

Our Lady of the Island:
Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto Reproduction and Use in
Two Newfoundland Communities

by

Cynthia A. Kiigemagi

A thesis submitted to the school of Graduate Studies in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Folklore
Memorial University,
Newfoundland and Labrador
November 2022

Abstract

Replicated Catholic grottos are local religious shrines fashioned after famous Catholic sites. Many of these reproduced shrines are dedicated to Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and are designed after global Marian apparition sites, such as Our Lady of Lourdes in southwestern France. Replicated grottos play a part in Catholic communities through collective identity, religious narrative, and individual and communal devotions. Researching the replication of Lourdes's shrines can offer insight into the religious practices of groups and communities and the spiritual nuances of vernacular belief. This thesis examines two replicated Our Lady of Lourdes grottos in Renews and Flatrock, Newfoundland, and Labrador, Canada, by locating how these communities creatively negotiate local devotional sites. The central focus of this thesis lies in both the material context of these grottos and the oral narratives which have developed around them. These memetic edifices developed as a form of “creative theology” by the people and for the people (Cunneen 1996, xvii). I offer three arguments in this work. First, Our Lady of Lourdes reproductions are vernacular (folk) sites similar to the original French grotto site in its initial stages. Second, these replicated grotto sites are ostensive reproductions based on the legendary accounts of Bernadette’s experiences at Lourdes and should be recognized as such. Third, these reproductions are feminine in form and message; therefore, during a time of Church turmoil concerning clerical abuse, they offer an alternative to male-dominated places of Catholic worship. Using historical and ethnographic approaches, this work recognizes replicated Our Lady of Lourdes grottos as sacred spaces that are part of Newfoundland and Labrador's oral, historical, and visual religious culture. As such, they deserve to be recognized within the religious and cultural tapestry of Atlantic Canada.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgments.....	v
List of Figures.....	vii
Map of the Avalon.....	x
Preface.....	xii
Chapter 1: Introduction: Mary Made Material.....	1
1.1 Why Marian Grottos?	1
1.2 A Brief History	5
1.3 Reproductions.....	11
1.4 Researching Reflexively.....	13
1.5 Authentic vs. Inauthentic	15
1.6 Vernacular Religion.....	17
1.7 Vernacular Catholicism.....	22
1.8 Arguments Offered.....	28
1.9 Questions to be Answered.....	31
1.10 Chapter Overviews.....	34
Chapter 2: Methods and Overview	
2.1 Approach.....	37
2.2 Questions of Faith and Belief	38
2.3 The Literature: Grottos from the Ground Up	41
2.4 Why Grottos?.....	42
2.5 A Magical Place where Mary Dwells.....	44
2.6 Place and Imagination at the Grottos.....	50
2.7 Religious Materiality	53
2.8 Embodiment.....	59
2.9 The Question of Agency.....	63
2.10 Landscapes of Belief.....	67

Chapter 3: A Place in History	
3.1 Shrines and History.....	74
3.2 Early Christians	76
3.3 Shrines and their Association to Relics and Martyrs.....	78
3.4 Early Marian Devotion.....	92
3.5 History, Ostension, and Saint’s Legend.....	96
Chapter 4: Sites of Devotion: Renews	
4.1 Welcome to the Outport of Renews.....	105
4.2 Context.....	107
4.3 Questions of Identity.....	111
4.4 Where you at the Rock.....	113
4.5 What is a Mass Rock?	115
4.6 Question of Authenticity.....	116
4.7 Memory and Landscape	127
4.8 Bricks and Mortar.....	130
4.9 Contestation, Disruption, and Change.....	135
Chapter 5: The Lourdes Grotto at Flatrock	
5.1 Welcome to Flatrock.....	141
5.2 Fr. Sullivan’s Grotto.....	145
5.3 Contested Material Presentation.....	152
5.4 Why Build a Grotto?	157
5.5 A Visit from the Pope	161
5.6 Pilgrimage to the Grotto	163
5.7 Changing Tides.....	166
Chapter 6: Ritual	
6.1 Changing Aspects of Ritual.....	169
6.2 Ritual and Imagination.	174
6.3 Narrative Imagination and Ritual Behavior.....	175
6.4 Lady Day at the Renews Grotto.....	177
6.5 Modern Ritual.....	187
6.6 Ritual at the Flatrock Grotto.....	188
Chapter 7: Signs and Wonders	

7.1 Hallowed Ground.....	192
7.2 The Laws of Nature?.....	194
7.3 What is a Religious Miracle?.....	198
7.4 Ostensive Healing	201
7.5 Miracles in Renews	202
7.6 It's All in the Water	209
7.7 Miraculous Priests	219
7.8 The Catholic Connection to Miracles	228
Chapter Eight: Mary's Grotto, Ever-Changing	
8.1 Mary in the Modern Church.....	230
8.2 The Changing Roles of Mary.....	232
8.3 Issues in Marian Devotion.....	234
8.4 The Benevolent Face of Mary.....	238
8.5 Clerical Abuse in Newfoundland	242
8.6 My Interviews in Renews	244
8.7 Community Consensus.....	248
8.8 Clerical Power	252
8.9 Forgiveness?	256
8.9 Sanctuary.....	260
8.10 The Sacred Feminine.....	264
8.11 Lourdes, the Feminine Place of Mary.....	266
Conclusion.....	269
Bibliography.....	279

Acknowledgments

This thesis is dedicated to four recently passed individuals who participated in this work. First, to Eddie Chidley, whose plethora of stories about the Renew's grotto cannot be underestimated in their value for the knowledge and tradition they imparted to everyone who listened. Eddie walked with the miraculous throughout his life and was a true *Seanchaí*, a tradition bearer, and a teller of stories; he will be missed. To Terry Hynes, whose voice comes through in this work with humor, knowledge, and intelligence. Terry offered clarity concerning hard times during Renew's recent history; his passing saddens me. To Helen Lawler, who helped fill out the edges of life in Renew and the importance of community. Finally, Fr. John Hanton was kind enough to let me ruffle through his old clippings concerning life in Renew while patiently answering my questions. May they all rest peacefully.

This work was a labor of love. I was told early on that by the time you finish your Ph.D. dissertation; you will be sick of the topic—this could not be less true. The topic of shrines, saints, pilgrimages, relics, ex-votos, and all that Catholic vernacular culture holds is still fascinating for me. I recognize the traditions and rituals of Catholicism as one of the most beautiful aspects of sacramental religious culture. Conversely, through this work, I have also become aware of the pain and suffering that the Church has caused so many who have been caught up in the cruelty that only an unchallenged male-dominated institution can create. However, through my research, I was cognizant of the power individuals and communities have to find alternatives to their spirituality in times of sorrow and pain, thus, reflecting the indomitable human spirit.

Finally, I want to thank my family for their patients and understanding, especially Peter Kiigemagi, who walked me through this each step of the way. Also, I want to thank Shawn

Peckford, who encouraged me when I felt overwhelmed. Moreover, for the beautiful photos he took for this thesis. I also want to thank Dr. Holly Everett, my supervisor, for being patient and reassuring me when my critical and perfectionist genes took over. Most of all, I thank all Renew and Flatrock participants. They were kind and patient with their answers to all my many questions.

Thank you, everyone.

List of Figures

- Figure 1: Map of the Avalon Peninsula (1999). Illustration by Duleepa Wijayawardhana. Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Web Site. Courtesy of Newfoundland Heritage.
<https://www.heritage.nf.ca/resources/place-maps.php>
- Figure 2: Bernadette (1863). Image courtesy of Wikipedia:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bernadette_Soubirous
- Figure 3: Early image of Massabielle, post-apparition. Image courtesy of Pinterest.
[c.1858https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/498632989965293440/](https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/498632989965293440/)
- Figure 4: Cave niche where Our Lady of Lourdes appeared to Bernadette at Massabielle. Image courtesy of Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Lady_of_Lourdes
- Figure 5: Artist rendition of Bernadette and Mary at the grotto, N/D. Image courtesy off CJS.org
<https://corjesusacratissimum.org/2012/07/the-story-of-saint-bernadette-and-lourdes-part-ii-the-spring-of-miracles-is-discovered/>
- Figure 6: The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes. August 2009. Photography by Roland Darre.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanctuary_of_Our_Lady_of_Lourdes#/media/File:Lourdes_Basiliq
- Figure 7: Figure 8. Renews, Our Lady of Lourdes grotto (2013). Image courtesy of
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RenewsNL_GrottoOfOurLadyOfLourdes.jpg
- Figure 8: Flatrock grotto. Image by the author (2017), Flatrock, Newfoundland.
- Figure 9: Postcard of the grotto at Lourdes, France, late 19th century. Image courtesy of NOMA.org
<https://noma.org/object-lesson-grotto-of-massabielle-in-lourdes-france/>
- Figure: 10. Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes at the University of Notre Dame. Image courtesy of Trip Advisor. https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g37535-d7930516-Reviews-Grotto_of_Our_Lady_Lourdes-South_Bend_Indiana.html
- Figure 11. A Newfoundland outpost. Early 19th cent. Image courtesy of Old Renews Facebook group.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/59635175325/> Figure 11: Grotto of St. Bridget c.2003. Image by the author (2003).
- Figure 12. Grotto of St. Bridget 2003. Image by the author, Liscannor, Co. Clare, Ireland.
- Figure 13. Need help selling your house? You can purchase St. Joseph on Amazon.com. Image courtesy of Amazon.com
https://www.amazon.com/s?k=St.+Joseph+statue+for+selling+house&ref=nav_bb_sb
- Figure 14. Annals of St. Anne, c. 1941. Pamphlet published by the Redemptionist Fathers on behalf of the Shrine of St. Anne De Beaupre. Photo courtesy of Google.com; images.
https://www.google.com/search?q=The+annals+of+st+ann&sxsrf=ALiCzsaUwu1YsrML2F7Z4btoVz5ilcc7mA:1657904052334&source=Inms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjDrfHwrfv4AhUUrIkEHeOWAswQ_AUoAXoECAEQAw&biw=1230&bih=712&dpr=1.25#imgrc=KPbXO4ANCOR2JM

- Figure 15. Grotto Our Lady of Lourdes in Lourdes, Newfoundland. Image courtesy of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. <https://www.ourladyoflourdesparish.ca/grotto.html>
- Figure 16. St. Gerard Maiella, St. Lucy's Church, Newark, N.J. Image courtesy of Newarkology.com <http://www.newarkhistory.com/stlucyschurch.html>
- Figure 17. Artist's depiction of a historic Mass rock in Co. Wicklow, Ireland. Image courtesy of The Wild Geese.com <https://thewildgeese.irish/profiles/blogs/the-mass-rock-1>
- Figure 18. Mithraic Temple, Ostia Antica, Italy c. 100-300 CE. Image courtesy of Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mithraeum>
- Figure 19. Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna, 2nd century C.E. Image courtesy of antiochpatriarchate.org <https://www.antiochpatriarchate.org/en/print/page/339/>
- Figure 20. 465-year-old 'incorruptible' hand of St. Xavier. Image courtesy of CBC.ca <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ottawa-arm-relic-saint-francis-xavier-1.4510766>
- Figure 21. One of the earliest depictions of Mary. Image courtesy of Aleteia online. <https://aleteia.org/2018/10/19/the-9-oldest-images-of-mary/>
- Figure 22. Archbishop of Genoa Jacobus de Voragine with The Golden Legend (c.1230 - 1298). Image courtesy of Lapham's Quarterly online. <https://www.laphamsquarterly.org/contributors/jacobus-de-voragine>Fig: 26.
- Figure 23. Bernadette in Nevers France. Image courtesy of Sanctuary of Nevers France. <https://www.sainte-bernadette-soubirous-nevers.com/en/le-sanctuaire/>
- Figure 24. Holy Apostles Catholic Church. Image by the author (2016), Renewes, Newfoundland.
- Figure 25. Renewes grotto when first viewed in 2016. Image by Shawn Peckford, Peckford Photography, St. John's, Newfoundland. The image held by the author.
- Figure 26. Rev. Charles McCarthy, Renewes Newfoundland N/D. Image courtesy of Old Renewes Facebook group. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/59635175325/>
- Figure 27. Fr. McCarthy's Letter shown to author by Fr. Hanton (2016). Image by author, St. John's, Newfoundland.
- Figure 28. Altar at the Renewes grotto (2016). Image by Shawn Peckford, Peckford Photography, St. John's, Newfoundland. The image held by the author.
- Figure: 29. Small stone relic from Lourdes at the Renewes grotto. Image courtesy by the author (2016), Renewes, Newfoundland.
- Figure 30. Arial view of the town Flatrock and Flatrock Bay. Image courtesy of the town of Flatrock. <https://townofflatrock.com/about-us/>
- Figure 31. St. Michael the archangel sits below the grotto, overlooking Flatrock harbor (2016). Image by Shawn Peckford, Peckford Photography, St. John's, Newfoundland. Image held by the author.

- Figure 32. Full view of Our Lady of Lourdes grotto in Flatrock, c. 2017). Image by Shawn Peckford, Peckford Photography, St. John's, Newfoundland. Image held by the author.
- Figure 33. Father William Sullivan, parish priest of St. Agnes parish from 1932 to 1961. Image courtesy of St. Agnes parish.
- Figure 34. Bernadette at the feet of Mary, Flatrock grotto (2017). Image taken by author Flatrock, Newfoundland.
- Figure 35. Fiberglass crucifix above the Flatrock grotto. Image courtesy of the town of Flatrock. <https://townofflatrock.com/about-us/>
- Figure 36. One of the two armless angels at the grotto (2016). Image by Shawn Peckford, Peckford Photography, St. John's, Newfoundland. Image held by the author.
- Figure 37. Small commemorative to a loved one at the Renew's memorial garden. Image taken by author (2019), Renew's, Newfoundland.
- Figure 38. Pope John Paul's visit to Flatrock Grotto, 1984. Blessing of the fleet. Image courtesy off The Newfoundland Herald. St. John's N.L. <https://nfldherald.com/memories-of-the-papal-visit/>
- Figure 39. Lady Day Renew's; procession to the Church, c. 1960s. Image courtesy of Old Renew's, Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/59635175325/>
- Figure 40. Early Lady Day procession to the grotto. N/D. Image courtesy of Old Renew's, Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/59635175325/>
- Figure 41. Figure 41. Lady Day 2016 at the Flatrock grotto. Image courtesy of Shawn Peckford, Peckford studios. St. John's, Newfoundland.
- Figure 42. Gisella Cardia witnessing a vision of the Virgin. Image courtesy of countdowntothekingdom.com. <https://www.countdowntothekingdom.com/why-gisella-cardia/>
- Figure 43. Statue of Mary purchased by Cardia before the onset of the visions. Image courtesy of countdowntothekingdom.com. <https://www.countdowntothekingdom.com/why-gisella-cardia/>
- Figure 44. Modern, 1994 apparition of the Virgin in Clearwater, Florida. Image courtesy of tampabay.com. <https://www.tampabay.com/news/florida/2019/12/23/remember-when-the-virgin-mary-appeared-on-a-clearwater-building/>
- Figure 45. Mt. Cashel Boys School and orphanage c. 1989. Image courtesy of CBC new [shttps://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/mount-cashel](https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/mount-cashel)

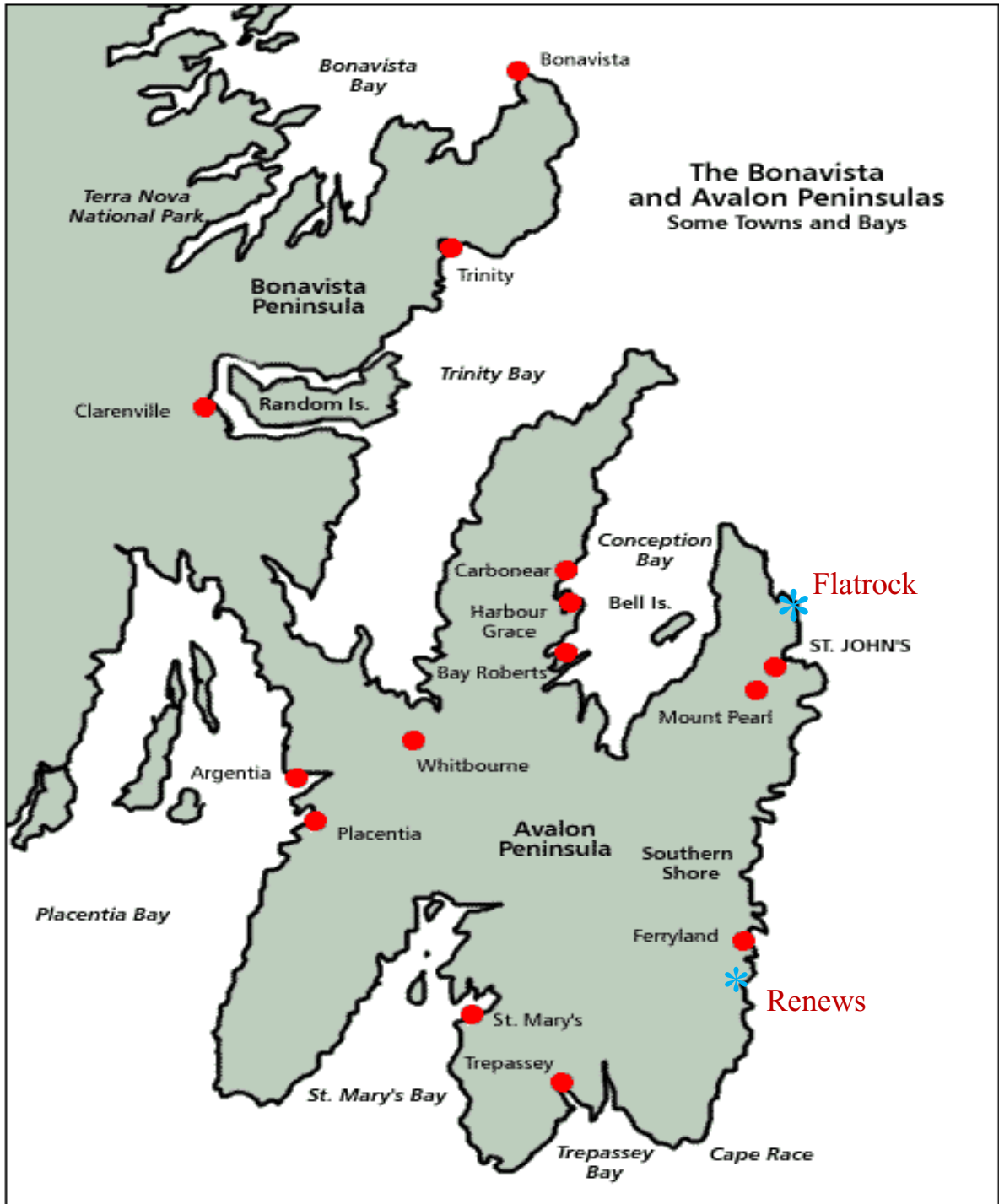


Figure 1. Map of the Avalon



Figure 2. Bernadette Soubirous, 1844-1879.

Preface

Setting the Stage

“At that moment, everything began. There was a blast “like a gust of wind,”
and yet, the air was calm.”

Bernadette Soubirous (Laurentin 1999, 20)

Bernadette’s Vision

On a February morning in 1858, a fourteen-year-old impoverished French girl, Marie-Bernard (Bernadette) Soubirous (1844-1879), loitered after her sister, Toinette, and a friend, Jeanne Abadie. Leaving Bernadette behind, Toinette and Jeanne crossed the *Gave* River to look for firewood. The area was known as *Massabielle*, an uninhabited place where sheep and pig herders brought their flocks to graze. Bernadette paused to take off her shoes and stockings to pass through the river to the other side. While doing so, she looked up at a small niche in an outcropping of stone above her and saw a young girl in a white gown and blue sash gazing down at her:

Bernadette looked backward toward the Gave River, opposite the grotto. Above the grotto, on the right-hand side, at the base of the niche-like cavity in the rock, some bushes were quietly shaking, their long brambles reaching to the ground. The dark cavity brightened and there in that light was a very young girl dressed in white. She smiled in welcome (Laurentin 1999, 20).

Bernadette later remarked, “I rubbed my eyes; I thought I was mistaken,” (Crawford 1989, 5).

The vision requested Bernadette visit the grotto for the following weeks, where the figure would soon make her intentions known to the awestruck girl.

Two weeks after the first vision, on February 25th the apparition, whom Bernadette referred to as “*aqueró*,” meaning ‘that one,’ commanded Bernadette to dig, then wash and drink from an area of ground near the niche in the grotto:¹ Perplexed, Bernadette complied and began digging:

Aqueró told me to go and drink at the spring and to wash in it. Not seeing any spring, I went to drink at the *Gave*, but she beckoned with her finger for me to go under the rock. I went and found a little muddy water almost too little for me to hold in the hollow of my hand. Three times I threw it away, it was so dirty, on my fourth try, I succeeded [As spoken by Bernadette] (Laurentin 2000, 57).

Soon a tiny trickle of water came out, wetting the ground. Later, the locals would help excavate the small underground spring that would become the central focus



Figure 3. Early image of Massabielle, post-apparition c.1858

of one of the world’s most-visited Catholic healing shrines (Kaufman 2005, 5). Historian Judith Devlin notes that the whole community plunged into “...something that bordered on [religious] hysteria following the discovery of the spring” (1987, 162). Louis Bouriette, a 55-year-old quarryman with deteriorating eyesight, was allegedly the first to be healed by the waters at Lourdes. He had been blinded in his right eye nineteen years earlier by accident and feared he

¹ Up until the third vision, Bernadette was not willing to admit the apparition was the Virgin Mary. However, many had already decided by then that “*aquero*” was the Holy Mother. Six weeks after the first vision, the apparition told Bernadette that she was the “Immaculate Conception,” (Carroll 1985, 65). This was a recently established Church Apostolic Constitution issued on December 8, 1854 by pope Pius IX, which determined that Mary, the Mother of God was conceived without sin. Some argue that Bernadette would not have known about this, but others believe she would have heard of it during Sunday school.

would lose the vision in his other eye. When seeing the newly uncovered spring, he applied the water to his eyes, later declaring that his eyesight had been miraculously restored (ibid).²

By March of 1858, word of the visions at the grotto had progressed to the highest office in France, where Napoleon Bonaparte demanded information concerning the miraculous happenings at the site. Sabine Baring-Gould relates the story concerning the Emperor's son and healing herbs from the spring at Lourdes:

Somewhat later, the Empress was at Biarritz and had with her as attendant Mme. Bruat, who had just returned from Lourdes, brought with her some of the grass that grows in the grotto. It fell out one night that Prince Imperial was ill, and croup was feared. Mme. Bruat urged the application of the herb from Lourdes. The Emperor was roused, and in his presence, the bit of dried grass was applied to the lips of the child, and he became easier (1907, 144).

In return for his son's improved health, Bonaparte offered his protection to the grotto at Lourdes, and those who had held doubts (both clergy and local officials), kept further skepticism to themselves (ibid).

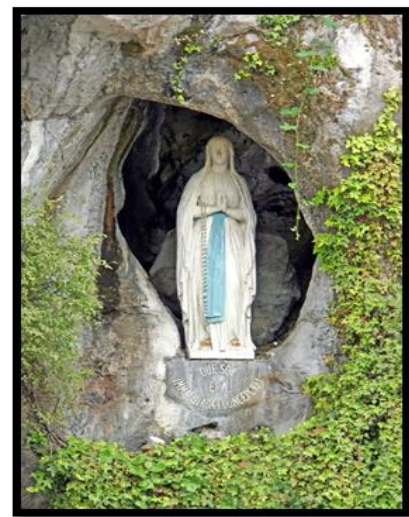


Figure 4. The niche where Our Lady of Lourdes appeared to Bernadette at Massabielle.

