute was modelled on the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Puy, Woods’s descriptions of the prototype community, however, resembled to the life style and work of the beates, a group of non-cloistered unprofessed pious women possessing only rudimentary learning who acted as adjuncts to religious communities and ventured, often in couples, into the countryside to

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214 Ibid., p. 292.
proselytise and teach the children of the French peasantry.\textsuperscript{217} Woods

later recalled that there was no ‘fine ladyism’ among those French sisters. They did not have grand convents or elaborate schools but lived uncomplicated lives in country areas teaching the catechism and simple skills to peasant girls.\textsuperscript{218} In pursuing their adherence to a strict form of Franciscan style poverty Josephite members were expected to live frugally and support themselves by whatever means available, including begging for alms when necessary. The provision of dowries by prospective members, a central mechanism in financing Mercy and other convents, was not a prerequisite for entry to the Josephite institution. Reflecting a more egalitarian social composition the rule of the institute forbade choir and lay divisions between members, and all aspirants, regardless of social position or former education, were admitted on an equal basis. Indeed MacKillop advised that the more accomplished entrants should deliberately strive to ‘make a sacrifice of any taste and forget any knowledge they might have got’.\textsuperscript{219} In contrast to many preceding European institutes, MacKillop forbade house servants and all members, regardless of previous social position, shared in menial and housekeeping tasks. Similarly, reflecting its egalitarian culture the Josephite institute, in contrast to the designation ‘Reverend Mother’ or ‘Sister Superior’ used by other religious communities, applied the less authoritarian title ‘Little Mother’ to its central administrator. Again, consisting of as little as two members living in humble accommodation, many of the early branch convents contrasted with the public perception of conventual life. In Ireland, for example, at that time, convents were large enough to house an average population of fifteen sisters and layout design included a parlour for receiving members of the public.\textsuperscript{220} The Perth Mercy convent also echoed this tradition and although initially a humble cottage,

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{218} Paul Gardiner, \textit{An Extraordinary Australian Mary MacKillop}; p. 43.
\textsuperscript{219} Foale, \textit{The Josephites Go West}, p. 83.
\textsuperscript{220} C. Clear, \textit{Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland}, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan 1987, p.73.
\end{footnotesize}
within a decade it had become a comparatively significant structure in the small pioneering settlement. In short, in their attempts to establish a new religious community more finely tuned to the practical exigencies of its hinterland the Australian bush MacKillop and Woods wilfully attempted to move away from the cultural and administrative confines of the more traditional European foundations.

So the Josephite administrative structure contrasted with the more traditional metropolitan communities already represented in the Australian colonies. For example, compared with the Mercy network of independent convents each containing its own novitiate, the Josephites, in order to instil and maintain a sense of community within its membership, adopted a centralised administrative structure that connected the future network of convents to a central or Mother House under the direction of a Superior General. A command chain of local and provincial superiors charged with administering individual branch and convent clusters maintained the centralised structure.\textsuperscript{221} The centralised novitiate system obliged all new members to undertake their formation in the motherhouse and thereby reinforced the central connection.

Having initially encountered scepticism from both lay and clerical elements within the Catholic Church, the new institute soon proved worthy of their declared calling to educate the poor. The sisters teaching in the inaugural Cathedral Hall School established by the institute in Adelaide in 1867 rapidly gained widespread respect for both their management skills and teaching techniques.\textsuperscript{222} The Hall became a model or training school for all subsequent schools established by the institute in the diocese.\textsuperscript{223} In compliance with pedagogic practices current at that time, the Josephite

\textsuperscript{221} Foale, ‘The Sisters of Saint Joseph 1866-1893’, p. 132
\textsuperscript{222} Foale, \textit{The Josephites Go West}, p. 64
\textsuperscript{223} The first school was established in 1867 at Yankalilla about 75 kilometres from Adelaide.
community enlisted the monitory method of classroom instruction as a means of both supplementing staff and training future teachers. All schools practiced rote teaching or learning through repetition. By 1870 the institute had 127 members and administered thirty-four schools throughout South Australia.