The Grotto

The nineteenth century was a dynamic time of change and movement. New domains were opened to migration, and urban areas began filling with people from rural regions looking for better jobs and wages. Mass industrialization was the zeitgeist of the age. With this modern spirit

² After the first miracle, Catherine Latapie-Chouat, a young pregnant mother, paid a visit to the apparition site at Massabielle where she placed her recently broken hand into the small spring that Bernadette had dug. Heavily pregnant and in pain from her shoulder to her two paralyzed fingers, she prayed for healing. Miraculously, her broken hand was restored. According to the account, later that evening she gave birth to a healthy baby boy (Harris 1999, 79).

came an energetic period of Marian revival and the “diffusion of Marian apparitions” around the western world (Coleman 2019, 609). Between 1803 and 1907, over 115 apparitions were reported in Europe; most of the visionaries were women and children (Van Osselaer 2019, 580). Within this social context, the broader collective meaning of the Lourdes vision can be assessed globally.

Nevertheless, each of these 115 visions is its own entity and deserves assessment based on its regional qualities and characteristics. The distinctiveness of each apparition site allows researchers to delve into the deeper meanings of religion as lived, especially from a communal perspective, where the sacred is often embedded in the local culture and geography (McGuire 2008, 25). This is particularly true for the Our Lady of Lourdes grotto in France.

The inhabitants of Lourdes were closely tied to the surrounding area and the natural

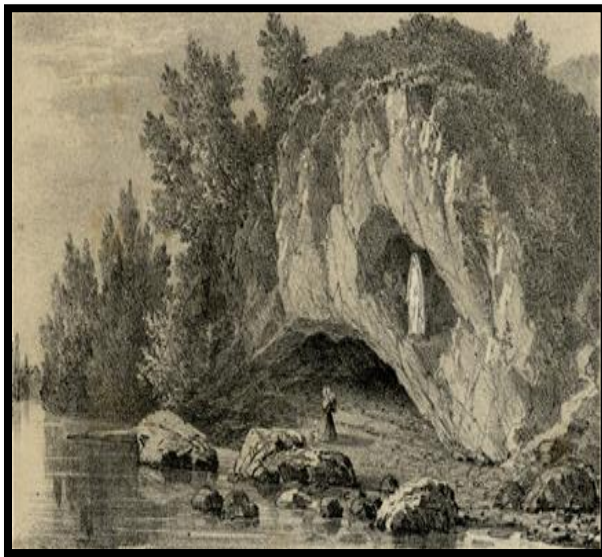


Figure: 5. Artist rendition of Bernadette and Mary at the grotto, N/D.

landscape. Rivers, forests, mountains, and thermal springs occupied a region rich in agriculture and farming (Reinberg 2019, 57). The Pyrenees were known throughout Europe as a place of beauty, healing, and restoration long before the miraculous happenings in 1858. Spas and medicinal waters, which had attracted people since the Roman occupation

of the region, enticed travelers to the area for physical and mental restoration.³ Visitors frequently commented on the “marvelous” qualities of

³ Much of the Pyrenees region was dotted with ancient Gallo-Roman sites, such as early pagan spa/shrines and forts. Local people, many who had retained vernacular knowledge of these sites through oral tradition, built small Christian shrines above or near these places of antiquity.

the mineral waters; thus, the locals exploited the natural resources by encouraging visitors to come and spend time and money in the area (ibid). Closely tied to their surroundings, the blessings and the dangers of nature's proximity followed villagers' daily lives.

Just before the miraculous happenings at the grotto, disease reached the area in the form of cholera in 1854 and later in 1856-57. Following bad weather and a poor harvest, famine also struck the *Occitanie* region in southwestern France, where Lourdes is located (Devlin 1987, 161). In the 19th century, Lourdes generally consisted of poor and uneducated farmers and laborers living on the edge of poverty. These socio-cultural factors created an atmosphere for vernacular imagination to co-mingle with Church teachings, thus, creating a mixed bag of religious beliefs. For example, it was common to cross oneself when walking by the (natural) grotto at Marsibelle due to the possibility of evil spells being worked against you by an unknown spirit lurking in its dark recesses (Harris 1999, 53). These behaviors are recognized as “localisms,” as McGuire characterizes them. These “local” vernacular behaviors played as much a part in accepting potential supernatural happenings at Lourdes as Church teachings; in other words, the ground was ripe for the miraculous (2008 26).

Long before Bernadette's visions of Mary, the grotto at Lourdes was known as a place of legend, where all manner of spirits and preternatural characters inhabited (Harris 1999, 52-54). Historian Eugene Weber observes that France in the 19th century was steeped in supernatural vernacular belief. He remarks that the “...moonlight was crowded with goblins, sprites, elves, imps, wraiths, will-o-the-wisps, werewolves....white ladies, and ghostly huntsmen....” (1977, 24). The mountains around the town of Lourdes are riddled with caves. Near Lourdes, there are

at least thirty known caverns (showcaves.com, para. 6).⁴ Here, inhabitants of Lourdes recognized Massabielle, and other similar cave edifices, as a storied place of regional lore, where supernatural beings could appear anytime to an unsuspecting person. This awareness of the grotto's supernatural atmosphere drew people to the site and added credibility to Bernadette's visions. Theologian Belden C. Lane notes in his work in *Landscapes of the Sacred* (2001) that landscape, and by default, sacred landscape, "operates as a function of the imagination" (238), further stating:

We live in a natural world framed by the stories we tell though we prefer to think of it as a *tabula rasa*. We walk continually through a terrain manufactured by the human imagination, dwelling as much in our interpretation of place as in the place itself (239).

Local imagination imprinted on the Lourdes landscape long before the happenings in 1858. Because of these inherent vernacular beliefs concerning the area, it was no great leap by the locals to believe Bernadette's visions were part of a continuing narrative relating to the mysterious and the supernatural at Massabielle. It was a space of liminality between the wild unknown and cultivated civilization, where supernatural beings would often appear as little women dressed in white with the abilities to "stir up and calm storms [...] and heap kindness on those who do them sincere homage" (Harris 1999, 77).

In 1858, local belief coalesced at the Lourdes grotto, creating an invisible landscape of imagination, religious faith, and numinous experience. Religious historian Mircea Eliade's discussion on the sacred is applicable here. He contends that the holy "erupts" in places as revelatory "heterophonies" or events, hence creating "powerful centers of meaningful worlds" (1959, 20). Mircea Eliade defines the sacred space as "...implying a hierophany, an eruption of

⁴ Showcaves.com. Grotto de Massabielle Big Rock - Lourdes Grotto, N/D.
<https://www.showcaves.com/english/fr/caves/Massabielle.html> (Accessed July 30 2020)

the sacred into the mundane" (1957, 26). In many ways, this "eruption" or demarcation of sacred and profane is not as straightforward as one would suppose within early religious sites. Reusing this landscape implies the unification of utilitarian needs (living space) and sacred geography. The sacred is wedded to a large extent to the mundane just by the very act of human creation of objects within the landscape. Cultural geographer Yi-Fu Tuan recognizes that the concept of "sacred" goes beyond human material production, such as churches and shrines; instead, it is the experiential world of something set apart from the "commonplace." (1978, 84).

As a consequence of Bernadette's visions, the grotto at Lourdes became something set apart; a "fixed point," a "powerful center" for millions of Catholics and their search for religious meaning. The miracle at Lourdes and other Marian sites have spread globally, making Mary one of the most recognizable figures in the Christian world (Rubin 2009, xxi). This form of sacramental imagination creates a sacred space where Mary can meet those seeking her in the most humble places.

Stories concerning visions of the Virgin were not new to people in Lourdes. Theologian George H. Tavard that apparitions of the Virgin Mary occurred in at least twenty-one locations in France from 1803 to 1899 (1996, 178).⁵ These visions were organic happenings emanating from working-class people (ibid). Locals would have known the 1846 apparitions at La Salette, France, where two local children tending sheep saw a "lady shimmering in white" (Harris 1999, 60). The apparent similarities between Lourdes and La Salette were notable due to both visitations occurring in rural areas where poverty and disease were common and where vernacular religious beliefs played no small part in the conflict between survival and a world

⁵ Sociologist Michael P. Carroll points out that there are more Marian shrines in France than any other European country (1986, 11).

filled with physical and supernatural peril. Historian Therese Taylor identifies that in the villages of southern France, “All forms of the supernatural were understood to be related and Catholic miracle stories and were embellished with elements drawn from the world of fairies, ghosts, and witches” (1995, 462). Fear of the Devil, disease, and supernatural forces drove everyday life in small 19th-century communities like Lourdes. For locals, veneration of the Holy Family and Catholic saints was as much about protection as it was about piety (Harris 1999, 84-88; McGuire 2008, 31-34; Sumption 2003, 9-15). During crisis and upheaval, any indication of supernatural intervention by the divine would have been more than welcomed—even encouraged by the populace.

Taylor remarks that at Lourdes, vernacular beliefs were often “...flaunted before Church authorities,” reflecting the conflict between the populace as to the supernatural viability of Bernadette’s vision and modern sensibilities (1995, 460). These perceptions were rooted in the local clergy, and the middle class, who assumed Bernadette’s impoverished and uneducated background rendered her incapable of telling the truth, and she had fabricated her experience to draw attention to herself (Harris 1999, 55).

In the same year as the apparition, a twenty-two-year-old local woman named Adelaide Monlaur wrote numerous letters to a friend concerning the visions of Bernadette, whom she refers to as “the child” (Taylor 1995, 461). Adelaide lived with her father, a local school teacher, only three kilometers away from Lourdes and was privy to the gossip and general information concerning the visions. She stated that the form of the Virgin Mary appearing in the rock “...would seem to have been a work of nature,” concluding, “...it is the great faith of people which makes them perceive these figures” (as cited in Taylor, 460). This attitude reflects many of her peers who questioned the supernatural in an age of reason.

Apparitions of the Virgin can be understood as a function of creative theology for marginalized people (Cunneen 1996, xvii). Those who believed were ordinary working-class people, especially in the early days of the visions when public opinion was hostile to Bernadette. Already steeped in the vernacular belief that the supernatural existed alongside the physical world, many were willing to accept that God's mercy would appear as the Holy Virgin to a young girl of humble means (Harris 1999, 56). Religious scholar E. Ann Matter points out that during the 19th century, Marian apparitions were marked by a pattern favoring young children of humble origins and situated in primarily rural areas (2001, 128). The apparition at Lourdes followed this model, and the natural grotto's reputation as a healing site proliferated. Soon, hundreds (and later thousands) began coming to the area, hoping to experience Mary's healing mercy.

After Bernadette's visions ended in the late summer of 1858—there were eighteen in all—locals set up a place to pray before the grotto. Thousands came before the Church recognized Lourdes as an official Marian apparition site (Kaufman 2005, 5). The Catholic Church had little oversight in the early days but was aware that it was a situation they had to control. As word spread, the sick and disabled traveled to Lourdes looking to wash and be healed in the now-holy spring at Massabielle. Some claimed to have been cured, which solidified that Lourdes was truly miraculous in many believers' minds. In 1861, a local priest, Abbé Dominique Peyramale, and Bishop Monsignor Bertrand-Sévère purchased the site to create order and make it more accessible to visitors.⁶ By 1862, the Catholic Church officially recognized the

⁶ Bishop Laurence of Tarbes would eventually appoint a commission to look into the happenings at Lourdes. He comments on the happenings at Massabielle writing, "Bernadette Soubirous, a young girl of Lourdes, thirteen years of age, [she was 14 at the time] was supposed to have had visions in the cave of Massabielle, west of this city; the immaculate Virgin was supposed to have appeared to her; a spring began to flow there; the water of this spring, taken as drink or used as a lotion was supposed to have worked a number of cures; these cures are regarded as miraculous; people have come in throngs and continue to come every day, either from our own diocese or from

apparitions, and in 1892, a new railroad ran through the small town, bringing pilgrims from all over Europe and the world (Crawford 1997, 3; Kaufman 2005, 2). By then, the Church had taken complete control of the grotto in a bid to preserve and ‘beautify’ the site for visitors. They made the grotto more manageable and aligned with ecclesiastical aesthetics, complete with a cathedral known as *The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes*. Built in 1863, the cathedral sits on a plateau above the grotto, where historian Ruth Harris observes that “...the Church ensured the symbolic imposition of orthodoxy” on the entire site. She comments further:

The central importance of the Grotto led to a preservation process that, in fact, proved to be quite destructive of its original appearance. On the one hand, clerics recognized that its natural quality was an essential part of the message of Notre Dame de Lourdes; on the other, they sought to remake this wild and even unprepossessing site into something more picturesque and convenient (1999, 169).



Figure: 6. *The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes, France.*

Consequently, the religious establishment could control the outgoing message by bringing the site at Lourdes and Bernadette into the fold of the Catholic Church. Vatican journalist John Thavis points out that because Marian apparitions tend to be “grassroots affairs,” they can pose a problem for the Church and hierarchy, who tend to be “conflicted” doctrinally when the miraculous shows up to the poor and uneducated.⁷ For the

Church, reports of the supernatural become a balancing act, requiring them to negotiate between

neighboring dioceses, requesting this water for the cure of their maladies, while at the same time they invoke the immaculate Virgin. Civil authority has been moved to take action. From all sides have come requests that ecclesiastical authority give some explanation of these spontaneous pilgrimages” (Laurence 1958, 1).

⁷ John Thavis is the former bureau chief of *Catholic News Service* in Rome and lectures extensively on Vatican affairs around the world.

“*sensus fidelium*,” the “sense of the faithful,” and overtly emotional popular religiosity (2015, 89).

Despite their misgivings, the Catholic Church soon regarded the Lourdes apparition as a challenge to modernity and secularization, which had encroached on conservative religious ideologies since the Enlightenment (Orsi 2009, 217; Spretnak 2004, 34-35; Thavis 2015, 82). However, in an odd twist, by recognizing and promoting Bernadette’s visions, the religious establishment merged ecclesiastical tenets with the very thing that threatened the social dominance of the 19th-century Catholic Church; modernity (Harris 1999, 247; Kaufman 2005, 6-7). The Church utilized contemporary amenities, such as print and modern transport, to promote the site, thus mixing the act of pilgrimage with the “experiences of a newly commercialized society” (Kaufman 2007, 2). The paradox is notable. Bernadette’s vision is modest and timeless in its presentation; yet, within the context of the Industrial Revolution and the rapid social change of European society, the Church’s influence can be perceived as exploitative in its garish display of religiosity at the site as Kaufman observes:

[T]he acts of traveling, seeing, and prying took on new forms. Clerical officials transformed the train into a moving chapel. They encouraged pilgrims to read religious guidebooks and to ship bottled Lourdes water to loved ones at home. Entrepreneurs of religious goods and services marketed newfangled *Objets de piété*, such as picture postcards and mini-dioramas of the shrine. They seized on popular entertainments, such as wax museums, to represent the shrine’s miraculous events. Church leaders also used modern innovations to refashion traditional healing practices into religious spectacles (Kaufman 2007, 2-3).

In many ways, Lourdes changed the character of visionary locations. Originally, apparition sites had been private or small-scale; conversely, after the advent of Lourdes, many became places of public performance and religious spectacle (Tavard 1996, 180). Pilgrims came to Lourdes by the hundreds, and later thousands, with their prayers and expectations undeterred by the Church’s

manipulation of the site. Devotees were drawn by the promise of the miraculous, healing, and personally experiencing the narrative of Mary's revelatory appearance to Bernadette.

By 1924, when Fr. Charles McCarthy of Renewals, and later in 1954, Fr. William Sullivan of Flatrock, Newfoundland, Canada, traveled to Lourdes as pilgrims, the site was known as a "modern pilgrimage shrine" and globally assessable to all (Kaufman 2005, 2). Lourdes was part of contemporary communication and networks in a newly commercialized world. However, the shrine's 'modern' approach to spirituality did not negate its power as a sacred site; it only promoted its accessibility and viability in the Christian world as a place where Our Lady of Lourdes was available to all who wanted to take the journey to engage with her. Folklorist and religious scholar Marion Bowman writes of such ordinariness by noting that the simplicity of the individual (and location) makes these experiences "all the more remarkable" (2004, 9). Notably, Thavis mentions that the story of Bernadette is one of "simple faith" and is often the one that Vatican officials point out as a model of authenticity due to the provincialism of both Bernadette and the natural environment. (2015, 79). The underlying ordinariness of the original environment and Bernadette's common humanity allowed pilgrims to feel an intimacy with the Virgin outside of the organizational Church, thus, generating a desire to bring Mary's presence back home to their communities in the form of replicated Lourdes grottos.



Figure 7. Renew's Grotto, 2016



Figure: 8. Flatrock grotto, 2017

Chapter One

Introduction: Mary Made Material

“The blessed Virgin used me like a broom then, put me back in my place.”

Bernadette Soubirous (Laurentin 1999, 551)

In the following years after the apparition, Bernadette’s visions generated a phenomenon of devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes and subsequent mass pilgrimages to the site of Massibelle in Lourdes, France. The visions also initiated a spiritual desire within global Catholic communities to duplicate this sacred religious location in the form of locally replicated Lourdes grottos. Known as a healing shrine, the Marian grotto at Lourdes, France, attracts over six million people annually (Notermans and Jenson 2011, 170).⁸ Accepted as the first modern, high-profile, and commercially promoted Catholic religious site, Lourdes, and its subsequent worldwide replications, offer an intriguing opportunity to research how vernacular religiosity, materiality, modernity, Mariology, Church doctrine, and spiritual practice intertwine.⁹

1.1 Why Grottos?

The *Dictionary of Architecture and Construction* defines a grotto as “A natural or artificial cave, often decorated with shells or stones, and incorporating waterfalls or fountains.” The majority of the dictionaries and encyclopedic entries refer to grottos as both replicated and natural. Simulated religious grottos are part of a culturally created sacred aesthetic. As such, they are a

⁸ For the sake of simplicity the terms “shrine” and “grotto” will be used interchangeably in this dissertation.

⁹ Suzanne Kaufman does a wonderful job outlining modernity and consumerization of the Lourdes phenomenon in her 2005 book, *Consuming Visions: Mass Culture and the Lourdes Shrine*.

component of the cultivated secular and religious landscape. For this thesis, I suggest that simulated Marian grottos are structures made to resemble natural caves or grotto recesses through natural materials—or human-made resources made to look natural—where there is either a local natural or a fabricated water supply. This source could be a spring or a simulated water source such as a cistern or, for that matter, municipal plumbing.



Figure 9. Post card of the grotto at Lourdes, France; late 19th century.

Replicated Lourdes grottos are established in numerous geographical locations, including Canada. In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, replicated Lourdes grottos have been fashioned in several communities within the last century, which, until now, have not been explored in a scholarly study. This thesis seeks to address the gap in the knowledge of local Lourdes shrines generally, and in Newfoundland specifically, through a comparative study of two regional grotto sites— Our Lady of Lourdes in Flatrock and the Grotto de Lourdes in Renewes. In the following chapters, I explore the importance of the religious materiality of these grottos, their public and personal use by local Catholics, and the oral histories and narratives that have developed around them. This study adds to the current knowledge concerning how belief and devotion are negotiated within the Roman Catholic Church's complex system of sacred shrines. The creation of religious sites within Catholic communities allows for a significant role for the group and individual layperson in the participation and execution of worship; it becomes a

sacramental act of devotion.¹⁰ This thesis recognizes locally replicated Lourdes grottos as vernacular structures produced by clerical and lay relationships. As historian and religious scholar Peter Williams remarks, this type of local collaboration is "...characterized by a mixture of popular and folk styles of religiosity shaped strongly by clerical influence" (1989, 232). Here, the priest and the congregation collaborate in the physical environment of devotion. Williams points out that this type of collaboration is "one remove from folk [vernacular] religion" (88). I propose that this partnership *is* vernacular in its scope due to the laity using local materials and operating as both architects and laborers and, to varying degrees, the caretakers and users of the grotto sites. Replicated grottos act as a locus of spirituality where religious practice and personal vernacular devotion are often negotiated. Because of this, regional Lourdes grottos are significant sites for understanding vernacular religious beliefs and behaviors within the auspices of official Catholic doctrine.

Insight into Marian devotion is vital for understanding Catholic religious observances and the subsequent construction of the Renewals and Flatrock grottos.¹¹ Mary's image can move the individual to spiritual contemplation and/or political action. Statues of the Virgin Mary and other objects of devotion represent a material medium in communication with the holy family.¹² As

¹⁰ Sacramentals, according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "...are sacred signs [materially and ritually] which bear a resemblance to the sacraments. They signify effects, particularly of a spiritual nature, which are obtained through the intercession of the Church. By them, men are disposed to receive the chief effect of the sacraments, and various occasions in life are rendered holy" (No. 1667). The word "Sacrament" is derived from the Latin *sacramentum*. Besides sacramentals, Catholics recognize seven *primary sacraments*; the sacrament of initiation; baptism, Eucharist and confirmation; sacraments of healing; anointing of the sick and penance (confession) and the sacraments of service; marriage, and holy orders. These are what St. Augustine, in the fifth century, described as "visible forms of invisible grace" (Inge 2003, 59).

¹¹ Mary is recognized within the Catholic Church as having four central dogmas. First, Mother of God or "*Theotokos*." Second, Perpetual Virginity. Third, Immaculate Conception, or born free of sin, and finally, the Assumption, where Mary was taken into heaven and did not face mortal death.

¹² Set in public spaces, religious images' become symbols which highlight both the public side of Mary by displaying both religious affiliation and personal devotion (McDannell 1995, 48). Publicly, Mary's image is carried through the streets during festivals, displayed in shop windows, mounted on car dashboards, and worn as holy pendants to protect and identify the individual as one of her devotees. Christians display her image on the lawn in front of their houses

such, Marian devotion can allow people to resist “modern reforming forces” that have made them feel powerless (Hermkins et al. 2009, 2). Anthropologists Victor and Edith Turner note that shifts in devotion began to take a turn as early as the nineteenth century concerning the rise of industrialized mass society (1978, 203). In this particular area of Marian piety, we can see the contestation of religion as it is lived being played out. The rise of Marian apparitions and pilgrimages to Marian shrines has been on the upsurge since the 1960s (Haardt 2011, 170). In many ways, apparitions of the Virgin and Marian devoutness, in general, have created a juxtaposition between the needs of the laity and the regulated observances sanctioned by the Catholic Church. The Church hierarchy has not endorsed many of these apparitions. Only seventeen are recognized out of hundreds reported over the years.¹³

In her discussion on the replica of Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto at Notre Dame, historian Colleen McDannell notes that building replicated religious sites is an established 19th-century practice among devotees to Mary (1995, 157). Infused with holy water from Lourdes, these sites become

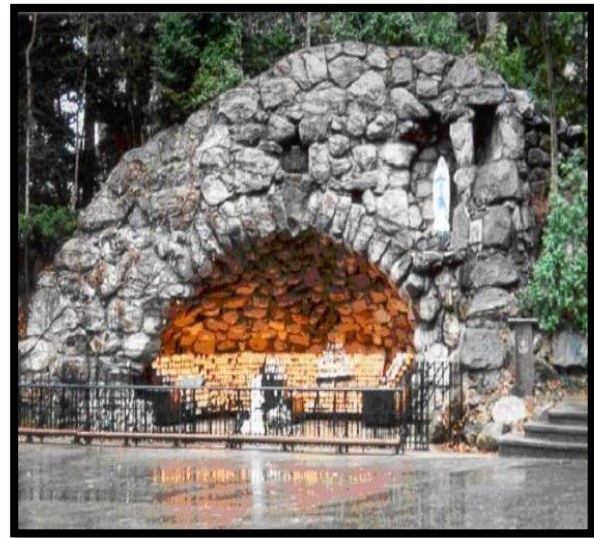


Figure: 10. Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes at the University of Notre Dame.

and can also be found in ethnic restaurants. The image of Mary defines the parameters by which the world views the individual as well as the group. She is set on a political stage through social interaction and display.

¹³ These sites include; Guadalupe, Mexico (1531); Lezajsk, Poland (1578); Siluva, Lithuania (1608); Luaus, France (1664); Rue du Bac, Paris, France (1830); Rome, Italy (1842); La Salette, France (1846); Lourdes, France (1858); Champion, Wisconsin (1859); Filippsdorf, Czech Republic (1866); Pontmain, France (1871); Gietrzwałd, Poland (1877); Knock, Ireland (1879); Fatima, Portugal (1917); Beauraing, Belgium (1932); Banneux, Belgium (1933); Kibeho, Rwanda (1981). According to Michael O’Neill, “The Catholic Church has been very cautious to approve purported miraculous events. In fact, in the 20th Century, of the hundreds of public claims of Marian apparitions, there have been only 9 with episcopal approval (4 of those with Vatican approval) and a handful of other Marian apparitions that have not received official approval but have been approved for faith expression at the site” (2018).

“authentic” healing centers dedicated to the Virgin (154-155). The physical presence of holy water is a catalyst that enables the devoted to perceive the replicated grotto as invested with the sacred power of Mary’s tangible presence. As Hermkens et al. have noted, these replicated grottos are not just facsimiles of more significant religious sites but, by the very act of imitation, they “...gain their special meaning and can make the presence of Mary felt just as with the original...” (2009, 10). Mary’s mediating authority is no longer an abstraction but a reality through the grotto’s presence in time and place. In other words, Mary *is* made material.

Unlike the villages and towns that European Catholics originally came from, the religious landscape of North America offered new complexities, forcing adaptation and change. Nevertheless, devotion to Mary was the one consistent element in a Catholic immigrant’s life. Various ethnic and national representations of the Holy Mother can be found in grottos and shrines nationwide, many with a distinct vernacular character that offers worshipers a place where “the worlds where the devout came from [are made] present again” (Orsi 2005,66). In Newfoundland, Mary came early to the New World in the mid-sixteenth century with Irish and French immigration, thus establishing her place in the province's history.

1.2 A Brief History

Culturally, Newfoundland offers an abundant historical and social record of transition and change in small ethnically identified communities. Like the location of Massabielle in France, Newfoundland's Catholic communities had a simplicity centered on local life, the Church, and

familial obligations. Renewes and Flatrock began life as fishing villages known as *outports* in Newfoundland.¹⁴

Both the communities of Flatrock and Renewes were primarily Irish Catholic, with a prevailing attitude of deference to the local clergy and the Catholic Church, arguably the cornerstone of the community (Many of the people I interviewed commented on this). Newfoundland was known to the Irish who immigrated to the Island as *Talamh an Eisc*, Land of the fish or the fishing grounds. These cultural expressions are formed by a complex history of immigration, attachment to a (real or imagined) Irish homeland, and a shared social and religious history.

Today, only a small portion of the provincial population of Newfoundland live in outports. Captain Richard Whitbourne, first governor of Renewes (1618-1620), commented on the desirability of these small bays:

And so, it is to be observed that roundabout the coast, and in the bays, there are many small island (none of them further off than a league from the land) both fair and fruitful: neither doth any one part of the world afford a greater store of good harbors, freer from dangers or more commodious (1620, 3).

Geographically, outports tended to be in sheltered bays where fresh water was

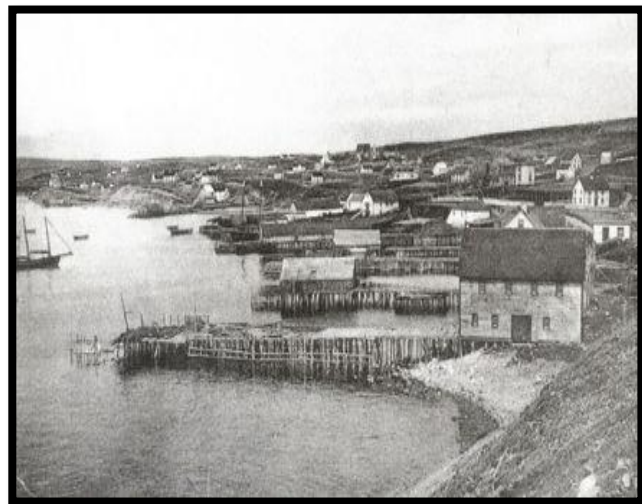


Figure 11. A Newfoundland outport. 19th cent photo of Renewes, north side.

available. Settled by small groups of individuals and families during the fishing seasons, these groups began to form social and community bonds as ‘overwintering’ became

¹⁴ I will be using the term ‘outport’ which differentiates the more significant port of St. Johns from those communities settled out along Newfoundland's coasts.

common. For four hundred years, these communities shaped the economic and social identity of the island, creating religious and ethnic diversity on its shores. According to cultural geographer John Mannion, settlement patterns show boundaries between Irish Catholics and the English Anglicans and Methodists in their choice of locations.

Mannion notes, "By 1836, the Irish were virtually the sole occupants of the southern half of the Avalon, from Bay Bulls round to Little Placentia and Long Harbour in Placentia Bay" (2004, 1).

External political and social pressures created Newfoundland's English, French, and Irish settlement patterns. One of these tensions was the occupation of Ireland by the British (1541 to 1922) and its early persecution of the Catholic faith. Historian John Fitzgerald has noted that Newfoundland's history is bound up in its complex associations with Roman Catholicism and Irish immigration (1997, 5). Therefore, it is essential to discuss religious and historical events in how they have directly affected the grottos at Flatrock and Renewes and how they have influenced the shaping of both sites physically, religiously, and politically.

The Catholic Church on the East Coast of Newfoundland found its antecedents in Irish immigration when numerous rural, poor, itinerant Catholic workers signed onboard ships working for Fishing Admirals seeking abundant cod stocks found off the coasts of Newfoundland (Huston and Smyth 1990, 192-193; Mannion 1974, 15-17). Based on economic considerations, this human migration was due to Ireland's lack of industry and viable land to farm (J. Mannion 1974). The economic focus on the island was primarily fishing, salt cod preparation, the seal trade, and lumber to a lesser degree. The fishing industry was the largest employer. Before the 17th century, there were no permanent settlements due to the British government's ban on allowing the island's occupation year-round (O'Neill 1984, 62). Archbishop Howley (1843-1914) remarks in his

Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland (1979 [1888]) that "The English laws and English sentiment opposed all attempts at colonization. The Island was regarded as a great ship moored in mid-ocean, to be yearly manned and commissioned by the fishermen of England and the Channel Island" (166). By the mid-1700s, the year-round occupation had become common. By 1751 there were 4,588 settlers in Newfoundland, chiefly on the coasts (63). Mannion determined that migration from Ireland—primarily from counties of Tipperary, Wexford, Waterford, and Cork—to the British Dominion of Newfoundland occurred seasonally in the early part of the 19th century, between 1810 and 1835, with the earliest Irish migrants settling along the Avalon Peninsula where Renew's is located (1974, 18; 1977, 5). Historian Paul O'Neill notes that by the 1790s, there were 10,000 people on the island, and half were Roman Catholic Irish (1984, 63). Protestant English (Anglican) from the West Country, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, and Somerset made up the other immigrants following British merchant vessels to the fertile fishing grounds.

The first Catholic missionaries to the island were the English Catholic Jesuits (Howley 1979[1887], 104; O'Neill 1984, 57), who were known for their global outreach in the proselytization of Catholicism (Park 2005, 448). O'Neill comments on the condition of the early Irish Catholic Church, observing:

The French Catholic Church in Newfoundland began with noblemen bishops sending Franciscan friars to minister to authorized settlers and governors. The English Catholic Church in Newfoundland began with secular and Jesuit clergy administering the sacrament to the chosen colonists of a respectable Lord of the realm. The Irish Catholic Church in Newfoundland began much less auspiciously with fugitive priests, skulking about from the shack of an illiterate and illegally settled family to another (57).

Bishop Howley gives a definitive date of 1784 for establishing the Catholic Church in Newfoundland (1979 [1888], 186). He notes that once the Rev. James O'Donel, from Tipperary, Ireland, arrived on the island, the Church began to unify and establish itself as a viable religious

and political force (Ibid). O'Donel was the first accredited priest sent by Rome to organize the then loosely organized Catholics (Mulcahy 1985, 5).

No matter how uncomplimentary O'Neill's comment concerning "skulking priests" may sound, it was the unfortunate state of affairs for the Catholic Church in Newfoundland during the 16th and early 17th centuries. Similarly, D. W. Prowse comments in his 1895 work, *History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial, and Foreign Records*, that Catholic priests were hunted like bandits:

The Catholic Church in this colony was founded by Irishmen and by Irishmen only, with no extraneous help; it was begun in an evil time of persecution and penal laws when all outward observances of the faith were prohibited under the direst pains and punishments; for years it was only amidst the lonely rocks and under the canopy of heaven that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass could be offered up by the sorely persecuted clergy (33).

British penal laws, enacted in 1695, followed Irish Catholics to remote parts of the British Empire, including Newfoundland, which had a high percentage of Catholics relative to other areas in North America. Laws were enacted against Catholics and other religious dissenters by the English and Irish Anglican Church and by a Protestant Parliament. Consequently, this rendered the Protestant Church of England (Anglican) and the Church of Ireland the only officially recognized faiths in the British colony of Newfoundland (Ulster Historical Foundation 2019).

The Renewes and Flatrock grottos were founded in the wake of a contentious religious history on the island. Therefore, I approach this study on the two grottos through a lens of Irish Catholicism (Howley 1979 [1888], 166; Keough 2008, 12-13; Mannion 2013, ii). Cultural foundations become relevant in both Renewes and Flatrock, where Catholic identity is, to no small degree, linked to Irish ethnicity and traditions and how locals perceive themselves within Newfoundland's historical and social complexity. The scale to which ethnicity plays some part

should not be underestimated. Mark G. McGowan notes that the Catholic Church evolved differently in communities in Canada due to social structures such as language, politics, and economy (2013, 2). Because of this, regional Catholicism has numerous local and cultural expressions. In her discussion of Mary in North American culture, Rosemary Radford Ruther highlights the importance of ethnic pluralism within Catholic devotion—what she calls “distinct strands” (1995, 15). These ethnic “strands” of Catholic practice play an essential role in how doctrine is disseminated and experienced within communities of believers (ibid).

Although the communities of Renewes and Flatrock are many generations removed from their ancestral land, my conversations with the locals, particularly those in Renewes, reveal a hyper-awareness of their ethnic connection to Ireland. One local I interviewed states, “Renewes is big into [their] Irish.” My research has shown that cultural identification with Ireland had much to do with the clergy and the Presentation Sisters, particularly for the outport of Renewes. Many had come from Ireland to teach the local children. An older participant from Renewes mentioned this topic to me, stating that back in the day, “We knew more about Ireland than we did about Canada or the United States, or any place like that (Hearn 2016).¹⁵

The devotion to Roman Catholicism, which thousands of Irish brought to North America’s shore, has been one of Newfoundland's identifying cultural features. Irish Catholicism is an essential consideration in my research due to an integral tie between ethnic and social identity, cultural genealogy (family ties), and the faith of these communities. Williams (2015) points out that Irish Catholicism has many distinct characteristics. For Irish Catholics, Church, and clergy were held in high esteem, and their authority was rarely questioned, even though there may have

¹⁵Hearn, Loyola, interview by author, Renewes, Newfoundland. August 2016, Interview # R011-08222016. Transcripts held by author.

been some resentment and minor displays of anticlericalism (294). The Catholic faith and the day-to-day displays of local customary practices among the Southern Shores Catholic population strengthened the expressions of a distinctive transplanted Irish culture. These coalesced into an adaptive Irish-Newfoundland configuration of religious, ethnic, and community uniqueness.

1.3 Reproductions

In Catholic culture, replications of Our lady of Lourdes grottos tie communities to a global spiritual narrative concerning Marian piety. Immigrants from Southern and Western Europe brought to the New World a tradition of shrine building and place-centered devotionism (Orsi 1998, 27).¹⁶ These replications are a critical and historical aspect of Catholic culture and play a significant role in Catholic identity and worship (McDannell 1995, 160). Therefore, the key to this thesis is the folkloristic concept of the group, where artistic practices express values and beliefs that convey collective identity through the creative dissemination of tradition (Ben Amos 1971 3, 13; Glassie 1995; Noyes 2003; Simms and Stephens 2011, 68). Subsequently, the formation of religious grottos within Catholic communities allows for significant roles for the congregation (group) and individual layperson to participate in the execution of communal devotion. These reproductions signify the desire to localize the sacred narrative materially in Catholic communities and are particularly crucial in our postmodern analysis of religion as a living and dynamic entity (Knott 2009, 159). In this thesis, I demonstrate that by situating replicated Lourdes' shrines in communities, Bernadette's extraordinary account concerning the Virgin's

¹⁶ Unlike the villages and towns that migrating Catholics came from, the religious landscape of North America offered new complexities, forcing adaptation and change. Nevertheless, the one consistent in their lives is their devotion to Mary. Various ethnic, national representations of the Holy Mother can be found in grottos and shrines nationwide, many with a distinct vernacular ethos that offer worshipers a place where "the worlds where the devout came from [are made] present again" (Orsi 2005,66).

manifestation is centralized in a public communal space, thus allowing for a deeper, more localized ostensive participation in the story of Lourdes.

For the laity and the clergy alike, replicated Lourdes grottos offer a place where intercession and miraculous cures are available without a pilgrimage to France. These sites are believed to be imbued with spiritual power, emanating directly from the presence of the Holy Virgin made material (despite her apparition appearing 2000 miles away) through a “media of presence” (Orsi 2005, 49).¹⁷ Religious scholar Amy Whitehead (2018) recognizes that to understand how shrines work, one must look at their various relationships (216). Here, religious objects are used relationally to work in the physical world to allow the day-to-day realm to be in touch with the presence of the divine. These replicated shrines, and the objects they hold, comprise the essence and power of the primary site for those who choose to encounter the holy contained within them (ibid).

Replicated grottos under the label of “Our Lady of Lourdes” covers a wide diversity of landscapes, from small backyard shrines to larger public religious spaces. Shrines develop relationships manifested through human and supernatural agency. Here, beliefs, customs, rituals, and narratives form a stratum of relational activity. These layered strata give depth, imbuing space and place with multiple spiritual meanings. Grottos become spiritual sensory thresholds or doorways where devotees can approach Mary through the agency of the material world.

Another characteristic of these sacred sites is their ability to guard against the fast pace of change in modern society. To some, they have become an intervening influence against the loss of

¹⁷ By “real presence” or “presence,” Orsi is delineating between the symbolic and the real; the really real. Many Catholics approach Mary and the saints with the belief that they are truly present in the material world of sacramental objects, just as Christ presence is truly real in the Eucharist (2005 18; 2016, 2-5).

social cohesiveness, which is the bulwark of the communities. These sites are touchstones of the past where nostalgia and memory are situated. Folklorist Ray Cashman has observed that material objects are used to negotiate modernity and “critically evaluate what is perceived as a staggering amount of change over the last century” (2006, 137). This work will address this issue in the context of the grottos’ ability to arbitrate and act upon, the uncertainty concerning the residents in these two communities, and the demographic population changes that affect Newfoundland’s smaller communities.

Subsequently, this thesis will add to the body of knowledge concerning Catholic devotion in Atlantic Canada and contribute to the in-depth documentation of two key religious heritage sites in Newfoundland and Labrador.¹⁸ Drawing on a number of authors who have written about the religious replications of major grottos, my work contributes to the broader field of knowledge concerning religious spatial displays in a regional context (Coleman and Elsner 1995, 128-135; Kaufman 2005, 182, 216; McDannell 1999; Mitchell 2009, 215-216; Orsi 1991; 132-162; Sciorra 2015, 121-153; Turner and Turner 1978).

1.4 Researching Reflexively

The discipline of folkloristics recognizes that how scholars perceive and present our research is filtered through our biases (Primiano 1995, 40). Subsequently, I offer my background and reasoning for pursuing this topic. My interest in shrines, particularly grottos, grew out of my time in Ireland, a predominantly Catholic country, where shrines of early Christian saints were part of the countryside. Ireland’s identity has a long and complicated history, but fundamentally, it

¹⁸ Typically the province is referred to as Newfoundland and Labrador but for the sake of brevity, and the fact that both sites are on the island of Newfoundland, I will only be using ‘Newfoundland’ when referencing the sites location.

is associated with profound political and religious ties to Catholicism (Elliott 2007, 6-10). I spent several years attending Limerick University, on the west coast of Ireland, studying for a Master's degree. During my free time, I would visit out-of-the-way places where holy wells and small shrines are found among the natural landscapes. Not far from the small West Clare town of Liscannor is a grotto dedicated to St. Bridget, known as St. Bridget's well. The shrine is situated on a natural spring below a small, historically significant graveyard. The grotto is built with local rock and cement, giving it a tomb-like appearance. A large statue of St. Bridget stands encased in glass just outside the entrance.



Figure 12. Grotto of St. Bridget c.2003.

A small pool of water emanates from a natural spring at the back of St. Bridget's well. Above the pool is a break in the ceiling, allowing rain and natural light to come through the dimly lit interior. As you walk into the damp, narrow structure, you are met with numerous secular and religious objects; pictures of loved ones, petitions for the sick, children's toys, rosaries, Mass cards, and keepsakes in various stages of decay. These

items are left as devotional offerings. With a background in anthropology and religious studies, I recognized these objects' collective and personal power. I was deeply moved by this physical outpouring of piety, need, and gratitude. It was an overwhelming testament to the human desire for spiritual intervention in everyday life. Melanie Wallendorf and John F. Sherry Jr. have commented that these occasions are a primary source of insight for the ethnographer because they are emotionally evocative and, therefore, "...more appreciated than might otherwise be

possible” (1989, 1). I returned to spend time there whenever I could, touched by the overt outpouring of vernacular spirituality in the material displays.

St. Bridget’s well extends back into the pre-history of Ireland. In my mind’s eye, I could see this space being used for religious devotion for many millennia emanating from a pagan past. This experience drew me to my interest in shrines, sacred wells, and grottos. I was also fascinated by how the natural landscape played a vital role in creating this sacred space.

Spiritually, the Irish grotto seemed wholly democratic and devoid of Church or clerical mediation. Looking back on this now, I can see how this thinking would correspond with Victor and Edith Turner’s ideas of “*communitas*” and the concept that pilgrimage sites, such as shrines and grottos, engender an anti-structural and egalitarian ethos (1978). However, I have learned that it is much more layered and complicated than I had initially realized.

1.5 Authentic vs. Inauthentic

As a folklorist and ethnographer, I have come to appreciate the power of narrative, i.e., legend, to catalyze creativity and mimicry in the material world.¹⁹ Replicated Marian grottos, such as Flatrock and Renewals, are lent their authenticity through their material aspects and participation in the remarkable legend of Lourdes (McDannell 1995, 161). McDannell notes that “time and distance conflate” through storied religious imagination, where Bernadette’s experience in 1858 is replicated daily through acts of devotion. The larger global story of Mary’s appearance in a small natural cave near the town of Lourdes in 1858 excites the religious imagination to recognize a locally built Lourdes grotto in Canada as “authentic” as the original (Orsi 2016, 50). Reproduced grotto sites are complex, with stratum of meaning and intent, both personally and

¹⁹ More on this in my discussion on ostension.

collectively. Material images of the Virgin Mary in her various manifestations are powerful. Standing or kneeling before her image requires the viewer of the material Mary to identify, on some level, the narrative behind the icon. For many devotees, representation of Mary through the medium of the matter is not as simple an imaginative storied connection. Instead, it is a corporeal contention, a real presence; Mary is fully extant when her “representation is subsumed by presence” (Freedburge 1989, 28).

Similarly, Orsi views this “presence” as an active component in Marian devotion (2001, 4; 2016, 50-56). Mary’s tangible manifestation is experiential at its core. By reproducing Lourdes at a location in the community, her power is centralized and focused, permitting the local populace to meet her in her special place set aside for the Holy Mother and her devoted followers (Orsi 1996, 26). Replicated Lourdes grottos offer a window into how religion is lived and creatively enacted daily by individuals and communities through behavior and religious material culture. The material display of the sacred narrative of Lourdes acts as a physical cue to the divine story of Mary and Bernadette.

My interest in the two Marian grottos is in how the laity addresses these sites within the contexts of Catholic practice and how they express their beliefs through everyday behaviors associated with these sites. Like Marylyn Motz, I recognize that folkloristics, as a discipline, has much to offer concerning the understanding of how belief and alternative ways of knowing are part of a vernacular practice, especially concerning Mary. Devotees experience an intensely personal relationship with her (1998, 340). By understanding how people create spiritual worlds for themselves as part of established Church doctrine and how the laity makes it meaningful through their thoughts and behaviors, we, as researchers, gain insight into how religion, devotion, and spirituality are applied personally. Folklorists Marion Bowman and Ulo Valk have expressed

that these forms of devotion are observable; however, it is not only what is observed but what these behaviors conceal, making the understanding of belief as a product of the human condition “mysterious and elusive” (2012, 10). Ethnographically, I may never truly uncover what complexities lie beneath religious belief and devotion regarding the grottos at Renew and Flatrock. So, at best, I can only analytically (and, to some degree, emotionally) understand these behaviors and present them in this study as a snapshot of time and place.

1.6 What is Vernacular Religion?

The scholarship on folk or vernacular belief has been a consideration in folkloristics since its inception (Motz 1998, 340; Mullen 2000, 120; Primiano 1995; Yoder 1974). However, this has been problematic due to past scholars characterizing folk religion, or folk belief, as removed, or aside from, elite religious practices (Primiano 1995; Yoder 1974). Folklore’s development is colored by historical, social, and interpretive processes which, until recent years, relegated ‘folk’ belief and its associated field of religion to the dark waters of superstition and pathologized behavior (Bennett 1989; 1987, 13-14; Degh 2001, 33; Mullen 2000; Motz 1998). Historically, folk religion was perceived as being apart from the elite observances of the Catholic Church, something which adulterated pure religion with superstitious customs and beliefs, or worse, as animistic vestiges from a ‘savage’ past (Primiano 1995, 38). However, within the last thirty years, folklorists and other social science disciplines have recognized the value of individual creative interpretation within the scope and practice of established religious faiths (Bowman 2003, 2012, 2016; Bennett 1999; Dundes 1999; Goldstein 1983, 1995; Hufford 1985, 1995, 2010; Magliocco 2006, 2012; Motz 1998; Mullen 1996; Primiano 1995, 1999, 2001, 2012).

This thesis recognizes Leonard Primiano’s 1995 article, “Vernacular Religion and the Search for Method in Religious Folklife,” as foundational for my research. I recognize vernacular

as an alternative designation for the term folk religion. Primiano challenged the label “folk religion,” used by previous scholars, as being reductionary and marginalizing to those who practiced it. The term ‘folk’ has been used to denote superstitious or less educated rural dwellers. Primiano successfully argued that the problematic terminology set folk or popular religion apart from official elite religion. Primiano reasons the use of the term folk marginalizes vernacular belief to something aside from religious practice, noting, “This practice both residualizes the religious lives of believers and, at the same time, reifies the authenticity of religious institutions as the exemplar of human religiosity” (Primiano 1995, 39). Primiano’s argument resulted in the term “vernacular religion” and the recognition that what people brought to their religious practices was not set apart from, or in conjunction with, elite religion but a fundamental part of how people understand and enact established religion creatively. Primiano’s argument challenged the assumptions of how individuals and groups practice their beliefs, recognizing that it was not opposed to established religion but deeply rooted in religious practice and devotion. Similarly, David Morgan notes that vernacular religion, or as he terms it, “lived religion,” “...comes in the form of practices—of seeing, speaking, eating, singing, and a wide variety of rituals—formal and informal, corporate and private, prescribed and improvised....Rather than define religion in terms of creeds or doctrines, these scholars find it more helpful to focus on practices as constitutive of religion” (2019 Para. 7)

Earlier scholars have addressed vernacular or live religion in their work on religious practice. Prior to Primiano’s 1995 article, folklorist Don Yoder discussed the problem of academic bias concerning folk religion by pointing out, “Folk religion is the totality of all those views and practices of religion that exist among the people apart from and alongside the strictly theological and liturgical forms of the official religion” (1974, 14). His argument attempted to remove the

stigma that had reduced folk belief to mere superstition. Primiano's argument went further by recognizing vernacular belief as not "alongside" or set "apart from" official religion but as a creative and integral part of a person's established religious life (1995, 44). It is the personal ongoing interpretation and negotiation of one's own beliefs (daily) within the "...institutionalized elements of organized religion" that Primiano recognizes as a vernacular religious practice (45).