Reflecting a pragmatism born of familiarity with local colonial conditions and the French prototype community the founders did not aspire beyond providing a basic elementary education to the poor. Unlike immigrant foundations advanced education for the more privileged was not a consideration, and rather than promote social mobility they aimed to inculcate religious values and enable prospective students to obtain positions commensurate with their social and economic backgrounds. Accordingly, basic proficiency in reading, writing and arithmetic in addition to religious instruction became the educational benchmark of the institute’s educational aims. Advanced instruction, when available, was limited to introductory book-keeping for senior boys and needlework for senior girls.

The institute earned the respect of the local Adelaide community and attracted praise from a number of prominent people not least, Frederick Weld, the governor elect of Western Australia who visited Adelaide in 1869 on his way to Perth. Weld advised the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Cardinal Alessandro Barnabo, of his appreciation of the piety and work of the institute. In his letter Weld was unreserved in his support and advised Barnabo that he had little doubt but that the Josephites would in time take their place amongst the great religious communities of the Catholic Church.

At Adelaide I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Bishop Sheil. ...I was struck forcibly with the holy poverty, devoutness and the real hard work done by the nuns of St. Joseph

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224 Ibid., p. 89.
225 Gardiner, An Extraordinary Australian, Mary MacKillop, p. 97.
and surprised at the number of persons who join an order which appears to me to recall all one has read in the saints' lives of the commencement of those great institutions which have done so much for the church. I assure your Eminence that I expect much from this humble beginning.227

But departure from established customs unsettled a number of diocesan clergy, and the institution's unconventional approach, including the practice of begging, eventually attracted episcopal censure. In Adelaide, in response to complaints from his diocesan clergy, the local bishop, Laurence B. Sheil, attempted to revise the rule and regulations of the institute and bring it into conformity with the more traditional community structures and practices. The Mercy community, with its diocesan structure under the control of the local bishop, appeared to have been the more acceptable model. When MacKillop refused to accede to his reformist proposals Sheil, much to the annoyance of the diocesan laity, attempted to suppress the institute. This resulted in the appointment of a formal investigation into the institute. Informed of the growing disquiet amongst the laity Rome appointed the bishop of Hobart, Daniel Murphy, to arbitrate between the protagonists. Anxious to conclude the situation, the metropolitan bishop, Polding, advised Murphy to commence his investigation as promptly as possible and appointed the bishop of Bathurst, Matthew Quinn, to assist. The enquiry conducted throughout June 1872 gave its tacit approval to the institute. Yet, despite the suitability of the institute's regulations allowing for small two-member foundations to establish bush schools in the Australian outback, the Josephites continued to attract censure from individual bishops. In particular the institute's centralised administrative structure, remained a contentious issue within the ranks of the Australian episcopate, and many bishops of Irish origin felt the diocesan structure governing the more familiar communities like the Mercy sisters less

challenging to their diocesan authority. The Quinn brothers James and Matthew, the respective bishops of Brisbane and Bathurst, had successfully arranged for foundations in their dioceses in the early 1870s. However, both of these Irish appointed bishops subsequently took issue with the centralised administrative rules governing the institute. Within four years of their arrival in Bathurst, however, Matthew Quinn, after several exchanges over diocesan jurisdiction, advised the members of the foundation established in ‘his diocese’ that those who wished to remain associated with the centralised system were free to leave and those who wished to remain would become part of his diocesan community. As a result the first break occurred within the institute when one of the sisters decided to remain under diocesan regulations, the second break was destined to occur in Western Australia under the episcopate of Matthew Gibney. Meanwhile in Brisbane Quinn’s brother James, also challenged the institute’s central administrative regulations. Unlike Matthew, however, he did not succeed in his attempts to establish his own diocesan version of the institute and by 1880 all of the Josephite schools in Brisbane were closed. Ecclesiastical conflict continued and the ‘decidedly Irish’ bishop of Adelaide, Christopher Reynolds eventually gave the community an ultimatum to depart the diocese or subject itself to his authority.

The Australian episcopate viewed the issue of the Josephite regulations sufficiently acute as to require their protracted consideration at the 1885 Plenary Council. In addition to prioritising the Catholic educational agenda the bishops in council emphasised the necessity for clerical discipline and conformity with

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228 McLay, James Quinn, p. 216.
229 Foaie, ‘The Sisters of Saint Joseph 1866-1893’, 120
231 McLay, James Quinn, p. 216.