Primiano asserts, "...one of the principal hallmarks of the study of religion by folklorists has been their attempt to do justice to belief as lived experience" (1995, 41). For that reason, this thesis recognizes the many-layered implications of the words "practice" and "belief" as culturally, socially, and individually loaded with interpretive meaning, primarily when associated with vernacular spiritual practice and orthodox religion. Its significance is subjective and should be approached phenomenologically (Bowman 2004; Cartwright 1982; Honko 1964; Tilley 1994). In the study of the sacred, phenomenology is an advantageous vantage point to locate and describe the individual's experience, particularly the transcendent experiences' associated with religious devotion. Phenomenology starts with the precept of first-hand subjective experience as the foundation for understanding belief and behavior. It proceeds from the premise of the subjective, i.e., an experiential philosophy rather than a rational principle. In other words, how do individuals experience religious phenomena, and what is the individual undergoing during and alongside devotional acts? (Cartwright 1982; Bowman 2004, 5; Tambiah 2010, 101-103). In an early article on memorates (supernatural belief stories), folklorist Christine Cartwright discusses the importance of a phenomenological approach:

The heart of phenomenological social science, whether applied to sensory perception, to the relations between belief and experience for a given individual in a given instance, or the relationship between personal experience and shared narratives or beliefs, is to make the full, faithful presentation of the informants' perspectives the foundation of the research (1982, 59).

Cartwright ascertains that these experiences relating to supernatural or religious experiences are “often rooted in genuine perception or some sort...” (57).

Similarly, Folklorist David Hufford recognizes that many beliefs can be culturally generated (1995a, 19). However, his work with those who have had supernatural assaults, known as the Old Hag or Mara, has established that, in some cases, belief is also generated through personal experience (1995b, 31). In his 1982 book, *The Terror That Comes in the Night: An Experience-Centered Study of Supernatural Assault Traditions*, Hufford argues for his “Experiential Source Hypothesis,” offering the concept that some vernacular beliefs are rooted in actual (somatic) events (1982, x). Personal experience is a vital element in studying vernacular religion and belief and is deeply embedded in the human body (embodiment) and the act of worship. Belief is bolstered by numinous religious experience, as I have ascertained through several interviews concerning healings and supernatural happenings at the two Lourdes grotto sites. Hufford also notes that we obtain most of our beliefs from culture, but not *all* beliefs are learned this way (1995, 21). We acquire or learn beliefs through cultural training and imitation; belief is also acquired through personal experience.

This thesis will likewise engage religious scholar Robert Orsi’s arguments on “real presence” and the network of experiential personal relationships with the sacred people employ in their everyday expressions of spirituality (2005; 2016; 2012a; 2012b). Orsi argues for the experiential as essential to belief by remarking that faith is made and sustained on “networks” of interpersonal, material, and social constructs that create dynamic and mutable connections between the individual and their understanding of the divine (Orsi 2005, 2). Locating the experiential argument in Catholic spiritualities, Orsi reasons that once religion, and by extension belief, is recognized not as a web of “meaning” but of relationships, scholars can take their place

as participants within this dynamic network (2005, 5). In his 2005 work *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them*, Orsi situates his argument within his personal and scholarly life, locating relationships through narratives concerning his family. He points out that we, as researchers, are caught up in these bonds whether or not we choose to be. I agree that belief, and the subsequent narratives we scholars seek, are entangled within a highly complex network of experiential human and divine relationships.

Regarding the material aspects of lived religion, I identify religious scholar David Morgan's work on religious visual culture in this thesis. Seeing is a personal (embodied) and social exercise (2012, 6). Therefore, Morgan recognizes that individuals share common values that affect their ways of experiencing belief in the sacred. Similarly, Patrick Mullen comments, "Belief suggests an abstract level of cognition, but to study it, we must look at concrete practice and cultural expression...." (2000, 120). Worship is a presentation of self to the divine socially, emotionally, and materially in a culturally created landscape; therefore, in this thesis, I recognize that seeing the spiritual world through a cultural lens acts as a framework for experience and belief in how they are understood. However, I recognize that more profound and personal forms of belief are unseen. It is here where negotiation within the mind and imagination interact with internal dialog by constantly re-evaluating experiences and understandings of both the spiritual and external world. Therefore, throughout this thesis, I maintain that experience and religious imagination are primary belief components.

Objects are experiential, and as such, icons of Mary, such as those at the two grottos, act as a medium of presence, where devotion and faith are expressed and experienced in the sensate world. It can be argued that scholars of religion and spiritual belief have detected experience and praxis as central actors when locating belief and how it makes meaning in people's lives. Because

of this new direction in the study of religion, folklorists now identify that the various religious expressions are not entirely contained in assertions of religious canons and creeds but in how religion is internalized and enacted in the daily lives of believers. It is the “reality of religion as it is lived” by the group or individual (Primiano 1995, 39).

I also utilize Marion Bowman’s approach to vernacular religion by stressing the “...importance of the geographical and cultural context in which belief and praxis occur...” (2003, 286). This is vital when working with regional shrines that reflect specific cultural or ethnic practices. Recognition of cultural context would include the creative act of building and utilizing shrines and grottos, which display ethnic and religious expression through a multilayered semiotic (signs) process. The symbols are elite and “official,” yet are varied materially, artistically, and communally. They move beyond the theological and into a personal creative expression of ordinary Catholics (Bovin 2009). Religious scholar Nathan Mitchel has argued that vernacular religion has “contributed powerfully” to Church doctrine and ritual (2009, 123). Similarly, Orsi states that it is “impossible” to draw a line between “elite and vernacular practice in Catholicism,” which, as this thesis will demonstrate, is particularly noticeable in the realm of Marian devotion and grotto replication (2016, 30).

1.7 Vernacular Catholicism

As a historically significant religion, Roman Catholicism offers a rich and diverse field of exploration into myriad dimensions of faith. When concentrating on vernacular and elite aspects of religious devotion, Catholicism can have particularly complex and multifaceted belief structures. Williams recognizes Catholicism as a complex blend of elements accumulated over time (1989, 69). Subsequently, isolating the official and vernacular aspects is sometimes challenging because these are highly syncretic behaviors, especially among ethnic groups of

Catholics. Bowman reflects this in her assertion that “Boundaries between official, folk (vernacular), and individual religion are not well-defined and can be virtually indistinguishable” (2004, 7). Primiano also identifies this in his claim that practices and beliefs represented “within institutionalized and non-institutionalized Catholicism form a rich source of inspiration within the process of believing” (2001b, 54). He further states:

Vernacular Catholicism is the uniquely Catholic formulation of the vernacular religious impulse shared by all religious people. It is the way a Catholic individually expresses his or her understanding of the Catholic tradition, which is the history, structures, laws, customs, beliefs, and practices of its people. *Vernacular Catholicism involves absorbing, learning, accepting, changing, denying, embellishing, and appreciating Catholicism's spiritual and cultural parameters in one's life.* It is manifested by Catholic believers and evidenced within the widest range of Catholic institutions (italics mine, *ibid*).

In an early article on folk Catholicism (1982), folklorist Jack Santino notes that Vernacular Catholicism is part of a particular cultural manifestation and should be addressed not only within the context of a group or a place but for its individual and cross-cultural idiosyncrasies (93). In the past, emphasis on vernacular aspects of Catholicism has been researched or collected primarily within the context of ethnic traditional cultures such as Mexico and the Philippines (*ibid*). In recent years, however, folklorists and other academic researchers have moved closer to home and focused on the individual aspects of vernacular Catholicism in western belief systems. Primiano points out that vernacular Catholicism can be expressed in two contexts; the individual Catholic and the [diverse] Catholic community (2001b, 55). Here, individuals and communities have creatively adapted religious behaviors to augment their everyday practice of religion, in other words, “religion as lived” rather than religion as doctrinally decreed.

Catholic vernacular practice offers a range of expressions that would not be considered a part of Church theology but are intimately a part of an individual’s spiritual practice (Bowman 2004, 5). Through ethnography, researchers can understand how individual and collective

vernacular spirituality resonates within groups of believers (Primiano 1995, 44). Religious belief and praxis are a creative personal expressions that are diverse, complex, and ever-changing to meet the needs of the individual within the structures of Catholicism (Bowman and Valk 2014, 5; McGuire 2008, 183).

Because of its unique nature, Catholicism can and has absorbed (syncretic) values from other belief systems and has been doing so for the last two thousand years, thus, making it fertile ground for creative religious vernacular augmentation by the laity. For example, vernacular beliefs, already interwoven into the environment, coalesced at Lourdes, inspiring the laity to recognize the Virgin in a place previously influenced by supernatural forces. Here, God and the Virgin were “omnipresent” in the everyday world, as were ghosts, fairies, and other uncanny beings (Harris 1999, 13). There was no spiritual conflict in this cohabitation of the supernatural for the locals. Nor did they see it as two separate belief systems; instead, they recognized it as sacramental, the natural workings of God’s divine mystery in the material world.

As a more unconventional example of vernacular Catholicism, material objects, such as a statue of St. Joseph, are not only venerated but modified to meet the immediate needs of the supplicant. The vernacular practice of burying St. Joseph upside down in a yard to help sell the home would seem unusual (Primiano 1999, 187). However, such practices meet the practitioner's needs here and now and are not recognized by the devotee as being any less Catholic than if it was just a simple prayer to the saint (Bowman 2004, 7). Dramatic gestures— such as burying St. Joseph upside down and two feet under, are visible performances of vernacular belief.²⁰ Primiano

²⁰ The St. Joseph’s statue in figure 13 is an interesting mix of a modern sacramentalism, material religiosity, and religious kitsch. The statue is effectively an elite, vernacular, and popular (mass-consumption) religious object, what Leonard Primiano terms, “Catholic plasticiana.” These small, cheap religious items began to flourish not long after the apparition at Lourdes (mid-19th century) with its need to modernize and, subsequently, consumerise popular religious sites (almost all apparition sites have a gift stores). Later in the 20th century, small Christian retailers outside

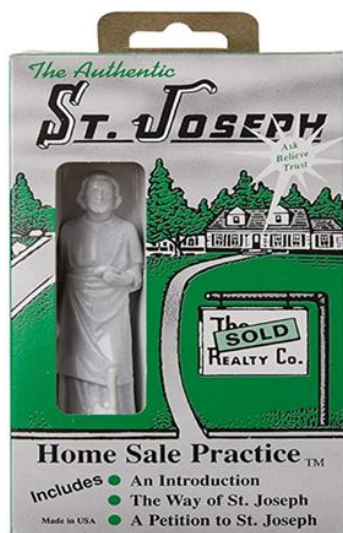


Figure 13. Need help selling your house? You can purchase St. Joseph on Amazon.com.

Points out that Christians continue to incorporate into the modern world material culture that can be used to integrate the holy into all aspects of life, i.e., home, office, and even in automobiles (1999, 187-188). Vernacular religious behaviors are not always evident to an outside observer. Manifestations of vernacular belief can take the form of how people form relationships with saints and the Holy Family personally. By creatively modifying these interactions, they may get results and meet needs not addressed in institutional Catholic practice.

Healing of the body is where Catholic vernacular practice is particularly evident. Whether water from Lourdes or a saint’s relic in a Church, material objects have often been imbued with extra-devotional meaning outside of Church doctrine. As an illustration, faced with the rapid change in medicine over the last century—with its science-based care that has appeared void of a holistic understanding of disease—has left numerous Catholics searching for a more rounded multivalent approach to healing (Hufford 1985; McGuire 2008, 19-20; Orsi 1989, 70). One of my collaborators tells me that he keeps a jug of holy water collected at the local Lourdes grotto at home and will drink it if he is not feeling well. Ingesting holy water is not encouraged by the Church due to pathogens, yet, it is done frequently by devotees who recognize the power inherent

of these areas began to proliferate selling cheap religious items to those who felt the need to have these images alongside them everywhere they went. Key chains, small plastic statues for car dashboards, holy cards for your purse, and other items fed a populace that was in need of constant contact with the holy. Primiano reasons that many of the stores that sell these objects walk in two different Catholic eras, where some are relics of the pre-Vatican II time “when the understanding of sacramental culture was centered on the visual, the sensual, and their innate association with the supernatural and the sacred” (1999, 195). Now they are available for purchase from Amazon.com, and other online sites.

within the Lourdes water and feel protected from consuming possible disease-carrying microbes.

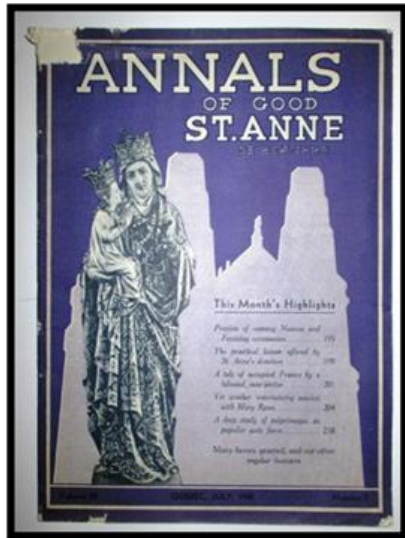


Figure: 14. *Annals of St. Anne*, c. 1941

Vernacular belief can also take the form of “folk sacramentals” (Hufford 1985, 202). In Catholicism, non-sanctioned objects can be used in place of recognized sacramentals. These objects have associations with the holy but are not directly affiliated with the sacred tenets of the Church. David Hufford (1985) tells of a woman who used *The Annals of St. Anne De Beaupre* to heal her son of stomach pain by placing it on the boy’s abdomen, after which he felt no pain and could finally sleep (ibid).²¹

One story was told to me by Helen Lawler, who grew up in Renew, exemplifies vernacular Catholic behavior:

Now, St. Bridget was honored and revered by the older people because it was believed that St. Bridget would walk on the fences. Now, her feast day was around the first of February, and an old man who used to live next door to us, who died in the early 60s, would put a cord along the fences, and she [St. Bridget] was supposed to walk along it at night, and that was a cure. You would wrap that [the cord] around yourself. It would keep you from back complaints, and St. Vitus Dance, whatever that was [Parkinson’s disease] (2016).

Helen also recounts how objects, such as blessed candles from February 2nd, St. Bridget’s Day, were used vernacularly for both blessings and healings:

I remember my uncle would drop some [candle wax] on the horse, probably the horse's mane and his tail [for a blessing] And, I actually saw my mother drop a bead on her toenail because she had problems with her nails...Now, I certainly

²¹ The *Annals of St. Anne De Beaupre* is a Catholic magazine published bi-yearly. Founded in 1861, it boasts over 2,000 subscribers.

don't advise that, but the nail would grow in, and that was the end of the ingrown toenail (2016).

Recognized sacramental objects such as holy water, oil, religious jewelry, relics, and icons in ritual practice are also used creatively. Seen as physical manifestations of the sacred that can directly affect the body, these holy objects are not just stone, cloth, wood, or water but are made real through the sacred imagination of the believer. Anthropologist Meredith McGuire asks if these non-official forms of belief are any less religious than the official Church-sanctioned religiosity (2008, 20). I would have to answer no as a folklorist focusing on vernacular religious belief. Those who incorporate vernacular practices do not see it separately from their Catholic devotional observances.

The environments at grottos and shrines are dynamic. As such, they can encourage various forms of vernacular practice by drawing on the internal devotion of the individual as well as community-shared values, beliefs, and symbols. In Roman Catholicism, additional overtly vernacular displays of religious belief are located within communities through religious possessions, yard shrines, ex-votos at religious sites, religious objects worn on the body, fiestas, and the like. More colorful displays of these sacramental observances are usually associated with old-world religious behaviors (Orsi 2005, 1985; Pena 2011; Sciorra 2015; Tweed 1997). Because the grotto sites at Renew and Flatrock are intimately associated with vernacular belief and construction, this thesis identifies replicating religious sites as a vital aspect of Catholic vernacular culture. Here, spirituality is extended and expressed outside the walls of the Church and into a common area where the dynamics of vernacular religious devotion by the community are played out (McDannell 1995, 155; Orsi 2005, 59).

The two grottos in Newfoundland, particularly the one in Renew, reflect a long-standing heritage of Irish Catholicism on the island, which leans towards a more moralistic religious

interpretation and presentation of Catholicism (Fanning 2014, 46-47). After Irish independence from Britain (1922), the Catholic Church held a “moral monopoly” over Irish society, where the state and Church worked in tandem to regulate religious and moral behaviors (Ingles 2014, 46). This rigid regulation is reflected in the Irish laws that mirrored Catholic principles and dominated all aspects of social and personal life (ibid). Immorality, vice, and secularization were perceived as damaging to the social fabric of Irish Catholic society. All efforts to minimize these influences were focused on Catholics by the Church and state, creating stringent social laws bordering on theocracy (50). This rigid interpretation of social morality did not stop the laity from expressing their beliefs in vernacular ways, either in Ireland or Newfoundland.²² Having been removed from Ireland for many years, the Catholics of Newfoundland did not necessarily hold to the demanding moralistic interpretations of the Irish Catholic Church. However, priests newly come from Ireland undoubtedly did. This harsh Catholic morality will come into play later during the clerical abuse scandal in Newfoundland, which I discuss in chapter eight.

1.8 Arguments Offered

This thesis offers three arguments or claims regarding the replicated grottos at Renew's and Flatrock. First, my research into the history of Lourdes has persuaded me that from its inception (Bernadette's first apparition), the phenomenon was a vernacular or popular religious movement driven by the people, for the people, and because of a need to control the message, appropriated by a skeptical Church for its benefit. I have come to recognize that the driving force behind many of these sites is the laity despite the religious, political, and social pressures of the Church. Orsi remarks that there is often tension between clergy and the laity around these sacred sites (1996,

²² An Irish friend once told me in reference to the Irish people, “If you scratch the surface here in Ireland, you'll find the pagan underneath”

27). I assert that these tensions are why they have remained a part of Catholic vernacular worship no matter how other internal and external forces in the Church vie for dominance. I maintain that the essential core of replicated grottos is their distinct vernacular origins and Mary's unambiguous message to and about ordinary people. I will argue this further in subsequent chapters.

Religious scholar Tine Van Osselaer recognizes that "Religious history intersects women's history" (2019, 579). With this understanding, I offer my second argument that Lourdes grottos are physically and metaphorically feminine in orientation. Moreover, when combined with the sacred womanhood of Mary, you have an unambiguous spiritual alternative to a male-dominated institution. Historian Ruth Harris has noted that Bernadette's vision of the Virgin placed her as the conduit of the "feminine supernatural" (1999, 71). "Girls like Bernadette were seen as appropriate vessels [in the 19th century] to encounter the divine, and women the proper judges of their experiences," Harris comments (1999, 358). Likewise, historian Suzanne Kaufman observes that the Lourdes apparition allowed women to acknowledge the feminine in Catholicism on a public scale (2005, 3). Through the Lourdes phenomenon, Kaufman further recognizes that Catholic women begin to see themselves as part of the extraordinary drama between Bernadette and Mary (134).

Similarly, Harris recognizes the grotto site at Lourdes as "transgressive" in its feminine metaphors (1999, 85). Womblike at the entrance, dark and moist, the female imagery was not lost on the locals nor the Church (86). The power of female metaphors and the feminine actors of the Lourdes story should not be underestimated in the transformational quality and vernacular adaptability of replicated Lourdes grottos.

Based on my research, I stress that some Catholics recognize Marian devotional sites act as tangible replacements to the structured aspects of the formal Church. Unlike other sacraments,

such as the Eucharist and confession, Marian devotion does not require a priest's mediating presence, allowing for a more personalized vernacular approach to religious observances (Kane 2004, 89). At Lourdes, surrounded by the elements of earth, rock, and water, the Holy Mother appeared to a young woman, leading to one of the most spiritually powerful and dynamic vernacular/elite religious sites in Christendom.

Third, as folklorist Patrick Mullen points out, folklorists recognize the relationship between legend and belief (1971, 408). Consequently, I argue that these sacred edifices operate as a form of religious ostension in that they are material and ritual re-enactments of an early-modern religious legend. Moreover, pilgrimages to these sites can be considered a practice of spiritual legend tripping or journey.²³ This form of mimesis is situated not only in the reproduction of the grotto but in the daily visits and expectations of spiritual communion with Mary by the devout, who view the grotto as viable and authentic as the original. Legend can be a powerful tool in transforming a place, as folklorists Donald H. Holly Jr. and Casey E. Cordy point out (2007, 336).

Bernadette's vision of the Virgin Mary has its origins in recent history; equally, it has its antecedents in hagiography, the history and legends of Catholic saints. Told initially as an oral narrative, Bernadette's experiences at the grotto near Lourdes have allowed the religious imagination to manifest the legend ostensibly and materially around the Catholic world through pilgrimage and replicated grottos. The folkloric concept of ostension first appeared in Folklorist Linda Degh's 1983 article "Does the Word 'Dog Bite'? Ostensive Action: A Means of Legend

²³ I recognize that ostension, as we know it in the field of folklore, has been applied to primarily secular supernatural and murder legends and not in the context of vernacular religion, particularly Catholic saints' legends. Nonetheless, I see it as viable research model in the study of replicated sacred space in connection with belief, narrative and creative action. Another issue, is the sensitivity of the topic of personal and group spirituality, so the need to be cognisant of a highly subjective topic, such as religion, is necessary when using a secular concept as a research medium for what is deemed by many as sacred.

Telling?” Degh borrowed the term from semiotics, recognizing the act of replicating legendary happenings, both material and actionable, as ostensive action—an expansion of legend into reality. Similarly, Bill Ellis notes that ostension allows individuals and groups to participate in a “dramatic extension [of legend] into real life” (2003, 41). This thesis proposes that replicated Lourdes grottos are sacred legends made material through religious ostension. I will delve further into this idea in the following chapters.

1.9 Questions to be answered

The questions that I will be exploring in this thesis are threefold. First, I examine the material considerations and the motivations for grotto construction within the community. What are the physical attributes of these grottos? Who designed and built them, and most importantly, why? These sacred structures reveal secular and spiritual relationships within the community. Folklorist Gerald Pocius has noted that physical environments can reveal “codes,” which indicate underlying behaviors by those who utilize them (1986, 124). These are not always evident but reveal themselves through analyzing spatial, material, and social values integral to their creation and use. The Renewes and Flatrock grottos have external material aspects that reflect deeper associations with unspoken devout practices. Dedication plaques, memorial statues to deceased loved ones, and religious articles are material reflections of inner needs and supplications; these are all reminders of the influence materiality employs to affect and be affected by the sacred. Belief is woven into a web of meaning with the material world, revealing hidden aspects that are not evident in other forms of religious observance.

Further attention to the built environment raises questions concerning local geography and landscape play in developing these devotional sites. Nostalgia, memory, and religious and public identity intimately connect to place. This connection includes photographs, greeting cards, guest

books, letters, and other artifacts. Additional considerations will be given to the role of sacred legend as it pertains to the narrative of Lourdes and the apparition of Mary. By extension, the building of replicated grottos is a form of religious ostension.

The two Catholic communities' socio-cultural influences on belief and praxis are not arbitrary. The choice to set these sites in a public space becomes as much about cultural identity, religious boundaries, and land ownership as it does about religious narrative and practice. The British, Irish, and French inhabited Newfoundland and brought their understanding of land, society, and religion (Mannion 1974, 1977, 4-5; O'Neill 1984, 23-30). Religious scholar Catherin O'Brien pointedly notes that Mary's image has often been understood as "shorthand" for ethnic communities of Catholics, such as the Irish and Italians (2019, 546). Renews and Flatrock have long histories in Newfoundland, dating back to the early British colonial occupation. Ethnic identity has played an essential role in the choice of grotto sites and their constructions; therefore, I will examine this interconnectedness to land, community, ethnicity, and history as the context for grotto reproduction.

My second question asks how the use of religious replications of Our Lady of Lourdes in local Newfoundland Catholic communities manifests both personal and communal spiritual meaning (public vs. private). This question is the fundamental core of this research. The use and perception of the grottos are multilayered. Communally, Catholic rituals, such as the Feast of the Assumption ("Lady Day") on August 15th, as well as communal sacraments led by the Church and laity (re-enacting the Stations of the Cross and praying the Rosary), function by connecting the Catholic community through the collective praxis and shared ritual. These behaviors reveal to the researcher the dynamic aspects of collective worship and how it affects the group's social bonds, religious continuity, and change through time. For the communities of Flatrock and Renews,

religion was central to communal cohesion. Folklorist Sabina Magliocco identifies this cohesion noting, "Spirituality is a primary component of group identity. Because it deals with numinous experience and defines the sacred, ethics, values, and mores of a group, it could be said to lie at the core of identity for many and be a major determinant factor in a group's ethos" (2005, 1). Therefore, this thesis will shed light on religious group participation in the shrines' physical and spiritual aspects and the devotional practices they generate.

The third question in my research concerns the role of modernity and change in the religious landscape, both physically and spiritually. One of the more powerful aspects of a holy site is that they reflect the society in time and place. Narratives at religious sites can express contemporary issues around progress and change. They can offer implicit data on the inner (subjective) and outer (objective) workings of the populace's spiritual perceptions and beliefs. For example, in the middle of the 19th century, the world was in the throes of the Industrial Revolution. Mass media was becoming a way to connect outside the insular world of local towns and villages. Telegraphs, railway lines, newspapers, and mail services offered a new medium of information exchange, and the site at Lourdes in France reflected this. Suzanne Kaufman remarks that Lourdes emerged as a "modern pilgrimage shrine" by using contemporary modes of information transmission to disseminate its message to the rest of the world (2005, 2). Modernity changed both global and local devotional practices. Lourdes became a "mass spectacle" through advertisements in the popular press and public transportation to the site through new roads and railways (3). Mass pilgrimages, encouraged by the Catholic Church, descended on the sleepy village of Lourdes, creating rapid change. Souvenir shops, hotels, restaurants, and the sheer number of people changed Lourdes's demographics and character. Here, Mary became both an

intercessor and a commercialized product. Lourdes and its commodification are extreme examples but reflect how modernity, change, and social attitudes can affect and be reflected at a sacred site.

These attitudes are no less relevant for Renewals and Flatrock, where the movement of time and changing social and demographic patterns mirror local narratives. How the communities cope with change is part of the larger story concerning the grottos. These sites offer an element of relative permanency and connection to the past. Simultaneously, they are also dynamic in their changing use and meaning to each generation. Historical and social pressures impose a multivocal discourse on these sites, creating dialogue in the community on the historical significance, continuity, and relevance of the grottos into the twenty-first century. This thesis identifies the replication of religious sites as a vital aspect of Catholic vernacular culture, where devoutness extends outside the walls of the Church into a common area, where the dynamics of religious devotion are social, individual, and communal (McDannell 1995, 155; Orsi 2005, 5).

1.10 Chapter Overviews

In chapter one, “Mary Made Material,” I introduce my research and explain why studying replicated Marian grottos is vital to understanding Catholic belief within established religion and vernacular practice. By instituting replicated Lourdes grottos in communities, Bernadette’s visions are made tangible and meaningful to local devotees, thus, enabling them to participate in the miraculous and the otherworldly daily. Chapter two continues with this overall theme. In subsequent chapters, I will discuss the theoretical approach to these shrines and answer additional questions. Most importantly, I offer an overview of the multi-disciplinary literature that sustains this work and the various topics influencing my research, such as space and place, material culture, embodiment, praxis, pilgrimage, and more.

Having previously argued the multivalent aspects of Marian grottos by filling in the gaps concerning literature surrounding the subject, chapter three, “A Place in History,” will provide my research background. The chapter begins with the historical placement of shrines and relics in the Christian world as an antecedent to replicated Marian shrines. I discuss the importance of continuity and situate the grotto’s use and meaning within the continuity of time and history. By locating the historical and the socio-political contexts surrounding the Grottos at Flatrock and Renewes through their physical assembly and religious and social meaning, I locate how the past and the present tie together in replicated shrine construction. Together with the broader social history, this chapter will deliberate on the communities of Flatrock and Renewes and how these external forces directly contributed to the construction and dialogue concerning sacred grottos.

Chapter four, “Sites of Devotion: Renewes,” sets the stage for my discussion of the Lourdes grotto in Renewes. Based on my interviews with community members, I discuss the construction, personal meaning, and importance of having a replicated Marian grotto centered in the area. Local narratives are centered on the grotto’s vernacular spiritual meanings and Mary’s ability to mediate personal pain and loss. I locate themes within these narratives that offer insight into deeper meanings concerning the devotion to Mary and how religious materiality, in the form of replicated Marian grottos, works as a negotiator in times of joy, celebration, turbulence, and uncertainty.

In chapter five, “The Lourdes Grotto at Flatrock,” I examine the community of Flatrock and the subsequent building of the Lourdes grotto. The overall theme of this chapter is flexibility in the face of a changing world. This change is played out in population demographics and a shrinking Catholic Church. Use and upkeep become primary concerns with the sites. Chapter six, *Ritual*, traces ritual practice at the grottos of Our Lady of Lourdes and Grotto de Lourdes in Flatrock and Renewes in the broader global phenomenon of Marian devotion and ritual. From the

early processional ceremonialism of the Lady Day (Feast of the Assumption) by the parish to family displays of piety and individual devotion, these stories offer an insight into the importance of Our Lady of Lourdes in the everyday lives of the laity.

Chapter seven locates “Signs and Wonders” through interviews with local individuals associated with the grottos at Flatrock and Renew. Miracles are directly associated with the Lourdes grotto in France; consequently, devotees have the same expectations of Mary’s miraculous intercession at the replicated grottos. This chapter will focus on the grottos’ impact on the intangible world of supernatural healing, protection, grief, and divine intervention. Chapter eight, “Mary’s Grotto; Ever Changing,” deals with Mary in the modern world and her ability to offer a safe harbor during fractious times. I will be looking at the issue of child abuse in the Catholic Church and its effects on the community of Renew. Renew was particularly hard hit during the scandal. This chapter offers insight into how many coped with this time and how the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes became a safe site for those negotiating their spirituality and religious affiliation.

Chapter Two

Methods and Overview

“Shrines are thus like milestones that guide the journey of the children of God on earth. They foster the experience of gathering and encountering and the building up of the ecclesial community.”

(Memory, Presence and Prophecy of the Living God n/d)

2.1 Approach

This thesis is framed within folkloristics, with further considerations in religious studies, cultural geography, anthropology, sociology, and art history. My inquiries into replicated Lourdes grottos focus on the expressive and creative behaviors of spirituality related to material religious culture and vernacular belief in juxtaposition with established religious observances and the written canonical literature within Catholicism. I will privilege Catholic spirituality's oral, material, and behavioral aspects that offer insight into vernacular behaviors approaching the divine. These practices articulate beliefs within groups and individuals, which are not always directly evident to the casual observer. The Catholic Church recognizes shrines, particularly Marian shrines, as exemplars of faith and as “gifts of grace” to God’s Church:

Marian shrines, in particular, provide an authentic school of faith based on Mary’s example and motherly intercession. Today too, by their witness to the manifold richness of God’s saving activity, all shrines are an inestimable gift of grace to his Church (The Shrine 1999, para.3).

On the surface, Marian grottos, as authorized worship sites, offer individuals and groups established Church sanctioned places to worship in an outdoor venue. However, this “authentic school of faith” that the Catholic Church speaks of above wears many coats. How people express, experience, and understand their devotions at a shrine can be highly individualized and diverse. Because of this, the study of Marian shrines, notably replicated Marian grottos at a local level, can

challenge our concepts of established belief models that are thought to be the core of formal Catholic practices. This undertaking requires researchers to see religion as “as plural, dynamic, and [locally] engaged” beyond the edifice of the official Catholic Church (Knott 2009, 159). The communities of Flatrock and Renews, and their associated grottos, afford a unique opportunity to understand how vernacular belief operates in small populaces that, until as late as the 1970s, were, to some degree, insulated from the modern world. These populations tended to be homogeneous and predominantly Irish Catholic in their religious orientation.

The methodology of my research is both historical and ethnographic. Interviews, library research, archival work, and many trips to the grottos of Flatrock and Renews are the cornerstone of this work. My research spanned a year and a half. The summers of 2016 and 2017 were spent interviewing individuals, and the winter months consisted of library and archival research. My eighteen interviewees entailed fifteen laities and three clergies, all practicing Catholics in some form or another. Not all laity attended Mass weekly, but they had grown up in the Church and had personal and familial ties to the two communities. I spent multiple hours in the Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Saint John's, where I gained an understanding of the historical context of the grottos and Church history. Over two years, I attended several religious celebrations at the grottos, including The Feast of Assumption on August 15, where the grotto is used for collective worship and ritual.

2.2 Questions of Faith and Belief

Religious scholar, Robert Orsi's work is central to this thesis (2005). Orsi locates lived belief and its relationship to experience and narrative in the interpersonal relationships between the individual and the divine. The grottos at Flatrock and Renews allow individuals to experience a genuine interpersonal relationship with the Mother of Jesus outside the established church and

clergy. Religion, Orsi argues, is not about “meaning-making;” instead, it is a “...network or relationships between heaven and earth involving humans of all ages, and many different sacred figures together” (2). Locating his argument in Catholic spiritualities, Orsi contends that once religion, and by extension belief, is recognized not as a “web of meaning” but of experiential relationships, a more accurate understanding of how individuals express their beliefs can be reached be appreciated (5).

The duality between the realm of the miraculous and post-modern intellectualism via the Enlightenment creates a dichotomy in many believers. This duality of thought affects how people explain what and why they believe to themselves and to others. In other words, they often walk in multiple constructed worlds of ‘belief’ (Tambiah 2010, 101). Anthropologist Emile Durkheim’s work was foundational for understanding these binary opposites. In his 1912 work *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Durkheim writes:

Whether simple or complex, all known religious beliefs display a common feature: They presuppose a classification of the real or ideal things that men conceive of into two classes—two opposite genera—that are widely designated by two distinct terms, which the words profane and sacred translate fairly well. The division of the world into two domains, one containing all that is sacred and the other all this is profane—such is the distinctive trait of religious thought (34).

Later, anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, influenced by Durkheim’s thinking, wrote his work *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays* (1948), thus, perpetuating the binary concept within social science that separates religion and magic (sacred) from science (profane).

Anthropologist Stanley Tambiah notes that Malinowski recognized magic as a means to an end; however, Malinowski saw religion and religious action as an end unto itself (69).²⁴

²⁴ As I see it, it is unnecessary to have an either/or proposition; rather, it is much easier to appreciate that people walk in many worlds that exhibit various ways of subjective being, thinking, and behaving (phenomenology). What adds spice to this argument is the concept of faith. Magliocco surmises, “Western concepts of belief are so influenced by Christian notions of faith that for many thinkers, the two are essentially indistinguishable” (2012a, 10). However, are

With all this said, belief takes on new meaning when taken out of the phrase “I believe” and placed in the world of phenomenological or subjective action. Belief is negotiated both within the individual and through social constructions such as religion, gender, politics, ethnicity, and cultural systems. Moreover, belief is not static; it changes as the individual develops, grows, and experiences. As Walker points out, holding or maintaining a belief—believing—is a dynamic process that refers to ideas (1998, 19). This “process” locates belief squarely in the human mind and body, which filters perceptions of the external to the internal “I.” Sociologist and anthropologist Meredith McGuire likewise maintains that spirituality, and thus belief, fully involves peoples’ material bodies and not just their minds and spirits (2008, 97). The practice of believing involves multidimensional forms of human cognitive activity. I recognize that we can begin to make sense of religious practice's tangible and intangible aspects through narrative and embodied material world.

Recently, there has been consensus within folklore, anthropology, sociology, and religious studies that the scholarship on religion and spiritual faith should center on how people live their religious lives in all its complex aspects. This concept has led to creative ethnographies that have located belief in the myriad ways the people perform, communicate, and relate to their beliefs through narrative, space, place, and religious material culture (Basso 2010; Glassie and Shukla 2018; Griffith 1982, 1992; Hufford 1984b; Hume 1998; Morgan 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014; Orsi 1985, 1996; 2005; 2016; Pocius 1986; Sciorra 2015; Turner and Turner 1974; Upton 1986).

Folklorists recognized this relational value to belief and praxis in the early 1990s. Kay Turner and Suzanne Seriff, in their 1993 article, “Giving an Altar to St Joseph: A Feminist

they the same? If we argue faith is acceptance in something without evidence; and, in turn, argue events, or the experiential, creates subjective evidence via experience, then I recognize that belief exists in the experiential world of the sacred. In contrast, faith is an acceptance that does not require experience.

Perspective on a Patronal Feast,” identified this celebration as produced and maintained through women’s networks of relationships and interfamilial ties. These ties extend to the Holy Family, where the creatively arranged altars and ensuing rituals represent the maker and her interpersonal relationship with St. Joseph, the Holy Family, and extended domestic family networks (107). “Each woman’s choice of saints and holy personages is a highly personal and emotion-filled act....,” the authors reflect (ibid). Here, the interweaving of earthly and heavenly relationships demonstrates the interconnected and experiential networks of the sacred, the familial, and the self. More than any other concept that has evolved from the study of spiritual belief and practice over the years, the interconnectivity of experiential relationships through forms of sacramental devotion is one of the most dynamic elements in Catholic practice.

2.3 The Literature: Grottos from the Ground Up

The topic of grottos, shrines, and the related literature is vast when considering the multidisciplinary research associated with it. However, religious scholar Ian Reader has noted the lack of research on sacred grotto reproductions, commenting, “The topic of replications has been accorded less attention in the context of pilgrimage than it merits....” (2013, 53). The materials on shrines, pilgrimage, Marian devotion, vernacular practice, Catholic observances, space, place, and religious material culture are substantial. However, academic material on the memetic reproduction of Catholic (Lourdes) grottos is limited.

When I began my research several years ago, I was surprised to find relatively few scholarly works on local replicated Catholic Lourdes grottos and their use and meaning. Therefore, considerable research has been pulled together from the ground up to allow insight into grotto replication and subsequent analysis. There are a few authors that offer single chapters in larger works on religious material culture (McDannell 1995, 131-162; Orsi 1997; Sciorra 2015,

121-152) and several smaller books that could be considered travel guides or art and devotional books (Corson 2006; Eade 1992; Eade and Sallnow 2000; Jackson 2001; Mullen 1998; Niles 1997; Stone and Zanzi 1993). Consequently, my investigation is informed by the vast corpus of research outside of folklore. Because the literature is so wide-ranging and overlapping, and because of the lack of a definitive work on grotto reproductions, the following sub-sections focus on various academic authors and topics that I recognize as connected with memetic grotto construction.

2:4 Why Grottos?

Rather than being just an appendage on the parent term “shrine,” religious grottos have a more significant ancient and modern genealogy. As a foundational work for this thesis, Naomi Miller’s (1982) “Heavenly Caves: Reflections on the Garden Grotto” offers a historical overview of culturally modified grottos emphasizing their creative form and function. Miller’s central premise is the grotto as “cosmos,” where sanctuary, mystery, transition, theater, and environment coalesce, transforming the natural landscape into a geo-cultural space (12-13). Early cultures recognized the otherworldliness in these locales, as evidenced by the abundant creation mythology globally (James 1965; Moyes 2012; Varner 2007). From North and South America to Europe and Asia, many cultures have associated their origins with caves/grottos and natural stone structures. Over time, these organic edifices were altered to meet spiritual and social needs, thus creating a robust material representation of the transcendent and otherworldly (Miller 11, 1982).²⁵ Miller's

²⁵ As early as 47,600 BCE, caves, grottos, and rock shelters were culturally modified to exhibit human religious beliefs; subsequently, this makes them the oldest known structures for sacred ritual behaviors (Clottes 2013, 17; Miller 1982, 10-14). Arguably, this makes the study of ritual grottos and caves much more vital to understanding the long history of human religious conduct. Ritual artifacts, art, and elaborate human burials demonstrate the use of caverns and cave-like structures as one of the most ancient forms of ritual (religious) natural geography (Clottes 2013, 17). These spaces acted as *loci sacri* or local sacred sites that would later be replaced by human edifices such as churches and cathedrals (Coomans et al., 2012, 7).

work touches on many themes inherent in replicated Marian grottos; their use through time, artistic importance, and ritualistic and spiritual facets set them apart from other natural and replicated rock features. A few examples of religious employment of caves and grottos are Christ's place of birth at the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem and his death and internment, such as the tomb of Christ's burial (1982, 29). Miller notes that many cave and grotto sites are acknowledged as places of transformation and as "halls of worship" for various religious sects (ibid).

Without exception, natural geographies and, by default, stone have played a role in religious belief and praxis since time immemorial and have held sway over the religious imagination of humankind. Eliade articulates the power of stone in his early work on comparative religion (1958), pointing out that "sacred place is a microcosm because it reproduces the natural landscape," noting that stone represented "indestructibility and lastingness" (271). "Above all, Stone *is*," writes Eliade. It exists in and of itself and has continually been used as an instrument of spirituality due to its incorruptible character (217). Equally, in his work on religion and geography, Tuan recognizes that simple stone enclosures are the earliest forms of human-made sanctuaries (2009, 16).

Nevertheless, it is not the geologic material that inspires and garners worship and adoration but the belief in the supernatural power that dwells within it (Van der Leeuw 2014, 53). Tuan further remarks that religion adds more significant meaning to sacred construction through the power of symbols. He observes, "Stone is more than a stone, and putting one on top of another is more than just a practical step in construction. Both the stone and the construction take on extra meaning—a glow, as it were—through incantation and ritual" (Tuan 2008, 15). Therefore, the question here really should be; why not grottos?

In her edited work, *Sacred Darkness* (2012), archaeologist Holley Moyes addresses grottos and caves through a compilation of twenty articles by focusing on the mythological and ritual use of cave sites from pre-historic to the present. Because I am addressing the modern religious, communal, and personal use of these sites, along with the material and inherently semiotic aspects, this work helps flesh out the larger body of knowledge concerning the global use of caves/grottos as sacred sites. Preservation at these sites has allowed archaeologists to understand the human fascination for these locations. One article in the volume “Why Dark Zones are Sacred” (2012) by archeologists Daniel Montello and Holley Moyes addresses the ritual use of caves and their place in myth and ritual cross-culturally (385). Mythic narratives form through the communally shared use of caves and grottos (386). The authors point out that the physical properties of caves precipitate specific psychological responses in early humans, such as fear and awe, which can stimulate human imagination, thus, leading to imagined spaces where deities dwell (394). Similarly, religious scholar Veikko Anttonen notes that sites by their very topography, such as caves, are set aside culturally as sacred paces or “points of contact between humans and sacred beings (2008, 297). These scholars offer a foundation for this thesis’s understanding of grottos and their pre-historic and geological beginnings.

2:5 A Magical Place where Mary Dwells

The sacred imagination is central to understanding religious construction and devotion within space and place (Chidester and Linenthal 1995; Kong 2001; Knott 2001; McDannell 1995 154-62; Sciorra 2015 xvii-xviii; Sheldrake 2001; Stone and Zanzi 1993, 2-3). The perception of sacred space requires an awareness of what I identify as internal spiritual topography—not only for understanding the sacred in the geographic sense but in the *felt sense* of the sacrality of place. I recognize that internal spiritual topography functions at the intersection of belief, where

mind/imagination, body, vernacular memory, physical space, and emotions meet. Religious place is defined in context to the human activity surrounding it and is “tangible, physical, specific, and relational” (Sheldrake 2001, 7). Anthropologist and folklorist James Griffith recognize it as a “network of supernaturally sanctioned relationships” of self, place, and others (1992, xviii). In its rudimentary form, sacred space is demarcated by objects, people, rituals, and narrative but primarily by intent, meaning the spiritual mind’s eye sees the holy in (a) place (Lane 1988, 238). Both cultural and natural, materiality gives these sites form and function and roots the grottos in time, space, and narrative (Bronner 1986, 200). All told space is sacred because human activity deems it so, thus leaving some mark imaginatively or through activity on the landscape. This activity calls attention to how space creation develops through human agency. Meaning projects onto topography, which acts as a palimpsest, and new significances are written over past usages (O’Brien 2008, 331).

How these spaces are utilized is primary for understanding secular and religious communities (Pocius 1991, 7-17). These replicated grotto sites are where spaces become “social topographies,” where imbued meaning is actively tied to creating a sacred place (Sciorra 2015, xxvii). Religious grottos are where the meeting of the human and divine creates a network of multilayered interactive relationships. These sites rely on a two-fold interaction—mind *and* matter. Morgan remarks that images and objects play a definitive role in organizing sacred space to signify space as set apart yet imbued with meaning through story, action, and memory. Here, narrative and imagination take center stage (2005, 56).

Folklorist Joseph Sciorra’s work on religious material display in New York City’s Italian Catholic communities informs this thesis. Sciorra recognizes that community fosters cohesion by creating distinct spaces that resonate with the locals, what he recognizes as “environments of

meaning” (2015, xxvii). These environments are not just built of materials but with emotional, social, and religious layers as well. Narratives play as much of a role in space creation as brick and mortar. Bernadette's visions of Mary begin with the spiritual narrative of Lourdes and, as in all good stories, gathered steam by adapting itself to each successive generation of believers. Stories like Bernadette’s reflect the power of the spoken word and its associative ability to create spiritual worlds. Sacred spaces connect to the landscape and natural features in many cultures, where the creation of holy sites by human hands becomes a material construction of sacred narrative (Carmichael et al. 1994, 1).

The grottos at Flatrock and Renewals reflect different versions or imaginings of the Lourdes story in their chosen sites within the communities. Analogous to Henry Glassie’s studies on regional aspects of vernacular architecture (1969, 1975), these modified Newfoundland landscapes materialize a regional form of belief. Newfoundland outports were centered on a life heavily reliant on the sea and community. These built landscapes demonstrate the immaterial aspects of local religious interaction and belief and allow interaction with the holy outside established spaces, such as churches (Morgan 2010, 17). For example, Father William Sullivan’s view of the local landscape in Flatrock was one of the foundations on which he built the Flatrock Lourdes grotto. On his return in 1954 from his pilgrimage to Lourdes in France, Fr. Sullivan recognized that the landscape in Flatrock had similarities to the one in France. The pastor decided to build a Lourdes grotto with the help of the local populace in 1955. In August of 1958, the site was dedicated in time for the Lourdes centennial in France. This reinterpretation of the mundane landscape to fit a powerful religious narrative is the genesis of a sacred place where a landscape for the holy is produced through religious imagination, natural features, and creative human augmentation.

As discussed previously, early academic work in social science recognized that sacred places are removed from the mundane. Durkheim's argument for a binary delineation of the sacred segregated the sacred from the profane, placing them in dualistic opposition, reasoning, "...the sacred is by definition a world apart" and, as such, sustains an "antagonistic" argument that any time you fix limits onto the notion of the sacred, you come upon "difficulties both theoretical and practical" (1958, 1). This binary distinction is an important issue even today. People still commonly see the sacred and profane as opposing forces that should never overlap in religious belief. Nevertheless, the sacred can and does manifest itself within other aspects of everyday life that have not been exclusively set apart from the secular world.