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centralised authority.\textsuperscript{233} As was the case with education this represented an adoption of the agenda set by their Irish episcopal brethren at the synod of Thurles in 1850 and restated at Maynooth in 1875.\textsuperscript{234} Debate on the status of the foundation conducted during the Australian Plenary Council resulted in a fourteen majority of the eighteen assembled bishops voting in favour of reconstituting the community under diocesan governance.\textsuperscript{235} Rome, however, in 1887, having received representations from the institute, declined to ratify the recommendation of the Australian Council held two years earlier. Far from signalling any relaxation of its strict adherence to a hierarchical structure of centralised government, this ruling, under the papacy of Leo XIII (1878-1903), who had succeeded as Pope on the death of Pius IX in February 1878, paradoxically, established that dictum by coercively exercising its authority over the Australian episcopate.\textsuperscript{236} The deliberating council, the Rome-based Society for the Propagation of the Faith, did allow some compromise to the Australian episcopate and advised Moran that although the central administrative structure of the community was to remain each bishop was empowered if he so wished to erect already established Josephite foundations as diocesan.\textsuperscript{237} Any sister unwilling to become part of the diocesan community could return to the mother house. Advised of the decree by Moran the majority of the Australasian bishops, with the exceptions of the sees of Armadale, Auckland, Port Augusta and Wellington, exercised their canonical option to restructure existing Josephite foundations within their jurisdictions as diocesan and

\textsuperscript{233} Livingston, The Emergence of An Australian Catholic Priesthood, p. 108
\textsuperscript{234} See p.10 above.
\textsuperscript{235} Foale, 'The Sisters of Saint Joseph 1866-1893', p. 386.
\textsuperscript{236} R. Aubert, J. Beckman, P.J. Corish, History of the Church, vol, VIII, Hubert Jedin (Ed.), London: Burns and Oats, 1981, p. 13, suggested that Rome, against the wishes of diocesan bishops, encouraged congregations to establish a centralised administration in direct submission to the authorities at Rome.
\textsuperscript{237} Lesley O'Brien, The Unveiling of Mary MacKillop, North Blackburry, (Vic.), Collins Dove, 1994, p. 204
thereby under the control of their office.\textsuperscript{238} However, presented with this alternative many members opted to returned to Adelaide and the administration of the institute remained controversially centralised under the direction of an appointed superior but subject only to papal direction.

This contrasted with the more submissive culture of female religious arriving from Ireland to join existing or to establish new foundations during the second half of the nineteenth century. With few exceptions, these women under the influence of Ultramontanism came to perceive bishops unquestionably as their ecclesiastical superiors.\textsuperscript{239} The ascendancy of Ultramontanism animated the episcopate to exercise their authority on the one hand and heralded in a culture of acquiescence amongst religious communities on the other. This deference to episcopal authority was certainly inculcated in religious training for the priesthood during the second half of the century.\textsuperscript{240} For just as discipline was tightened in seminaries with the aim of producing more docile and disciplined priests, so too bishops tightened their control over convents.

This was certainly the case in Ireland as evinced by the unquestioned acceptance of a number of restrictive directives by individual bishops to the members of foundations within their diocese. The universality of episcopal censure within Irish diocese was made abundantly clear in 1864 when a majority of bishops throughout Ireland forbade any representation from convents within their jurisdiction to answer a call from the Mercy convent in Limerick for attendance at a forum to discuss the production of a new guide book to clear up a number of ambiguities that had arisen.\textsuperscript{241}

\textsuperscript{240} Corish, The Irish Catholic Experience a Historical Survey, p. 230.
\textsuperscript{241} Clear, Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland, pp. 56-58.
There are also a number of individual cases where bishops directly changed the regulations regarding the administration of local convents. For example, Bishop O’Dwyer of Limerick ordained in 1895 without prolonged consultation that the sister in charge of Mercy branch convents should be alternated every six years and moved the novitiate from one convent to another.\textsuperscript{242} The same bishop in 1888 had extracted a reluctant apology from the Superior of a new foundation of the Little Company of Mary who dared challenge his directions.\textsuperscript{243} Indicating some degree of variation in Community deference to episcopal dictates this apology was elicited through the intervention of the Superior of the local Mercy foundation. This deference contrasted with the earlier generation of nuns like Frayne who, as has been pointed out, were not afraid to stand up to bishops. However, the transition within Irish Catholicism associated with the Ultramontane campaign of Paul Cullen demanded conformity.