I would argue that this division of sacred and profane is an academic exercise in classification and means little to people who interact with sites set apart for the holy. This dualistic thinking concerning the realms of the sacred and the mundane developed out of the Reformation, or early Protestant thinking, where deliberate efforts were exercised to remove the sacred and the miraculous in everyday vernacular practice and place them in the hands of scholars, theologians, and clergy (Hufford 1995, 32; Magliocco 2012, 10; McGuire 2008, 37-38).

Anthropologists Diana Espirito Santo and Nico Tassi, in their work *Making Spirits: Materiality and Transcendence in Contemporary Religion* (2013), point out that since the Enlightenment, the dissociation between spirit and matter created a detachment or an "...exclusion of the possibility of reciprocal interaction ...between the two domains where matter is "autonomous from and even immune to, divine interference" (2).²⁶ Max Weber termed this Cartesian binary, "disenchantment of the world" (as quoted in (Webber 1958, 105; Scribner 1993,

²⁶ I would argue that this type of Cartesian thinking is unsupported in Catholic Christian theology through the *bodily materiality* of God's Son, Jesus who was recognized by early Christians as the "word made flesh" (John 1:14)

492). This dichotomy carried on into the 19th and 20th centuries, where progress and modernity were the bywords for the future. Weber's "disenchantment" is reflected in the recent destruction of sacramental material culture, which was singled out for elimination after the Vatican II council to bring the Church into modern liturgical practices and behaviors. Many icons of saints and the Holy Family were removed only to be replaced by a doctrine based on *logos* (Bible) centered theology. Modernizing religious practice did not resonate well with the laity, where God was, and still is, perceived as manifesting supernaturally in the physical world (Greely 2001, 1-3). The Catholic Church offered—and still does to a lesser degree—an array of religious materiality associated with sacramental devotion. Even an event such as Vatican II did not significantly reduce sacramentals in the laity's everyday pursuit of vernacular religious expression, thus, requiring the Vatican to walk a tightrope concerning popular (vernacular) belief and the "potential damage" posed by outside religious and secular influences, and inside overzealous believers. (Thavis 2015, 5). One Vatican theologian comments:

Devotion to the saints and belief in the power of the saints sometimes borders on 'superstition.' On the other hand, 'superstition' is often used by the theologically enlightened to dismiss popular piety because they don't appreciate the importance of these devotions (quoted in Thavis 2015, 5-6).²⁷

This thesis recognizes that spaces and landscapes can hold multiple meanings simultaneously. "For many people, the mundane landscape was, and is, interwoven within sacred sites," as historians Andrew Hamilton and Sarah Spicer have observed (1994, 4). By way of example, I spent some time in London researching heritage and tourism and their impact on sacred space. I was particularly interested in tourism's effect on these spaces. I focused on the church of *All Hallows By the Tower*, founded in 675 C.E. The church's proximity to the Tower of London and

²⁷ Thavis notes that whereas pre-modern Christianity viewed the miraculous as a sign of health in the mystical body of the Catholic Church, today, the Church hierarchy views them as "free radicals, unstable elements that need to be controlled" (2015,9).

its pedigree as one of the oldest churches in England makes it an essential spot for tourists to visit. The church is a contested sacred space where the negotiations and the expectations of three groups— clergy, congregation, and visitor— could create tensions. However, I found that the intersection of sacred and profane overlapped, with little conflict between the three groups.

Contrary to my preconceptions going into the study, I did not find that secular tourism detracted from the spiritual experience of the clergy or parishioners. Sacred sites reflect multivalent attitudes and behaviors, thus, requiring “...an acknowledgment of simultaneous fluctuating and conflicting investment of sacred and secular meanings in any one site” (Kong 2001, 212). Subsequently, the congregation sincerely embraced their role as ambassadors of Christ to a flood of tourists that visited daily (Kiigemagi 2015). This sacred/secular interflow is enacted worldwide at sacred sites, thus, contradicting, to a large degree, Durkheim’s view of binary oppositions.

Based on my research in Renewes and Flatrock, I recognized gradations of sacredness within these spaces. I have found that the grottos in Renewes and Flatrock act as a central locus that expresses the community's understanding of the sacred. The grottos exist physically in the everyday world of the community and help negotiate everyday fears and concerns for those who visit. I became aware that this sacredness progresses physically outwards from the two Marian shrines. Like a bulls-eye, the grotto’s influence acts as a center, spreading outward to a more integrated sacred/secular space. Similarly, Tuan notes that the sacred is often extended around a site, thus “defusing” the holy over adjacent spaces (1974, 147). At the Renewes grotto, the central image of Mary forms the nucleus, while the more moderate forms of religious materiality radiate outward.

Locally replicated grottos, like Flatrock and Renewes, are distinct from anywhere else due to their unique memetic quality and communal aspects. Through my research, I found other respective Lourdes grottos modified the landscape to suit particularities intrinsic to the regions where they are located. One of my favorite examples of this is another Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, located in the town of Lourdes, on the west coast of Newfoundland. Although not part of this study, I find it interesting that this grotto reflects a regional adaptation by creatively using ocean buoys to create a giant rosary that wraps around the site. Like other forms of culturally created space, it is cloaked in local legend, belief, and emotion, creatively reflecting the



Figure 15. Grotto Our Lady of Lourdes in Lourdes, Newfoundland.

importance of community connection to the sea. These dynamic and imaginative acts of material design uncover more profound and nuanced meanings connected to localized grottos. As physical sites, the grottos materialize local stories that hold value in the community’s eyes. As folklorist Kent Ryden observes, “Place enfolds relationships; relationships shape memory; memory sparks stories; stories cling to place...” (1993, 94).

“Place enfolds relationships” with people, objects, and with space; thus, the interaction between place and objects creates narratives rich in memory and meaning.

2:6 Place and Imagination

The idea of place is of central importance in religious construction and devotion (Chidester and Linenthal 1995; Kong 2001; Knott 2001; Lane 1988; McDannell 1995 154-62; Sciorra 2015, xvii-xviii; Sheldrake 2001; Stone and Zanzi 1993, 2-3). How these spaces are utilized is primary

in understanding secular and religious communities (Pocius 1991, 7-17). In these sacred places, people position themselves in the presence of the unseen, *imagining* that they will meet face-to-face with the divine within this sacred geography. The active imagination fills in what is hidden from sight (Lane 2001, 238-247; Tuan 1977, 85). Through this imagining, the sacred reveals itself on the physical plane. As Sociologist and priest Andrew Greeley notes:

Catholics live in an enchanted world, a world of statues and holy water, stained glass and votive candles, saints and religious medals, rosary beads, and holy pictures. But, this Catholic paraphernalia are mere hints of a deeper and more pervasive religious sensibility that inclines Catholics to see the holy lurking in creation. As Catholics, we find our houses and our world haunted by a sense that the objects, events, and persons of daily life are revelations of grace (2001, 216).²⁸

The grottos at Renews and Flatrock are ‘enchanted’ with Mary’s presence far from its origin; hence, her grace is materially manifested through the medium of holy objects. Human impact, transformation, and utilization of natural areas create spiritual focal points for human activity. Bronner articulates this by observing, “The significance humans attach to their objects can be traced to the artifact's ability to be touched and seen, and its three-dimensional, mutable quality” (1983, 318). When people manipulate forms, they create expressions of (religious) culture (ibid). In the case of replicated Lourdes grottos, the local population expressively reimagined this natural landscape to articulate a more significant connection to the global narrative of Mary’s apparition

²⁸ The apparition site at Massabielle where Bernadette saw the Virgin was rife with legend (Weber 1977, 23-29). It was a wild and rugged spot well known to the locals (Harris 1999, 52). The grotto was hollowed out of the rock, irregular in height, and, at times, submerged in river water at its base. It would not have been considered pastorally attractive except for a small niche above, where a wild rose bush grew (ibid). It was a place where pigs and cattle were allowed to graze and where people would scavenge for wood and fish in the nearby river. The grotto was unassuming, where local narratives told of witches, daemons, and fairies that occupied the area (54). These stories, and the site itself, were in the realm of the vernacular and beyond the established Church's reach. After Bernadette’s visions, the grotto took on new meaning. It became a place of religious inspiration. It took no stretch for the vernacular imagination to see the Virgin speaking to a child of humble origins in a rocky niche. I have often reflected that there is unspoken permission to recreate the Lourdes grotto in other far-off places because of the original grotto's modest yet relatable physical origins.

at Lourdes. In other words, the modified geological landscape becomes a stage for unfolding spiritual behavior. However, leading back to my early comments on St. Bridget's well in Ireland, it is more than this; the religious landscape reflects a profound need by the folk to touch the transcendent personally, create a one-on-one relationship with the supernatural, and locate the intermediating power of the divine in the everyday world in which they live. My time at St. Bridget's well in Ireland led me to believe that the material outpouring was a manifestation or extension of *self* to the holy. The objects are a substitute for the physical person, thus, reflecting the giver's gratitude, loss, pain, or need. As I see it, by being physically present at all times through these objects, St. Bridget is continually aware of the petitioner's need for intercession and consolation.

At the grotto of *Our Lady of Mount Carmel* in Staten Island, Sciorra points out that no one person speaks for the grotto, but many voices contribute to the shrine's spiritual and social meaning (2015, 122).²⁹ This creates a dynamic relationship that modulates behaviors by those invested in Mary's capacity to meet many needs. Eade and Sallnow also note that at central (and I would add minor) shrines, "...it is the ability to absorb and reflect a multiplicity of religious discourses which enables it to offer a variety of clients what each of them desires" (2000, 15). Regarding smaller local shrines, these sites, too, can offer the individual the ability to navigate religious systems through vernacular praxis in a familiar setting, where private devotion is not overwhelmed by the distractions of large crowds. Individual agency and control over their

²⁹ Anthropologists John Eade and Michael Sallnow have noted that competing discourses at sacred pilgrimage sites are common, rather than the generally accepted all-encompassing Church-sanctioned narratives of devotion. Regarding the principal shrine at Lourdes, they remark that some seek divine intercession and healing, while others come to subsume themselves to the will of God in service to others (2000, 10). Overtly, it may seem that devotees are collectively on a single page concerning the historical and theological associations of the grotto; in reality, these spaces allow for "the expression of a diversity of perceptions and meanings....," that are collectively or individually, brought to the grotto (9). These are the subtexts of the sites where behavior and narrative reflect the diverse meanings people project onto these physically tangible and spiritually malleable locations.

religious thought and behavior become a negotiation between the self and the deity. This is not to say that theological and liturgical considerations are tossed out the window; instead, it is a creative negotiation within the Church's precepts. In my work, I have found that these sites can take precedence over rigid canonical beliefs by the sheer nature of their invested sacred power as a global and accessible icon—the power of encountering the holy first-hand rather than through clerical mediation.

2:7 Religious Materiality

“Religion is a material practice,” anthropologist Anna Karina Hermkins stresses (2021, 1). Subsequently, this thesis emphasizes Catholic materiality and spirituality at the two grottos in conjunction with Marian devotion through exploring sacred space and images articulated through a material medium. I also recognize that personal reverence toward Mary varies by locality, ethnicity, gender, age, and individual interaction with one’s faith (McGuire 2008, 27). I assert that much of the Marian doctrine presented by the Catholic Church is only a thin veneer that hides a deeper meaning that these Marian sites and their materiality signify for the laity. Some of my informants are of a certain age where they would have known the Mary of the pre-Vatican II eras. For them, their relationship with Mary exists in the day to day of living. It does not rely on the correct theological considerations. Instead, it focuses on Mary's interrelated sacred and human relationship with her devotees.

I agree with Catrien Notermans that in daily devotional practice, people place an emotional value on the numerous representations of Mary that speak to them and reject those that do not (2008, 472). Since the 1980s, there has been a focus on the complexity of human material activity in the physical world. Led by anthropologists, sociologists, art historians, religious scholars, and folklorists, the interest in materiality sprang from questions concerning how material

culture reflects our relationships with others, the sacred, and the human-made and natural worlds (Paine 2013, 4-6). Henry Glassie succinctly states, “Material culture records human intrusion in the environment” (1999, 1). This “intrusion” can also be found in the supernatural world, where objects augment and amplify our interactions with the holy.

In recent years, sacred objects have been of particular interest to scholars of religion for understanding what religious materiality might tell us about human and divine relationships. Religious scholars Elisabeth Arweck and William Keenan have rightly commented, “Without their material expressions, religions float in the theological ether, and spiritualities enter the void, lifeless and deracinated” (2006, 1). Similarly, Morgan remarks that material culture acts as the “scaffolding” linking the body to the surrounding world, “It is the physical means of interaction with the physical environment....” (2014, 486). This interaction with the physical environment of religious devotion allows adherents to garner tangible results, such as healing the body and the mind, through the direct intercession of the principal saint or deity (Turner and Turner 1978, 205). Orsi has noted that prior to the changes in the 1960s, Catholic sacred culture centered on *presence* through bodies and *things* (italics mine 2005, 55). Prior to the Second Vatican Council, worship reflected a devotional world rich in corporeal sensory experiences. Sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell were all involved in the devotional experience (ibid). Feminist and religious scholar Charlene Spretnak sums up the difference between the two divergent paths of Catholicism— pre and post-Vatican—stating “as ... two different concepts of religion: [pre-Vatican is/was] an expansive, multivalent, mystical, and cosmological engagement with transcendence and the Divine, versus a more historically objective, rational, strictly text-based engagement” (2019, 534). Fortunately, papal declarations could not easily remove or dismiss these experiences within the physical aspects of Catholic spirituality and devotional behavior.

Religion is deeply embedded in the material world, from bibles and minarets to a shaman's drum. All reflect the human desire to navigate the unseen world, the unknowable, and the holy through material means. By understanding this, we recognize that religion happens not just through sacred teachings and text but in the material world's sensual physical domain (Morgan 2014, 486). Colleen McDannell remarks in her work on material Christianity that objects become powerful through their "participation in the authority of institutional traditions and organizations" (1995, 5). The Christian sacred, frequently displayed in images that exhibit Christ, Mary, and the saints, render the sacred physically present in the moment (Couchman 2012, 6). One of the most notable aspects of material religious imagery is locating the sacred on a material plane through time, space, and place.³⁰

When thought of as a complex of relationships, religion, and attending material culture, communicate through a web of meaning sustained through the devotees' imagination (Glassie 1999, 143). This web encompasses narrative, ritual, social and familial interactions, and Church teachings, creating a network where objects and places become emblematic of the sacred and the divine. Diane Cappadona notes that religious objects are "primary modalities" for religious communication (2014, 221). Therefore, the essential principle of religious objects in worship is the acceptance of the interchange (communication) between the creative imagination, divine image, and the believer, or as Greely succinctly notes, "Objects enact the narratives that we imagine" (2001, 35). This is particularly true for religious icons. For example, the grottos at Flatrock and Renewals are memory markers for personal and collective change. They indicate time

³⁰ In my own research, I have noted that early scholarly work on Marian devotion focused heavily on Mary as symbol. I contend that this is a reductionary and somewhat condescending approach to Catholic devotional life and belief. It is clear that symbols are intimately a part of Marian worship, and to outsiders, she is seen as symbolic of Catholicism's differences from Protestantism; nonetheless, Mary is experiential in nature for many believers. When she is approached by an individual, they experience her presence not just as a one dimensional 'symbol' but as real; her presence is alive and active in their lives.

and transformation for each family unit and the individual from childhood to adulthood. The adjustment and adaptation of the communities' social structure outside the Church's domain are revealed in this dynamic quality. In this respect, these material structures become more than religious sites of preformed belief; instead, they are a locus of vernacular creative memory that sustains community and family bonds.

One of the most notable features of material objects is their affective presence, their ability to evoke an emotional response in the devotee and render the sacred genuinely present in the moment through physical representation. Catholics are a "sacramental people," as Catholic author Greg Dues notes, and it is through the use of "things, places, and persons" that Catholics recognize the holy as accessible and present in their lives (1992, 148). In other words, matter matters; the insubstantial becomes articulated in substance and, thus, a narrative in its own right. In the grotto landscape, belief, narrative, and the material world become interdependent, focusing on the practice of belief in the everyday world. By their very nature, humans construct their emotions and worlds through the sensual and the material (Morgan 2010, 57). Nowhere is this emotional response more evident than in the interaction with religious objects.

Primiano notes that sacramentality is used in Catholicism to describe the relationship between the sacred and the material (1999, 190). In the Catholic sphere of devotion, the material is intimately connected to sacramental worship in that it reflects the divine through the physical world. Unlike Protestants, Greeley notes that Catholics see the material world as revelatory through the sacraments (1990, 4). Theologian Paul Tillich, from his discussion on *Art and Ultimate Reality* (2005), recognizes that "If the idea of God includes ultimate reality, everything that expresses ultimate reality expresses God, whether it intends to do so or not." (210). Tillich further reasons that through sacramentality, the sacred is present in the here and now; however, the danger makes

the object the divine itself, hence, idolatry (212). Similarly, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Hershel notes in his classic 1951 work *Man is Not Alone: A Philosophy of Religion* that “God is in all things, not only in the life of man” (122)—therefore, the sacred manifests in and through the material world as much as in the spiritual.

In this thesis, I identify the materiality of Christian devotion as a manifestation of the sacred narrative imagination. I would take this further by arguing that what we imagine impels us to create or produce the religious materiality through which we interact with the divine. In other words, materiality is the vellum by which the religious imagination engages the supernatural. One story that was told to me by a participant in *Renews* offers a picture of how the sacred material and the Catholic imagination interact within the daily lives of the believers:

I remember my uncle, Uncle Mike. All the old people had a great devotion to our Lady. Not only to our Lady, but they had great faith. I remember one day, Uncle Mike was in the meadow at hay, and he was after taking his teeth out of his mouth because he had a sore and he lost his teeth. So, he came into dinner and reached in his pocket, and no teeth. Anyway, he went in, and he said to [the statue of] St. Joseph, “Please help me find them, St. Joseph, I’m after losing my teeth,” you know, and he said, “if you don’t, you’ll go where the others went” [over the cliff into the ocean]. Anyway, between the jigs and the reels, he went out in the afternoon and picked up his teeth in the yard (Fowler 2016)³¹

St. Joseph’s statue acted as a “medium of presence” (Orsi 2005, 59), wherein the saint's physicality (statue) operated in direct relationship to uncle Mike.³² The uncle threatened to toss him out of the house like an errant teenager if he could not perform his holy obligations. This reflects an underlying expectation of the supplicant that the diety will perform his or her duties or

³¹ Fowler, Agnus, interview by author, September 2016, Cappahayden, Newfoundland. Interview # 0017-19092016. Transcripts held by author.

³² Uncle Mike’s threat, “...f you don’t, you’ll go where the others went” reflects the conspicuous removal of Catholic iconography within the Catholic Church in the 1960s. Vatican II (1961-1964) had made dramatic changes to the sacred materiality of the Church with the desire to update and modernize worship. This instigated a purge of what was considered overt and antiquated images that were essentially tossed out. I will delve further into this in chapter four.

risk the loss (physically and spiritually) of their elevated status in the home and among the faithful. Morgan has argued that when looking upon a religious icon's face, devotees do not see it as a mask but as the saint themselves (2005, 89). Objects demonstrate the underlying complexities of the emotional and social life of the Catholic believer. Morgan highlights how, through religious imagery, the divine is made concretely “real” by personal interactions with religious images (1998, 50). Religious statues are particularly evocative due to their human-like form. By interacting with these objects—speaking to, dressing, etc.—they become a part of the everyday interactions that people rely on to create relationships with the sacred (ibid).

Relating to theologian Paul Tillich’s assertion that all things can and do express “ultimate reality” (2005, 210), it can be argued that religious material creation is the sensual exemplification of the divine. Therefore, the creative sacramental imagination is central to creating sacred objects and spaces (Greely 2001; Lane 1988, 238; Lynch 2010, 43). Visual culture in the Catholic Church bridges the religious imagination with the material world. Beyond this lies the broader construction of personal and collective imagination through memory and narrative. Experience of place and object is made meaningful through all three and, therefore, tied to the inner world of the believer.

Greely ascertains that the fundamental differences between Protestant and Catholic are not doctrinal but instead opposing sets of symbols that organize and shape meaning (2001, 35). Most of these symbols are manifested in the form of material objects. How these objects are employed in devotional acts by the laity has been a bone of contention for ecclesiastical scholars since the Council of Trent (1545-1563). Today, the Catholic Church believes images like Mary’s should signify a more shared representation within collective worship. However, according to Victor and Edith Turner, these images became more personal when placed on an individual altar

or in small communities where they become “personified” (1978, 143). Sacramental art remains a touchstone for the laity where Mary’s image is not just representational but a visual exemplification of the holy made present in the here and now.

Mary and her image became a significant boundary figure between the changing religious environments of post-reformation Europe (Orsi 2001, 70). Her likeness in the material world identifies groups and individuals who participate in devotional activities surrounding her image as part of a community of believers (Anttonen 2003, 292; Kane 2004, 93). It locates them in a vast web of interconnected beliefs which shape the Catholic world. Material sacramentals intimately act to tie together personal worship and devotion to the deity. Anthropologist Anna-Karina Hermkins describes sacramentals as a sacred sign [object] or gesture that signifies effects, particularly of a spiritual nature, obtained through the intercession of the Church” (2021, 9). Objects such as religious jewelry, books, and altars are part of worship in ecclesiastical and vernacular (public and private) practices (Primiano 1999, 190). This extends to the grotto’s material display, where Bernadette’s eighteen visions of Mary reflect a larger narrative of Mary’s involvement and concern with the ordinary people. Mary’s public images convey the larger world concerning religious affiliation and community association. Devotional images, as Orsi notes, “...are used to act upon the world, upon others and upon oneself” (2005, 49). Orsi further comments that devotional images are based on the perception that what they portray, i.e., the Virgin Mary, is present in the object (ibid)

2.8 Embodiment

Material culture’s central aspect, or focal point, is the human body. The multifaceted aspects of religion and belief can only be manifested through a human medium. It is the primary actor in the physical enactment of the sacred (Mitchell 2006, 385). Subsequently, the following

literature informs this thesis regarding the embodied spiritual actions, such as personal and collective rituals, at the two grottos. Academic inquiry into embodiment within religion has allowed scholars to critique Enlightenment ideology that relied on textual evidence and doctrine to understand human participation in the religious domain (Zito 2010, 20). Belief is much more than a “linguistic event,” Morgan comments. He further notes, “The human body plays such a central role in this process that investigations of religion that ignore the body are in danger of proposing a deeply skewed and quite misleading account of their subject” (2019, para 1).

Material religious culture requires a physical experience from sight, touch, smell, and hearing, encouraging full bodily participation in the sacred. “Religious artifacts...construct worlds of belief,” Hermkens maintains (2021, 1). This material construction of religious worlds for devotees becomes a full-body (sensual) experience of the sacred via materiality. In conjunction with sacred materiality, the supplicant and the artist create meaningful spiritual worlds through body and imagination. Glassie offers insight into this in his work with Bangladeshi potters. Here, individual artists create images of the Hindu deities from clay. Artisans thus translate the spiritual to the physical through sacred and secular mediation. Past and present knowledge combines with religious imagination to render the “sacred wisdom visible” in the form of the *murti* (1999, 150).³³ Not too dissimilar from several of my informants concerning their work on the grotto, one potter comments that creation is an act of devotion for him; “It is a prayer” (148). This embodied action is fundamental to religious materiality through artistic creation and construction. Building a grotto for Mary, or sculpting a Hindu god, is a revelatory form of devotionism and worship. Morgan recognizes these sacred relationships in the form of a “triangulation” where the “...reticulation unfolds in the medium of the human body as a triangulation of individual, group, and sacred

³³*Murti*; the material shape or representation of a deity.

other” (2019 para. 5). The active principle here, however, is the human body acting as the nexus to forming these relationships. Meredith Maguire argues that our starting point for understanding religious belief was skewed by Reformation religious ideology, where belief was privileged over practice (2007, 188). This narrow thinking pushed embodied religious practices aside, seeing them as marginal and unworthy of study (ibid). However, in recent years researchers now recognize how vital it is to locate the body as the center of a highly intricate web of relational interactions expressed through creative bodily interaction with the supernatural.

Human embodiment is central to understanding religion as lived; the human body acts as the primary arbitrator between the corporeal and the supernatural. This multifaceted bodily interaction ultimately connects the material world to a spiritual one. Images of the sacred, especially anthropomorphized images, allow believers to see their physical bodies as receptacles and purveyors of the divine (Orsi 2005, 2005, 76-77). In their work on pilgrimage, Turner and Turner note that sacred icons are “...unique in their ability to mediate the differences between the human and the divine by proposing a similarity between the human body and the divine body” (1978, 113). Similarly, in his dialectical theory of objects, Daniel Miller contends that there is no separation of subject and object, “... that once these objects exist, they become part of who we are” (2010, 58-59). Morgan, in his work on Catholic visual piety, remarks that in “...devotional practice, the body was the means of participating in the life of God perfectly expressed in Jesus, whose incarnation, suffering, death, and resurrection were the material means of salvation” (1998, 61).

The body is a means of participating in the salvation story; therefore, it is vital to creating that which is sacred visibly real in the physical world. In Catholicism, ritual behavior, movement, gestures, and recitations are all-powerful agents addressing the saints and Holy Family. Embodied

ritual makes the sacred present, but even more so, places the devotee in a place of liminal experience (space and place) where the supernatural and the body meet. “corporalization of the sacred” is a term Orsi uses to describe this experience (2008, 74).

One case study that exemplifies this ‘corporalization’ is Peter Sebastiano’s (2010) work on the annual *Festa* of St. Gerard Mariella on October 16 in Newark, New Jersey.³⁴ Here, Italian

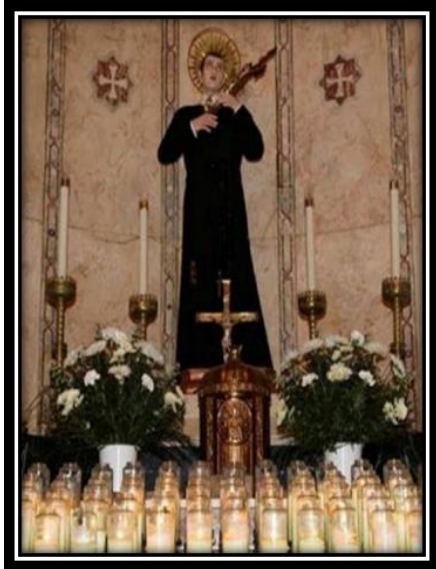


Figure 16. St. Gerard Maiella, St. Lucy's Church, Newark, N.J.

Catholics gather at the saint’s national shrine to change his clothes, clean the shrine, and prepare for the procession and a public Novena.³⁵ The “dressing” of the saint offers a glimpse of how devotion to the sacred image connects to the collective past through touch, bodily postures, vocal prayer, and gestures of affection (173). These behaviors are historically passed from generation to generation, identifying ethnic and familial dynamics in the devotees’ activities. The deeper spiritual meanings of this ritual are subjective, as Savistiono

demonstrates—varying from individual to individual (176-182). However, bodily ritual bonds share a historical, ethnic, and religious history in a way that is not apparent to an outside observer.

One of the more profound aspects of this devotion is how Saint Gerard is made real to his attendants by treating the statue as a living being. Along with the clothing that the statue is dressed in—including a set of cufflinks with monogrammed initials, “SGM” (Saint Gerard

³⁴ St. Gerard is known to Catholics as the patron saint of mothers. Interestingly, St. Gerard is quite popular in Newfoundland as evidenced by the popularity of the given name, “Gerard” to newborn Catholic boys. Marian Bowman writes extensively about this devotion in her 1985 Master’s thesis, “Devotion to St. Gerard Majella in Newfoundland: The Saint System in Operation and Transition.”

³⁵ Novena comes from the Latin, *Novem* meaning nine. A Catholic Novena consists of nine days of devotional prayer, either individually or in a group. This is done for intercession, blessing, honoring a specific saint, death of a loved one, or any other need that is identified by the participant(s).

Maiella)—the saint retains his very own medical doctor in case the statue “breaks” a limb or succumbs to a fall during the annual procession to the Church of St. Lucy (179). Anthropologist Daniel Miller surmises that “we happily anthropomorphize objects as agents....” (1998, 13). Objects become non-human actors in our lives, influencing our behavior as much as we control theirs; it is a mutual relationship. The ritualized behavior of Saint Gerard is an example of the ability of the saint to affect the embodied lives of his devotees. It exhibits the rich depth of devotion to objects that people engage with through various forms of bodily religious practice.

2.9 A Question of Agency

Human behavior towards inanimate matter raises the question of objects acting with agency, which has recently interested material culture scholars. Anthropologist Alfred Gell first brought the idea of objects as agents to scholarly attention in his posthumously published work *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (1998) and argued for a non-Western aesthetic paradigm that would go beyond the oppositional binary of object and person and find other cultures' value on material items (Eck 2010, 647; Gell 1998. Miller 2010, 75-6). The intentionality of an object or person defines agency. Gell defines this as: "An agent causes events to happen in their vicinity" (16). Gell contends that objects become non-human actors in our lives, influencing our behavior as much as we control theirs; it is a mutual relationship. The ritualized behavior concerning Saint Gerard is an example of object agency. Crispin Paine contends that Gell's argument was less about aesthetics and symbol and more about effect and response (2013,5). Objects, as actors, influence our behavior as much as we control theirs; it is a mutual relationship. Many modern thinkers would see this distinction as an ontological academic exercise, but the distinction between animate and non-animated actors is a moot point for some. Vernacular belief has long relied on the distinctions between the two being blurred. Recognizing that indigenous

belief frequently ascribed things as animate, 19th-century anthropologist Edward B. Tylor coined “animism.” This label held pejorative connotations concerning early “primitive” traditional beliefs; nonetheless, it recognized that inanimate things or objects were believed to harbor souls and, thus, agency (Timbiah 2010,44; Warms et al. 2004, 2). Anthropologist Robert Armstrong has observed that objects assert an “affecting presence” on groups and individuals (1971, 3). Rather than just being a semiotic device, icons, such as Our Lady of Lourdes, actively create their environments through interaction with the viewer. David Morgan suggests, “Images do things; they invite our inspection; they engage us in interactive relations called seeing (2018, 51). The image or icon influences the devotee through this visual engagement or stimulation. In my research, I have found it creates a sphere of influence both physically through space and psychologically when the object of devotion is no longer in view

For the outside observer, Catholicism has distinct boundaries regulated and controlled by Church tradition. However, Catholicism has proven highly adaptable concerning devotional worship (Scheper-Hughes 2016, 480). Engagement with sacred images, such as that of St. Gerard, locates ritual practice and embodied behavior equally in vernacular practice. To a large degree, extremely anthropomorphized practices toward the saint’s statue would seem almost bizarre to an outsider. The devotees' spiritual relationship to St. Gerard is reflected bodily by bathing him, changing his clothes, and adding adornments, such as jewelry, all in a display of piety far beyond established Catholic doctrinal practice. What is particularly compelling about St. Gerard's observances is that on a more visceral level, the statue (and his supernatural legend) can act upon the congregants, compelling them to handle the effigy as a real human being who is physically present. The ability of a religious object to act and be acted upon is a powerful part of vernacular

belief. It requires individuals and collective communities to recognize the supernatural as real and actively present.

In the case of the Lourdes grottos at Flatrock and Renews, their ability to act and be acted upon is intricately tied up in the human body, praxis, social and religious history, and a deep need to create meaningful relationships with the Holy Mother. Mary's material presence creates movement and ritual through embodied practice and object agency, both personal and collective. The simple movements of lighting a personal altar candle to the more significant collective movements of walking and pausing at the Stations of the Cross bring the reality of our beliefs to us through our physical bodies (McGuire 2008, 101). We physically act and are acted upon through the medium of the material.

Objects, such as icons of Mary, are more than just their physicality; they are layered codes of intentionality, history, religious politics, and emotional and theological meaning. Moreover, when approached by believers, there is unconscious knowledge of these inherent significances in the individual. Nonetheless, as I have mentioned earlier in this chapter, the concept of Catholic imagination that sees the 'holy lurking in creation' identifies the *real* in created material manifestations of the divine. Mary's image allows her to be everywhere. Her presence is not reliant on the original place or image from which grotto reproductions are fashioned, such as the primary site Lourdes in France. Reproductions built in and around Canada and the United States are permeated with Mary's authentic presence—just as real as if the devoted stood at the foot of the grotto at Massabielle (Orsi 2008, 59). In other words, Mary is much more than a metaphor or symbol; she is believed to be genuinely present at these sites, as much as Christ's body is believed to be *genuinely* part of the sacrament, or that holy water from Lourdes *really* does heal the sick

(Orsi 2011,13). Therefore, embodiment and agency take on alternative connotations, that of Mary's physical reality to the worshiper.

Archaeologist and religious scholar Crispin Paine notes that what people do is vitally important since they essentially "do things with things." Therefore, the idea of agency has added some interesting arguments to the study of religious materiality, particularly when dealing with Marian apparitions and their attending material culture. (2013, 9). Paine maintains that the interaction with objects implements meaning-making, creating relational and performative behaviors. Similarly, religious art scholar Diane Cappadonna points out, "A fundamental premise of religious art is the acceptance of the creative interplay between image and meaning-making as an interaction between the human and the divine" (2014, 221). She further recognizes the visual arts as "neither benign nor neutral." All in all, the question of agency is compelling and offers a thought-provoking approach to studying religious icons and their impact on the sacred environment and Catholic worship.

Modern religious theory, Orsi observes, is based on a post-enlightenment idea of "metaphors, functions, and abstractions" (2016, 4) and formed at a time when the boundaries of what constitutes religion were being redrawn. During the Reformation (1517-1648), Martin Luther and Protestant theologians argued against excesses of Catholic devotionism as "superstitions" (27). One of the effects of the Reformation was limiting the sacred by setting it apart from the quotidian, the mundane, and the material, thereby reifying and controlling the message (McGuire 2008, 33). This theological transformation removed the miraculous sacred from everyday people's lives by placing boundaries and restrictions on what was considered holy (ibid). The human body was no longer seen as a conduit of grace but rather something to be exercised of all earthly transgressions. Catholic religiosity has been, and is still, challenged by

Protestants, who regarded these sacramentally active types of worship as idolatry, inferior to logos (biblical) centered worship. In our postmodern world of intellectual and scientific thinking, these concepts harken back to a time when the supernatural permeated the lives of the populace, a time that was looked on pejoratively as laden with unscientific fears, naïve assumptions, and magic (Maguire 2008, 28-43; Orsi 2016, 3-5).

2.10 Landscapes of Belief

“In the history of Christian thought, landscape operates as a function of the imagination,” Theologian Belden C. Lane states in his 2001 work *Landscapes of the Sacred* (2001). Those approaching the grotto at Flatrock or Renews would be aware that they have come to a religiously significant area set aside by the community. The visible indicators, such as holy statues, crosses, and memorials, identify the sacredness of these sites even to the most secular visitors. The ability of replicated grottos to adapt to the local environments has allowed artificially created grottos to flourish in the religious imagination from antiquity to the present (Miller 1982, 7-12).

Traditionally, replicated grottos are constrained to specific material motifs, such as the deity's centrality and the religious narrative's visual display; however, their dynamic ability to transform through creative ascetics, usage, and meaning has kept them relevant to modern devotional needs. The grottos are set in geographical and communal spaces and reflect the Lourdes story through diverse material and cultural interpretations. After returning from a Lourdes pilgrimage, the Grotto de Lourdes in Renews was built in 1927 by local Irish-born priest Fr. Charles A. McCarthy (later Monsignor).³⁶ It depicts the narrative of Mary and Bernadette in a modest and unassuming fashion. In comparison, Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto in Flatrock, built in

³⁶ For the sake of consistency, I will be referring to Father McCarthy as ‘Fr.,’ rather than using his various other titles (Monsignor and Dean) that he received after the building of the Renews grotto.

1954 and finished in 1958 by Fr. William Sullivan, is the largest Marian grotto in Eastern Canada. Contrast this image with that of a more diminutive Lourdes grotto in Renew's. You come away with two very different depictions of the same replication dedicated to the Marian apparition in Lourdes, France. What is not readily evident is that the Renew's grotto carries a substantial storied history with ethnic identity, community, and faith which is not reflected in its diminutive physical presentation. That is not to say the Flatrock grotto is any less a storied place; instead, their narratives converge based on their geographical placement, their manner and time of construction, and the meanings placed on them by the community.³⁷ What is unique about the Renew's grotto is that locally, it is built directly atop a 17th-century site known as "Mass rock." Father Paul Lundrigan regards this as the "deeper history" of the grotto, commenting:

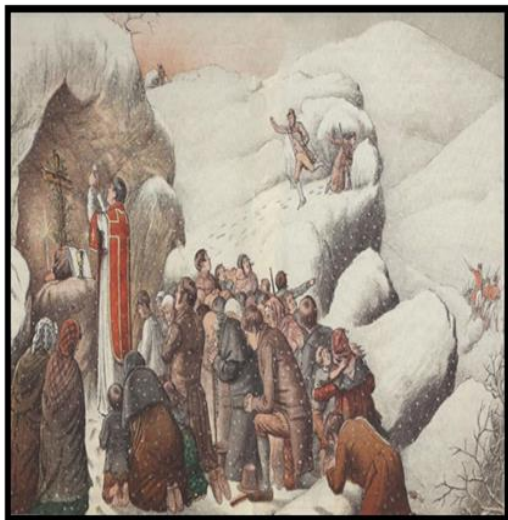


Figure 17. Artist's depiction of a historic Mass rock in Co. Wicklow, Ireland.

This thing (Mass rock) was from the late 1600s when Catholics gathered during the days of penal laws. Where they had Mass on [near] what is now called Midnight Hill because they'd meet in the middle of the night, and the priest would have Mass on that rock. It was always a sacred spot for them—a historical spot.³⁸

The grotto at Renew's demonstrates historical, religious, and ethno-political elements outside its obvious use as a shrine dedicated to Our Lady of

Lourdes. The grotto is localized yet reaches far back in time and displays continuity with the socio-historic complexity of Ireland's and Newfoundland's past. Mass rocks are subversive ritual sites that have connected the Irish to a counter-cultural and contested historical past (Bishop 2015, 828-9). In Ireland, hundreds of

³⁷ I will go into considerably more detail on this in chapter 4.

³⁸ Lundrigan, Paul Fr, interview by author. September 2016. St. John's, Newfoundland. Transcript# 001-092016. Transcript held by author

recorded Mass rocks are believed to have been used from the late sixteenth to the late eighteenth centuries (Ibid, 830; See Nugent 2013). These sites are scattered throughout the Republic, and the North, with the largest concentrations in Co. Cork and Co. Kerry (O’Sullivan and Downey 2014, 26).

Catholic group identity is social, spiritual, and political in its afflation; thus, creating a sense of personal and community uniqueness that today can be seen in parts of the Avalon Peninsula and the West Coast of Newfoundland. Catholic identity is constituted on an understanding of fixed Church doctrine and a continuous dynamism between the devotee and their spiritual environment. This duality requires the researcher to focus on the phenomenological aspects of lived religion in all its myriad forms. Therefore, central to this thesis is the concept of community/group, both Catholic and, in a regional sense, the village. Merriam-Webster defines community as “...a grouping of many individuals assembled together or having some unifying relationship.” Allan Dundes argues that groups have at least one common factor among them (1965, 2). Since this would encompass just about everyone and everything, then, by definition, groups can be perceived as web-like structures that intersect with social, bodily, and material reality. Dundes’s definition is simple but holds more profound, complex possibilities for understanding groups and communities.

Nonetheless, I agree with folklorist Dorothy Noyes that it is impossible to define a group neatly and succinctly (1995, 449), primarily because of the numerous overlapping and fluid boundaries of the group, self, and the external world. If we recognize community as an amalgamation of various groups, beginning with the most rudimentary— that of multiple individuals and families living in the same town, village, or outport and sharing community broadly— then we begin regionally and at a macro-view of a group. Here, social activities,

common topographical references, and referential space relations bind locals together. This sense of place-sharing connects people to a body of collective knowledge in the community.

Folklorists understand that vernacular traditions shared by communities build a consensus of identity (Bauman 1971, 32; Bronner 2000, Magliocco 2004, 58; Thomas and Widdowson 191, xxi-xxiii). Community identity is a collective and expressive way of life that binds individuals together in collective like-mindedness. In his 1984 article, *Defining Identity through Folklore*, Alan Dundes recognizes identity as “multiple in nature” (149). He argues that this multiplicity extends from the self to the community and the larger society. Group and community identity are binary in that it is not just what a group defines as distinctiveness but what it does not define as part of its commonality (ibid). In other words, there is no group ‘A’ without the contrast of ‘group B.’ Dundes further locates identity in its ability to express. “...mutual relationship[s] by connoting both a persistent selfsameness and a persistent sharing of an essential character with others” (150).

In recent years, religious groups, such as Roman Catholics, have seen the community change, yet their essential character has remained, to a large degree, the same. Modernity has created global villages where shared religious values, beliefs, and rituals still bind like-minded individuals to a religious community, even though proximity is not a factor. Multiple media platforms have allowed distances to be unimportant in Catholic devotion. In his work *The Internet and the Madonna: Visionary Experience on the Web* (2005), Paolo Apolito recognizes the internet as playing a functional role in the proliferation of Marian apparitions. He maintains that web-based sites have “...profoundly altered the very perception of religion among a substantial number of Catholics, shifting the course of post-Vatican II transformations of the Catholic Church in a completely unexpected direction” (2). He notes that creating an online visionary community allows for establishing relationships and “...multiple contacts in ways that would have been

unimaginable in the past” (15). There is an anti-clerical undertone to this type of Catholic community, where the collective mind challenges the post-Vatican II precepts of modernizing Mary’s place in the church. Nonetheless, regardless of the possible effects of such media proliferation on Catholicism, this thesis focuses on two unique communities where Catholicism, in no small part, played a significant role in their formation and sustainability.

Recognizing the Avalon Peninsula, where Renewes and Flatrock are located, as one of the oldest areas of European expansion on North American Shores can add perspective to the importance of place and community on the island. Gerald Thomas and J.D.A. Widdowson, in their anthology of Newfoundland folklore (1991), recognize the uniqueness of Newfoundland communities through historical and economic factors “which contributed to a collective understanding of the [inter]connectedness to heritage and tradition (xxi). They locate community as the first referent for most Newfoundlanders” (ibid). This is a powerful point when understanding how a community can influence religion and how religion, in turn, can define community; they are, in many ways, symbiotic. Deep ties to the Church, family, land, and ethnicity were reflected in each community where the grottos were built.

As an example of community relationship with space, Pocius, in his 1991 work in Calvert, a small Newfoundland community on the Southern Shore, recognizes space as the central factor in the daily life of its inhabitants (7). Choosing to start with space rather than objects, Pocius recognizes that the placement of objects *in* space is essential for locating how space is maintained and used by the community, as are the objects themselves (ibid). Objects become contextual in their relation to the space it occupies. I agree with his assessment, but I am careful not to blanket all Newfoundland communities with the assumption of the primacy of space. Time and modernity have created a differing perception of the importance of space and its relationship to community

objects. For example, Renew's centralized for itself and the surrounding Catholic communities, a dynamic Roman Catholic religious local for collective worship. As you enter the town, the most conspicuous building is the 19th-century Church of The Holy Apostles, located in what was once a larger complex of ecclesiastical buildings. Three of these structures have, over the years, been removed. However, from the late 19th century to the mid-1980s, the community boasted a Church, Rectory, Presentation Convent, St Joseph's parochial school, and a small clerical graveyard on a small hill behind Holy Apostles Church where several priests and Presentation Sisters are buried. One contributor from a neighboring community called the area "The little Vatican," which acted as the center of the Catholic community, thus, operating on a visual level to demonstrate the power of the Church to organize social behaviors.³⁹ I have found that locals in Renew's give equal weight to both objects and space in their social and community identity. I hazard to guess that identification with these religious edifices is a recent product of community identity (only since the building of the grotto in 1927-8). This amalgamation of religious structures gave Renew's standing in the eyes of other communities and therefore elevated, to some degree, objects over land.

Small communities in Newfoundland have changed over the last century due to large-scale rural and urban movements.⁴⁰ Modernity, isolation, and changing group and community dynamics have affected these locales differently. This is reflective of small Catholic communities that

³⁹ One participant, when describing the area noted, that growing up in Renew's you were always aware that the nuns were "watching everything you did."

⁴⁰ In the early 1960s, the government of Newfoundland offered remote outports, whose populations had been shrinking over the last forty years, money to resettle in the larger towns and urban areas. Battered by change in the fishing markets, a reduction in population, and isolation from essential services, outport occupants were forced to choose between the emotional pain of radical change and the potential for opportunities for the future. Newfoundlanders saw this move as undercutting a culture and way of life that had existed for close to four-hundred years (Major 2001, 419). As Yi-fu Tuan notes "Community and place are inextricable: where one flourishes, so does the other" (2009, 57). These outports lost more than a place, they lost cohesive communities and their very sense of identity and connection to the past.

tended to be semi-monocratic in nature. In the past, clerical or priestly control extended to all aspects of life in the community. The centrality of religion to community life was influential in maintaining and creating tradition. Both the communities in question, Flatrock and Renew, reflect a sociocultural change in the early to mid-twentieth century.

For Flatrock, 12 km northwest of St. John's, modernity has meant an influx of outsiders (many non-Catholics) moving into the area as an overflow to the city; in other words, it has become a bedroom community. For Renew, modernity has meant the loss of younger residents and a diminishing population due to aging, death, and outmigration. Both communities carry the weight of transformation and modernization, much to the consternation of the older generations. I observed that these modernization processes had created a sentimental view of the past in the two communities. These changes are what make this thesis so timely. By locating memory in space, place, and religious material culture that was, and still is, so central to communal and religious identity, we can understand the vernacular spiritual practice and its influence on people's lives.

Chapter Three

A Place in History

“Shrines! Shrines! Surely you don’t believe in the gods.
What’s your argument? What’s your proof?”

Aristophanes (446 BCE-386 BCE)

3.1: Shrines and History

This chapter offers historical background to my work on replicated grottos. Due to the lack of academic work on this topic, I recognize a need to begin from early Christian history to thoroughly uncover their importance in the schema of Christian devotion and worship at these two grotto sites. Vernacular religious behaviors are not formed in a vacuum, and neither are sacred sites; instead, they have precursors in the historical record, or, as Degh succinctly states, “...the ethnographic present is built on *historical antecedents* and cannot be understood in isolation” (Degh 2001, 91). Similarly, Primiano points out, “The study of vernacular religion, like the study of folklore, appreciates religion as a *historical phenomenon*, as well as contemporary process...” (italics mine, 2012, 384). Locally replicated grottos may look like simple structures to the casual observer, but they are multi-dimensional edifices that reflect historical tradition and narrative. Consequently, it is beneficial to frame vernacular belief from a historical perspective. History is mirrored in Marian grottos, like those at Flatrock and Renew, through their images, relics, and rituals, which remain doctrinally consistent but dynamic in personal interpretation and use.

In this chapter, I will focus on early sacred spaces (shrines and grottos) where the miraculous saints and deities are said to reside spiritually and physically through relics and where journeys of faith are undertaken with hopes of experiencing the holy at these sites. Shrines play a vital role in the history of Christianity and have continuity with past precedence (McDannell 1995, 35; Courtright 1987, 300).⁴¹ Therefore, it is essential to examine how and why shrines, and the subsequent pilgrimages they inspire, still thrive in today's secular world.