In Ireland the growth and entrenchment of modern socially active female religious congregations coincided with the consolidation of central authority within the church as a whole and also with the growing cohesion and effectiveness of the Irish Catholic hierarchy as a body. Nuns who carried out socially-oriented work systematically and effectively sometimes going outside their convents to do it, were a novelty, and a phenomenon which was perhaps far better understood by the bishops and priests of the pre-famine period who were personally familiar with developments in the religious life on the continent, particularly in France, than it was by the later generation of secular clergy and bishops who need not necessarily have had that experience. The particularly strong male domination in the modernising Ireland of the nineteenth century reinforced the already considerable authority and influence of an emergent hierarchy with Ultramontane tendencies.\textsuperscript{244}

Representing third and fourth waves of Australian missionaries these later arrivals were therefore less willing than their pioneering predecessors such as Ursula

\textsuperscript{242} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{244} Ibid., p. 68.
Frayne in the first half of the nineteenth century ‘to stand up to bishops’. Accordingly, the independent spirit exhibited by the Josephite community was more reminiscent of the pioneering foundations from Europe and Ireland who, unlike the more recent arrivals, were not products of the highly authoritarian Catholicism associated with the rise of Ultramontanism.

But Gibney, like his Irish contemporaries within the Australian episcopate, failed to acknowledge this. He failed to recognise that he inserted a new community culture into the Perth dioceses that contrasted in a number of ways with the Mercy and Saint Joseph of the Apparition foundations already present. This culture was born from a perceived need to respond to the unique needs of the Australian outback. Thus it incorporated elements that accorded the new institute a mobility and independence commensurate with its perceived mission to set up small uncomplicated schools to educate the youth of rural Australia. Accordingly, in addition to its government structure the educational aims of the Josephites founded specifically to educate the poor heightened the cultural contrast with the more traditional religious foundations from Ireland who in the Australian missionary context had become increasingly identified with providing schooling for the upper classes.

The years between 1860 and 1890 marked a pivotal period in the history of Catholic education in Western Australia. From his arrival in 1863 as a missionary priest Matthew Gibney, with the blessing of the diocesan administrator later Bishop Martin Gruve, mounted an unrelenting campaign against secular orientated state education and demanded a share of the annual state educational budget for the still emerging Catholic school system. In doing so, Gibney personified the Ultramontane

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246 Fogarty, *Catholic Education*, p. 293.
ideological perspective then prevalent within metropolitan Catholicism in which he had been formed. This perspective was introduced and became ascendant within the Irish Catholic Church during the second half of the nineteenth century under the influential administration of papal legate, bishop and later Cardinal Paul Cullen. Under Cullen’s uncompromisingly rigid Ultramontane stewardship the Irish Catholic Church underwent a structural and devotional revolution that ‘Romanised’ the spirit and structure of Irish Catholicism. Henceforth, the government of the Irish Catholic church became centralised with all roads leading to Rome through an authoritarian network of suffragan and metropolitan bishops. The ideological dimension of this Ultramontane Catholic perspective set the hierarchy on a crash course with the state sponsored Irish National Education system. Alleging that public schooling represented little more than an attempt by a secular state to undermine Catholic teaching, Cullen and the Irish hierarchy succeeded in transforming the National School system into a de facto elementary denominational school network. With the appointment of a number of bishops from Ireland to newly created Australian dioceses during the early decades of the second half of the nineteenth century state support for Catholic schools also became a primary ecclesiastical issue. In Perth, Gibney, encouraged by demands for public support for the Catholic system from the eight bishops assembled at the second provincial council of Australian bishops held in Melbourne in April 1869, led an unrelenting campaign for the allocation of state funding for Catholic schools. Henceforth Gibney’s name became synonymous with the Western Australian Catholic school system. Gibney’s campaign bore hallmarks of that waged in Ireland by Cullen particularly with reference to the liberal Anglican Archbishop of Dublin Richard Whately. For Gibney as well as Cullen Whately personified the nexus between the Protestant Church and the secular state. As far as Gibney and his fellow
émigré bishops from Ireland were concerned state education even in the colonies represented another symptom of this liberal contagion.

The arrival of Fredrick Aloysius Weld as governor in September 1869 marked the arrival of another Catholic culture. English in character Weld’s Catholicism contrasted in a number of ways with both that of Gibney and the majority of the laity. However, Weld supported Gibney’s claims for government subsidisation to Catholic schools. Although far from the case in other Australian colonies this recognition was already included in the formation of the more recent blueprint for British schools. Accordingly, he was prepared to exert his political influence and successfully introduced the colony’s first Education Act to the local Legislative Council in 1870. Composed of an exclusively non-Catholic membership the Legislative Council, after a period of caustic debate, reluctantly accepted the proposed legislation which included provision for the allocation of state aid to eligible schools within the Catholic education network. This represented a significant success for Gibney’s Ultramontane ideology because it implied a recognition by the state of the legitimacy of Catholic demands. This contrasted with trends then current in the Eastern states where legislation was slowly moving in the opposite direction.

However, this is not to say that Weld shared Gibney’s Ultramontane ideology. Unlike the belief in Catholic ascendancy articulated by Ultramontanes like Paul Cullen and his episcopal protégés, Weld as a public figure and representative of the British crown aspired to religious equality and toleration. His English aristocratic culture also upheld a more tolerant approach to and indeed participated directly in secular liberal statecraft. Notwithstanding these ideological subtleties, Weld’s 1871 educational legislation precipitated a period of renewed expansion for the Catholic
school system. Gibney was an ardent supporter of the schools before chapels call issued from the first plenary council of Australian bishops held in Sydney in 1885.

Yet as a bishop Gibney’s Ultramontane perspective generated negative as well as positive outcomes for Catholic education in Western Australia. Certainly as far as the Josephite foundation was concerned Gibney refused to concede any Ultramontane ecclesiastical ground and recognise the institute’s centralised administrative structure. On the contrary, he perceived the Josephite refusal to toe the Ultramontane line as compromising his episcopal jurisdiction and, following the precedent already set by his fellow bishops and countrymen the Quinn brothers, attempted to bring the foundation under his immediate diocesan authority by reconstituting the Perth foundation of the institute as a diocesan community. As had happened with his contemporaries in Brisbane, Bathurst and Maitland the Josephites, exhibiting an independence of spirit born of their colonial background, refused to yield ground and the community withdrew from their teaching work in the diocese. Thus, the political aspect of Ultramontanism as represented by Matthew Gibney in Western Australia was, in the case of the Josephites at least, prepared to disadvantage its ideological dynamic and relegate the cause of Catholic education in favour of preserving its core principles of episcopal authority. However, Catholic education in Western Australia had by that stage advanced past its fledgling period and its future was no longer in doubt. Consequently, by the twilight of the colonial period in the European history of Western Australia the Catholic education system had survived the tension of another internal cultural strain and by then maintained a network of schools offering elementary and upper class education to both boys and girls that presented a credible alternative to the state run education system. Reaching into the more peripheral settlements from their flagship convent-schools in Fremantle and Perth Catholic
schools represented a significant and highly visible dimension of the Western Australian Catholic mission.
Conclusion

Proceeding on the hypothesis that the existing scholarship on the West Australian Catholic mission is restricted in its treatment of Catholicism as a single, monolithic cultural identity that fails to adequately explain the complex nature of the dynamics that forged the West Australian Catholic education system this thesis has sought to expand the existing analytic paradigm. By placing the pioneering Western Australian mission in its metropolitan European context this study has challenged that traditional homogenous approach and argued that the development of the Western Australian Catholic education system was the product of a number of diverse Catholic cultures. Transported by waves of missionary clergy to the Australian colonies from their metropolitan heartland, these periodically diverse forces influenced the West Australian Catholic mission’s educational perspectives throughout the colonial period.

In addition, the thesis has concurrently argued that the internal administrative tensions that manifested within the West Australian Catholic mission between the missionary foundations that formed the vanguard of the school network and their episcopal superiors had as much to do with contemporary ecclesiastical cultures as with personalities. This new perspective corrects the more traditional approach which overlooked these different ecclesiastical orientations and community cultures that were represented within the colonial Catholic mission during the period when the Catholic education system was developing into a secure network of both primary and secondary schools.

At its ecclesiastical apex the cultural diversity that forged and moulded the West Australian Catholic school system included the Gallican perspective represented by the inaugural bishop, John Brady, the conservative Spanish influence that marked the administration of Brady’s successor, Joseph Benedict Serra while the subsequent

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administration of Martin Griver marked a transitionary period to the Irish-tempered Ultramontanism that culminated during the episcopate of Matthew Gibney. Gibney’s influence on Catholic education was discernable long before he was consecrated bishop. Indeed he began to have an influence on all aspects of diocesan affairs soon after his arrival as a missionary priest late in 1863, and his significant role in negotiating a provision for Catholic schools in the 1871 Education Act is well acknowledged by both contemporaries and historians. But these were not the only cultural influences that were brought to bear on the fledgling education system. The religious congregations that successive bishops enticed to establish foundations in the diocese and form the dynamic core network of the fledgling Catholic school system all brought their own individual community cultures. These cultures were the product of social context, founder’s inspirations, and social and pastoral orientation. Moreover, female religious institutes were obliged to astutely negotiate gender as well as ecclesiastical constraints for not only did they contend with a male-dominated society but also with a male-dominated church.

Empowered by their middle-class background and culture the members of the pioneering Mercy foundation, represented by their superior Ursula Frayne did not recoil from questioning episcopal dictate. This contrasted with the more subservient orientation subsequently associated with later generations of Irish Catholic female religious foundations in Australia. Synonymous with the growing influence of Ultramontanism on Irish Catholicism in the second half of the nineteenth century, this acquiescence inculcated a belief that women religious ought to be useful and deferential to their ecclesiastical superiors.

Consequently, the spirit of the early Mercy foundation contrasted with the more deferential demeanour associated with the members of the pioneering
foundation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition who arrived from France in 1856. Bereft of Papal approbation the members of this foundation were less confident in challenging the administrative whims of individual bishops. The community placed their faith in God and adopted a survival technique of skirting rather than confronting adverse episcopal mandates. This was not the case with their male counterparts in the De La Salle community who arrived to establish a foundation and augment the Catholic school system in 1864. After a brief stay of two years the De La Salle Brothers, unwilling to adapt their community living regulations to local diocesan requirements left the diocese. Later still, the Australian founded Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart also relinquished their diocesan mission in order to preserve their community regulations against episcopal interference.

Although Irish by birth the founding father of the Western Australian Catholic mission and inaugural bishop, John Brady, represented the French Catholicism of his spiritual formation. This spiritual background, ingrained during the early nineteenth century, endowed Brady with a Gallican ecclesiastical disposition which viewed the apparatus of government as unbiased and less threatening. In addition to resolving a number of conflicts by taking recourse to the civil courts Brady evinced his Gallican tendencies by his willingness to co-operate with the state in its inaugural efforts to establish a colonial school system. However, sectarian overtones within the local colonial administration stymied Brady’s declared intention to co-operate with the civil authority.

But Brady’s Gallican background also influenced his internal administrative approach within his church and had further consequences for the development of the fledgling Catholic education system. The authoritarian tone of his Gallican background, which conferred bishops with the ‘final word’ over diocesan
ecclesiastical affairs, was brought into sharp relief when challenged by the less than deferential bourgeois values of the Superior of the Mercy foundation, Ursula Frayne. Formed in Dublin by a group of middle class women the pioneering members of the initial Mercy foundation exhibited trappings of their bourgeoisie background. The Mercy culture in the early nineteenth century was pervaded by a spirit of independence and middle class values that was indicative of a more liberal Catholic tone. This background not only fortified Mercy independence from arbitrary episcopal control, but also proved advantageous to the success of the fledgling Catholic school system as it permitted the community to accommodate bourgeois middle-class Protestant educational aspirations in the absence of a suitable Catholic constituency in the colony. This ability to accommodate middle class Protestant educational ambitions conferred on the community a social eligibility that attracted patronage from the higher echelons of the small colonial society, including the wives of various governors. This bourgeois culture inspired congregational independence and empowered their struggle to retain congregational authority over their own sphere of operations and to preserve their own distinct identity. This generated tensions between the community and Bishop Brady with regard to episcopal authority and had negative outcomes for the fledgling Catholic education system when Mercy attempts to expand their school system were curtailed in 1849 when Brady directed the community to close their recently established school in Fremantle. However, springing from Gallican rather than Ultramontane ecclesiastical foundations, Brady’s perception of the authority of his episcopal office could, unlike his Ultramontane counterparts, tolerate some degree of compromise regarding episcopal authority and although administrative tensions remained both sides managed to maintain a dignified toleration in the interests of the Catholic school system.
However, the development of Catholic schools encountered a less tolerant challenge from Brady’s episcopal successor, Joseph Benedict Serra. Serra brought a contrasting ecclesiastical culture to the office of diocesan bishop that generated its own outcomes for Catholic education in the Perth diocese. Serra’s conservative authoritarian Spanish Catholic background underpinned his self-image of his position as diocesan bishop. He publicly declared his ecclesiastical role as a prince of the church through his palatial residence and elaborate dress code and jewellery. This personification of Spanish ecclesiastical opulence stood in stark contrast to the frugal missionary lifestyle of his predecessor. This princely self-image also endowed Serra’s episcopate with a particularly uncompromising administrative style. Moreover, his Spanish conservatism dovetailed with the Ultramontane movement. His long sojourn in Europe between 1853 and 1855 brought Serra into close contact with the advocates of Ultramontanism who were by then taking a tight grip of the European Catholic Church. Both of these influences set Serra on a collision course with the Mercy community and with the civil authority represented by Governor Arthur Kennedy. Unlike his predecessor, however, Serra was unwilling to relinquish the authority of his office in the best interests of Catholic education and Frayne, in the absence of any consensus, elected to leave the diocese. Far from a personality clash, Frayne’s spirited resistance to Serra’s authoritarian approach was a product of her liberal ecclesiastical formation and middle-class social background. She personified the well educated, articulate and evangelical characteristics identified with the founders of religious communities in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and like them she was not afraid to stand up to bishops who attempted to extend episcopal authority across the threshold of the convent door. Moreover, much to Serra’s indignity, Frayne’s middle
class perspective allowed her to accept the beneficence offered by Governor Kennedy and his wife.

Whereas Frayne took issue with Serra’s authoritarianism, which she identified as a consequence of his Spanish religious formation, the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition, were less questioning of episcopal direction. Invited to the diocese in 1856 and, to the annoyance of Frayne, allocated to Fremantle to establish a flagship convent-school, the ‘French Sisters’ were stoically resolved to accept episcopal authority even in its neglect of their needs. As a consequence, the pioneering members of that community were obliged to survive in near penury and were periodically dependent on public goodwill for some time after their arrival. Nevertheless, survive they did and made their own outstanding contribution to the Catholic school system in Western Australia.

Notwithstanding Frayne’s controversial departure from the diocese, tensions between Serra and Kennedy had more drastic outcomes for Catholic education. An Irish Protestant, Kennedy viewed Serra as out of place and touch. When Serra refused to co-operate with his financially-driven proposals to remodel the colonial school framework more closely with its Irish National School blueprint Kennedy retaliated by terminating the existing state aid to the Catholic school system. Although ostensibly based on the argument that Kennedy’s proposals omitted pertinent sections of the Irish School blueprint regarding religious education, Serra’s opposition to Kennedy’s proposals to amalgamate the Catholic school system coincided with a period of growing resistance to state education within the universal Catholic church. This resistance to state school systems spread throughout the European metropolitan diocese. Indeed it had by the second half of the nineteenth century become the dominant ecclesiastical view in Kennedy’s native land where it became the
predominant ecclesiastical culture under the administration of Archbishop Paul Cullen. Following the appointment of a number of Cullen-influenced episcopal appointments from Ireland to newly created Australian dioceses during the early decades of the second half of the nineteenth century, insistence on a separate Catholic run school system became a defining characteristic of the Australian Catholic Church. Serra’s expression of solidarity with his Irish episcopal counterparts in their struggle for a separate Catholic elementary school system in his last pastoral bore ample evidence of his solidarity with this aspiration.

Following the resignation of Serra the administration of Catholic affairs fell onto Martin Griver. Yet despite his personal humility and piety Griver’s benign administration did not escape the turmoil of internal dissention from episcopal direction. Having succeeded in attracting a foundation of the teaching community of Brothers of the Christian Schools founded by John Baptist De la Salle in France, Griver found himself unable to conform to the specified community regulations regarding, amongst other things, living regulations. Seeing little prospect of developing their foundation in the diocese the brothers departed from Western Australia within two years of their arrival.

By then, however, as indicated by its position as a central issue on the agenda of the second provincial council of Australian bishops held in Melbourne in April 1869, opposition to state schooling was a central ecclesiastical tenet of the Ultramontane-influenced Australian Catholic mission. In Perth, Matthew Gibney, was destined to lead the Ultramontane charge on behalf of the West Australian Catholic mission. Gibney’s campaign bore the hallmarks of that waged in Ireland by Cullen. Gibney had undertaken his spiritual formation at All Hallows seminary in Dublin during Cullen’s administration of that archdiocese. From his arrival Gibney’s Ultramontane
credentials were in little doubt, but his campaign on behalf of the Catholic education crusade bears greatest testimony to his conformity with the Ultramontane orthodoxy that was contemporaneously becoming prevalent within the ranks of the Australian Catholic hierarchy.

Gibney's educational crusade received support from Governor Weld from 1869. Weld, a devout Catholic, was determined to resolve the education issue which threatened to open up long festering sectarian tensions within the settler community in the colony. Accordingly, he successfully introduced the Colony's first Education Act to the local parliament in 1870. Composed of an exclusively non-Catholic membership, the Legislative Council reluctantly accepted the proposed legislation which included provision for the allocation of state aid to eligible schools within the Catholic education network. The achievement represented a significant success for Gibney and precipitated a period of renewed expansion for the Catholic education system. Despite his cooperation with Gibney in achieving a successful outcome for the Catholic school system Weld's Catholic culture bore little in common with that of Gibney. Born into the landed country aristocracy, Weld's Catholic background contrasted with that of rural Ireland tenanted background of Gibney. In contrast to Gibney's strict Ultramontane perspective, Weld through his office implicitly acknowledged the political jurisdiction of the British parliament. By virtue of his office Weld participated in a political system that was viewed with more than a small amount of suspicion, particularly with regard to education, by the Irish Ultramontanism that Gibney represented.

Yet, subsequent to his appointment as episcopal successor to Griver, Gibney's Ultramontane ecclesiastical perspective proved a mixed blessing for Catholic education, at least as far as the Josephite foundation was concerned. Viewing their
insistence on maintaining their centralised administrative structure as compromising his episcopal jurisdiction, Gibney attempted to emulate his fellow countrymen amongst the contemporary Australian hierarchy and reconstitute the Perth foundation of the institute as a diocesan community, thereby bringing the local branch of the community under his immediate diocesan authority. This resulted in the community withdrawing from the diocese. Thus, Ultramontanism as represented by Matthew Gibney in Western Australia could be counterproductive, as illustrated in the case of the Josephite community, as well as fruitful for the colonial development of Catholic education.

This expansion of the existing interpretative paradigm through which historians view the West Australian Catholic mission in general and the development of the school system in particular marks a significant shift in the existing historiography. As a consequence, scholars will in future approach the study of Western Australian Catholic mission in particular and the Australian Catholic mission in general with added vision and sensitivity to the internal diversity of the ecclesiastical cultures of Australian Colonial Catholicism. They will also view that colonial history in the context of its wider global connection within metropolitan European Catholicism. Both the internal colonial scene and the broader metropolitan landscape are more diverse and more connected to the colonial Catholics who aspired to constitute an independent, but state-supported Catholic education system in Western Australia.
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