As a sacred shrine, the grotto has a comprehensive history in the ancient Mediterranean world (McDannell 1995, 155; Miller 1982 1-33). The Greeks and Romans recognized the power of earth, water, and stone as liminal elements that the gods and goddesses inhabited. In ancient religious practices, subterranean chambers often acted as sites of passage and rebirth. One example is the Roman cult of Mithras, an Indo-Persian religion introduced into Rome in 67 BCE. Contemporary with first-century Christians, Mithraism was popular with the Roman military, where practitioners would meet in underground caverns to perform their secret rites (Martin 2000, 72; Miller 1982, 13; Ulansey 1989). Because of the association with Roman and Greek pagan practices, Christian shrines, especially those established in geologic formations such as caves and rock niches, were not seen as a deviation from the norm but as part of the ancient religious landscape where Christianity first established itself (Miller 1982, 13). There are numerous examples of pagan shrines in the classical world, providing early Christianity with a template to establish its tradition of shrine production.

⁴¹ The term “shrine” is derived from the Latin *scrinium* which means box or receptacle (Courtright 1987, 299). In modern academic and religious literature, ‘shrine’ is used loosely to describe everything from a simple home shrine, to holy wells, to a large religious complex hosting thousands of pilgrims every year. In India, Hindus use *tīrthas* as a word for shrine, meaning “crossing point” or “fjords” (Courtright 1987, 300). I find this definition insightful and apt for the concept of fixed religious space.

According to the Catholic Church Code of Canon Law, "The term shrine indicates a church or other sacred place which, with the approval of the local Ordinary, is because of special devotion frequented by the faithful as pilgrims" (Can. §1230).⁴² Shrine construction and veneration intertwine with early Christian history and are often connected to a specific space or place. Consequently, they serve to



Figure 18. Mithraic Temple, Ostia Antica, Italy c. 100-300 CE.

order religious life due to “power and meaning being bound in one place” (Courtright 1987, 300). Shrines become centers of spiritual influence by reflecting the deity’s presence in the form of material objects and ritual obligations. Shrines, dedicated to Christian saints, are arguably the earliest (semi) structures outside of a private residence, where early Christians met and celebrated the life of Christ and the saints.

3.2: Early Christians

In the early first century, the Roman Empire was largely polytheistic, apart from Judaism, which existed precariously juxtaposed with the Roman world (Aitken 2000, 81-83). Romans were inclined towards forbearance concerning other religions as long as they did not create trouble. After several Jewish rebellions in the first century against Roman rule, Rome's restraint broke, culminating in the destruction of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem in 70 C.E. The Roman historian

⁴² N/A. 2007. Book IV: The Sanctifying Office of the Church. Part III: Sacred Places and Times, Title I: Sacred Places (Can. 1205-1243), Chapter III: Shrines. http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ENG0017/_P4H.HTM (accessed June 18, 2019).

Tacitus comments that Christian persecution began in full in 64 C.E. after the burning of Rome during the reign of Emperor Nero (Barns 2010, 4).

Romans regarded Christians with deep suspicion in the first century of the Common Era. Hence, suppression by the authorities of cultic religions, viewed as politically and socially subversive, was predictable (Wilken 2003, 48). Historian Robert Louis Wilken remarks that Rome viewed the new sect of Christianity as a contingent of superstitious, antisocial eccentrics from the "lower strata of society" (2003, xix). Fear of sedition and political conspiracies created a climate of mistrust directed at non-conforming groups, particularly those that challenged the administration's collective religious customs (2003, 10). Stories of Christian orgiastic rites, which included cannibalism, were a part of the rumor mill that fueled anti-Christian sentiment during the first and second centuries (17-20). Civic responsibility required that the inhabitants of Rome offer wine, grain, and incense to the gods on ceremonial occasions. A sacrificial animal was expected for more formal events, such as the Emperor's birthday. Christian refusal to comply generated distrust among the local officials and the populace, who viewed noncompliance as an abdication of their primary civic duty with Rome and the Emperor (45). The average Roman acknowledged the benefits of communally practiced religion, recognizing it as good for the commonwealth and civic cohesion (53). The refusal by Christians to do so resulted in civil penalties and persecution by the Roman government. The directive to punish Christians through imprisonment and execution was established first by local proconsuls (governors) and later by the ruling elite to send a message of conformity to those practicing a socially subversive and superstitious religion (Frend 2006, 505-507). This repression would change profoundly between the third and fourth centuries due to the breakup of the Roman Empire by Emperor Diocletian into Eastern (Constantinople) and Western (Milan, later Rome) provinces and the conversion of Constantine I (also known as

Constantine the Great) who ruled the empire between 306 to 337 C.E.(Camron 2006, 540; Freedman 2011, 15).⁴³

3.3 Shrines and their Association to Relics and Martyrs

A brief look at relics and their central, if not vital, importance to Christian shrines and grottos is essential to understanding the historical context of pilgrimage and replicated shrine construction and how it reflects modern devotion to Mary.⁴⁴ The grottos at Flatrock and Renew's can be viewed through the lens of history, change, and continuity, moving from an ancient past to the present. Folklorists recognize that forms of religious practice adapt to time and place (Bronner 1998, 42; Toelken 1996, 48). Traditions are "constantly responding and adapting to shifting social encounters," as Bronner remarks (1998, 42). Therefore, it would stand to reason that shrine construction, with its two-thousand years of Christian practice, would remain conservative in its presentation (materially) but dynamic in its use and meaning. I will discuss this further in chapters four and five when I consider the Lourdes grottos at Renew's and Flatrock further.

Early Church shrines were established on the remains of saints and martyrs (Sumption 2003, 22). As early as the second century C.E., the quest for the material sources of Christian legends, relics, and biblical sites brought pilgrims around the Roman world to the Holy Land. In AD 324, at the age of eighty, Empress Helena (AD 246-330), mother to Emperor Constantine I (AD 272-337), traveled to Jerusalem at the behest of her son in search of holy relics associated

⁴³ In 312 C.E., Constantine is said to have delivered the city of Constantinople from an invading army through divine intervention (*instinctu divinitatis*). The historian *Lactantius* mentions that before battle Constantine had a dream where he was commanded (by God?) to place the sign of the cross on his army's shields. His dream of the Cross (*Chi-Rho*) before battle, and his conversion, remains one of the most powerful narratives in early Christianity (Pohlsander 2004, 23).

⁴⁴ The use of the terms "shrine" and "grotto" are used interchangeably in this work to mean the same thing. A grotto is a shrine with specific geologic characteristics as I have discussed earlier in the introduction.

with the life of Christ (Coleman and Elsner 1995, 78-79).⁴⁵ In vernacular narrative, Empress Helena is said to have discovered the location of Christ's crucifixion, the true Cross's remains, and the tomb of Christ's burial. She claimed the sites for Christendom by establishing the *Church of The Holy Sepulchre*, where Christ's burial and resurrection had purportedly occurred (Baert and Preedy 2004, 43; Coleman and Elsner 1995, 79). By doing so, Helena created a destination for religious movement through pilgrimage. She opened the floodgates to those seeking direct and physical contact with Christ's life and message. For most Christians, what had only been an early religious narrative was now tangible and accessible to those willing to undertake the journey.

At the time of Empress Helena's pilgrimage to Palestine (326-28), oral narratives concerning Christ's life had crystallized into various written accounts in the form of the synoptic gospels and writings by early Church fathers.⁴⁶ These early legends concerning the life of Christ and the holy martyrs permeated Christian cosmology. These stories also led the devout to visit sites far from their homes where the miraculous was reported to have happened. Due to a lack of definite physical evidence, the location of Christ's death and burial continued to be interpreted through oral and written narratives circulating in the years after Christ's death. Not until Emperor Constantine and Empress Helena established several shrines and churches on these holy sites did pilgrims institute Christian locations to go on pilgrimage. Hunt remarks that unrecorded journeys to the holy land may have come before the now-famous pilgrimage of the Empress (1982, 3-4). Stories of Helena's mission, and subsequent collection of holy relics, incentivized many early Christians to strike out on a sacred journey to see, feel, and experience these sanctified places for

⁴⁵ According to Socrate's *Scholastica* (in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*; Ecclesiastical Histories) 305-439 C.E., Helena was divinely directed in a dream to journey to holy land where she would search and find the burial place of Jesus.

⁴⁶ The earliest of the four gospels is believed to be Mark which dates from 66-70 C.E. (Stott and Motyer 2017, 9).

themselves. By the fourth century C.E., pilgrimage had become a commonly accepted form of Christian devotion.

During my fieldwork at the Flatrock and Renew's grottos, one question I addressed concerned the empowerment of the sacred through material means. I asked, what makes a grotto spiritually powerful? Moreover, what makes a replicated grotto equally so outside of the original? Is it its accompanying legend, or are there other material aspects that lend authenticity and power to the shrine? My research has led me to believe that objects of sacrality are just as crucial to the makeup of these shrines as the actual physical likenesses of the original grotto in France. In other words, relics actuate the power of the legend of Lourdes by their very presence. The idea of a relic is that the whole is present in any part (Graziano 2016, 11). They are the keys that open individuals' spiritual imagination, allowing them to connect directly with the holy figure and their story. At Flatrock, it is holy water from Lourdes poured directly into a cistern at the site; for Renew's, it is the holy water and a small, unassuming stone taken from where the apparition of Mary stood during her visitation at Lourdes. This artifact is set into the east-facing wall of the Renew's grotto, and people frequently touch it before and after praying at the site. Through the action of physical contact, individuals are directly connected to the history and memory of a sacred past. Historian Alexandra Walsham notes that:

[Relics] sublimate, crystallize, and perpetuate memory in the guise of physical remains, linking the past and present in a concrete and palpable way.... A kind of umbilical cord that connects the living and the celebrated dead, they carry messages from beyond the grave and provide a mnemonic ligature to a world that has been lost (2010, 13).

Interestingly, while researching at the Basilica of St. John the Baptist archives, I came across a letter from Fr. Sullivan, the creator of the Flatrock grotto, to then-Archbishop Skinner concerning

a piece of the True Cross that had been given to Fr. Sullivan by the archbishop. The letter is dated April 24, 1954, four years before the dedication of the Lourdes grotto in Flatrock. Sullivan writes:

My Lord Archbishop: I write these few lines in an attempt to inform my gratitude to you for the gift of the relic of the True Cross you obtained for this parish during your *ad limina* visit [annual visit to the Vatican]. For years we have wanted the relic, and it seemed to be [unintelligible] to obtain. It will be a happy thought for the parishioners and myself for years to come that our archbishop, in the midst of the very important affairs that claimed his attention in Rome, gave the thought and task the trouble to bring such a venerable relic to a small parish (AA 400/27/5).

The letter states that the relic was publicly venerated in Flatrock on Palm Sunday and Good Friday that same year. Father Sullivan notes that Michael Curtis, later to be the master builder of the grotto, built a reliquary "...like that used in the cathedral to hold the fragment when interred on the altar."⁴⁷ I asked several informants if they had heard of the relic, and they replied that they had not. I have not pursued this any further; the current location of the relic remains a mystery.

Holy relics for the Catholic Church are a doubled edge sword. n the one hand, they are valuable, highly venerated sacramental objects; on the other hand, they can be counterfeited and bought and sold as popular objects of interest on the internet or through various religious retailers. For example, a story by Thavis mentions that in 2006, a year after the passing of Pope John II, "relics" of the pontiff went on sale around the souvenir shops near the Vatican. This did not go over well with the Church authorities, and the shops were asked to stop selling these items, but not before merchandising these "relics" became a great success. These items consisted of a small medallion with a piece of supposed cloth from the habit of the deceased Pope (2015, 15-17). The sale of these relics, any relic, is forbidden by the Church, especially with the criticisms from the Protestant Reformation still ringing in the Church's ears (procuring and selling relics is known as

⁴⁷ Archdiocese Archives (AA). Sullivan letter dated April 21, 1954. Box number 400/27/5. p.2, St John's Newfoundland.

the sin of *Symone*). However, this reprimand has not stopped the prolific sale of suspect holy objects over the years (ibid).

Holy relics are potent material focal points for a saint's power (Walsham 2012, 13). They are sensual realities for Catholic believers, not merely symbolic or metaphorical, but proof of God's presence acting through the material world; in other words, they are sacramentals. Whether holy water blessed by a priest or water imbued with Mary's healing power through its direct connection to the apparition of the Virgin at Lourdes, Catholics perceive both as powerful tools against the darkness of the supernatural and secular world. St. Teresa of Avila recognized holy water as a powerful and substantial relic in her autobiography, stating, "From long experience, I have learned that there is nothing like holy water to put devils to flight and prevent them from coming back again ...so holy water must have great virtue" (quoted in Bradley 2012, 25).

Customarily, holy water blessed by a priest is recognized as sacramental by the Catholic Church; however, Lourdes water is considered a third-class relic due to its direct connection to the Virgin's apparition (Thavis 2015, 15).⁴⁸ Despite its mutable qualities and inability to hold form, Lourdes water plays the same influential role as any substantial three-dimensional relic. Although it is not the remains of a holy person per se (first-class relic), it is unquestionably a contact relic, much like a stone or a piece of cloth that connects with the religious person's body or tomb (Cameron 2010, 59). In 1103, German monk *Thiofried* commented in his treatise on relics that "...divine power works through things that have been consecrated by use and contact with the hands of the saints" (quoted in Bartlett 2013, 144). Contact relics began flourishing in the third

⁴⁸ Christian relics are divided into three classes. A first class relic is the remains of a saint, such as, bones or hair. A second class relic are items that have been touched by a saint, also known as contact relics. A third class relic refers to objects that have touched a first or second class relic such as touching a cloth to holy shrine.

century and have remained a vital form of sacred materiality through to the present. I will be looking closer at Lourdes's water in chapter five.

In early Church history, it was required that every consecrated church have a saint's relic placed in or on the altar. The second council of Nicaea in 787 C.E. reiterated this, stating that every altar should contain a relic, thus incorporating these objects of veneration into formal worship (Wilson 1983, 5). The remains of martyrs, saints, and objects directly associated with Christ and his Mother Mary were seen as channels of sacred power. The idea of holy presence manifested materially was, and still is, one of many Catholics' primary appeals to shrines and sacred places. An inscription on the tomb of one early Church saint reflects this, "Here lies Martin [of Tours] the bishop, of holy memory, whose soul is in the hand of God; *but he is fully here, present and made plain* in miracles of every kind" (italics mine, Brown 1982, 4). Individual supplicants could see and be seen by the deity or saintly intermediary and, in turn, bargain and engage in mediation in spiritual and worldly affairs, after which they could bring back a fragment of the experience in the form of a contact relic. Believers would often touch parts of the venerated object with a cloth or personal items, such as crucifixes. The article would become spiritually charged through direct contact, adding to the plethora of sacred objects created and dispersed through pilgrimage. From the first century into the late middle ages, the invisible world of the supernatural, Church teachings, and the material world were closely fused through these objects, creating a composite of vernacular materiality through contact relics and Church doctrine (McGuire 2008, 33; Orsi 2009).

Relics, such as pieces of the True Cross and the bones of saints, became "visible proofs" of the sacred inhabiting a place (Coleman and Elsner 1995, 83). Early Christian shrines were, quite literally, built on the bones of saints; in other words, they were constructed on the spot of a



Figure 19. Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna, 2nd century C.E.

martyr's burial. A letter to the church of *Philomelium*, written in 156 C.E. concerning the martyrdom of Archbishop Polycarp of *Smyrna*, burned at the stake for his faith, describes how local Christians collected his remains, "They took up his bones which are more valuable than refined gold and laid them in a suitable place where the Lord willing, we may gather together in gladness and celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom" (quoted in Sumpton 2003, 21). Many Christians believed that

the relics of saints and the Holy Family held special magical powers, and the high demand for such relics soon became pervasive in the Christian world. Relic veneration was a vernacular practice at its core, as some early Christian purists regarded this "cult of saints" and their relics as pagan (2003, 22).

The early Christian apologist St. Jerome discusses the question of relics stating, "We do not worship their relics anymore that we do the sun or the moon, the angels, archangels, or seraphim.⁴⁹ We honor them in honor of *He* whose faith they witnessed. We honor the Master by means of the servant" (Sumpton 2003, 22). St. Jerome desired that the relic be recognized as an essential object in the act of reverence and remembrance of those who had given their lives for their faith. However, St Jerome overlooked people's proclivity to invest supernatural presence into relics and shrines the saints occupied. In contrast, Church fathers, such as Justin Martyr, argued against the use of objects stating in his work, *First Apology* (155-157 C.E.), "We do not worship with many sacrifices and floral offerings the things men have made, set in temples, and called

⁴⁹ According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, a Christian apologist is an early Christian writer "primarily in the 2nd century, who attempted to provide a defense of Christianity and criticisms of paganism, and other aspects of Greco-Roman culture." Much of their writings were directed towards the Roman emperor (Kelly 2021, para. 1)

gods. We know that they are inanimate and lifeless and have not the form of God..." (as quoted in Thiessen 2005, 44). Like many early Christian thinkers, Justin was influenced by the philosophic school of Platonism, which argued that tangible forms are fleeting, unstable, and imperfect, often confusing appearance with what was real, i.e., the soul (Carnes 2017, 1).

New Christian shrines containing relics of the dead were considered divisive by some Christian apologists, thus, creating an internal struggle within the early Church. Criticism came from pagans as well. Emperor Julian (361-63 C.E.) argued that Christians, whom he referred to as "Galatians," had only created a new pantheon of gods to substitute for those they had rejected. He remarks, "You Christians have filled the whole world with tombs and sepulchers, and yet, in your scriptures, it is nowhere said that you must grovel among the tombs and pay them honor" (as quoted in Freedman 2011, 29). Julian was an apostate, a Christian who converted back to paganism (2011, 29). In *Against the Galileans*, his arguments reflect early second-century critics of the new religion (Christianity) and their inclination to attribute miracles to their martyred dead. The second-century philosopher Celsus viewed Christianity as "*exitiabilis superstitio*," pernicious superstition lacking reason and credibility.⁵⁰ Martin Luther would level this argument twelve hundred years later in his Protestant polemics on the Catholic Church, arguing that "...the cult of saints increasingly resembled the classical [Roman] pantheon." (as quoted in Cameron 2010, 208). The association of early Christian practice with pagan magic was worrisome to Church authorities, who considered the unauthorized (vernacular) use of Christian symbols and objects problematic among believers (Maguire 1995, 5).

⁵⁰ For the full text see: Origin of Alexandria. 2018. (248 C.E.) "*Contra Celsum*, Book III." New Advent org: Church Fathers. (Accessed June 24, 2009). <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/04163.htm>

The convergence of two belief systems, one polytheistic and the other monotheistic, overlapped a great deal in the early years of Christianity, much to the dismay of early Church fathers and theologians. Classicist Catherin Nixey discusses this in her work on Christianity's destruction of the classical world. She notes that although Christian evangelists demanded purity and conformity by forsaking all other gods, the newly converted often hedged their bets by playing both ends of the devotional spectrum:

The habits of polytheism, in which each new God was merely added to the old, died hard. Many pagans worshiped added the new Christian God and saints to their old polytheistic gods and continued much as before....Christians might pray to God for the truly substantial things in life, and yet when they desire something a little smaller—the return of a cow, help with a dicky knee—turn to slightly less awesome spirits (2017, 22).

Old habits die hard, and devotional practice by the average person was more diverse and complex than what the early Church defined as established theology. This dichotomy lies at the core of vernacular religion, or religion as lived, where official and folk religion boundaries blur and fuse in the mind of adherents. "Vernacular religion is as human beings encounter, understand, interpret, and practice it," notes Primiano, and where "manifold factors influence the individual believer" (1995, 44). Comfort in the old gods and goddesses still held sway over the minds and hearts of the newly initiated Christians. This duality of devotion suited the pagan religious mindset of the day as Roman religion recognized other foreign gods as equally viable to collective worship.

Nonetheless, it became an all-out war on non-Christian practices for the new devout sect of Christianity. Early Christianity confronted these issues by demonizing pagan religions. Christians saw the classical gods as evil and the work of Satan. According to the Christian church, non-Christians practiced demonic rites in the temples dedicated to the old gods (Nixey 2017, 110). Among Christian intellectuals and ordinary adherents, there was a "conscious fusion of pagan

(cults) and Christian beliefs and doctrines," which inevitably influenced early Church doctrine (24). Church fathers fought an uphill battle to rid their new sects of all vestiges of vernacular pagan beliefs. As with modern vernacular religion, the lived religion of the early Christians was influenced by contemporary culture and their affiliation with pagan traditions.

The first four centuries of the Christian era are particularly rife with pagan beliefs influencing the early Church, particularly regarding shrines and the cult of saints and martyrs. In his work on Christian relics, historian Charles Freedman locates many distinctive qualities shared by both belief traditions (2011, 9). One commonality was erecting an altar or shrine over the bones of dead heroes. This pagan practice translated into Christian practice, where martyrs and saints replaced pre-Christian gods and heroes (9). Similarly, pilgrimages to these sites were not a uniquely Christian practice but had antecedents in the pagan world. Freedman recognizes that:

The shrines they [pagans] visited may have had as deeply emotional an impact on them as would later opulent churches of the Christian relic cults. So the bodies of the saints may represent a very different kind of religious tradition by being often presented in contexts that would have been familiar (2011, 10).

Soon after Empress Helena's pilgrimage to Jerusalem and her subsequent collection of religious relics, the cults of saints and martyrs took a firm foothold in the hearts and minds of Christians. Tales of miraculous healings and interventions associated with these sacred items were part and parcel of oral Christian narratives. An account of Bishop Polycarp's martyrdom reveals that when he was placed on the pyre to burn, the flames would not consume him:

So, at length, the lawless men, seeing that the fire could not consume his body, ordered an executioner to go up to him and stab him with a dagger. And when he had done this, there came forth [a dove and] a quantity of blood, so that it

extinguished the fire; and all the multitude marveled that there should be so great a difference between the unbelievers and the elect (as quoted in Lightfoot 2018)⁵¹

This description of Polycarp's death locates the miraculous at the time of his demise. The account would have resonated with the Christian faithful, whose greatest hope was to see the miraculous revealed in their own lives, and in turn, would substantiate that even during and after death, the relics of the saint contained *pneuma* (*πνεῦμα*); the spirit of the divine.

Medieval scholars Caroline Walker Bynum and Paula Gerson note that the cult of relics was one of western Christianity's most curious and noteworthy practices (1997, 3). This relic veneration continues today within the Catholic world, both in the Eastern Orthodox and Western Roman traditions, where the remains of saints and martyrs demonstrate a powerful pull on believers. As an example, in early 2018, the relic of the 465-year-old right forearm of St. Francis Xavier, a 16th-century Jesuit missionary, came to the basilica of *St. John the Baptist* in the city of St. John's, Newfoundland. It was on a multi-city 'pilgrimage' in Canada. St. Francis is said to have baptized thousands during his travels through Asia. The saint's body (minus the arm) is buried in Goa in western India. In a radio broadcast on the relic, dated November 2017, Angele Regnier, co-founder of Ottawa's *Catholic Christian Outreach*, spoke to Helen Mann on CBC's, *As it Happens*. Regnier states that the saint's forearm is "...really quite astonishing [to see it up close] because this relic is incorrupt" (Regnier and Mann 2017).⁵² Regnier also discusses the possibility of making the relic a coat for the cold winter in Canada, which was later nixed by the Vatican,

⁵¹ The Letter of the Smyrnaeans or the Martyrdom of Polycarp. Internet History Sourcebooks Project. Translated by J.B. Lightfoot. <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/martyrdom-polycarp-lightfoot.asp> (accessed June 21, 2019)

⁵² Early in the second and third centuries, the incorruptibility of the martyr's physical form became part of the Christian tradition, representing to believers the triumph of the body over death through God's miraculous intervention (Freedman 2009, 214). One issue with the relics that are viewed as incorruptible, is that many times, the devout do not realize that what they "see" is actually is something designed to look real but is actually covered in wax and make up, or it is so small, such as a piece of the true cross, it is hard to see the relic in the reliquary. As an example, Bernadette's body, located at a shrine in the town of Nevers, France, is said to be incorruptible but her face has been covered in a wax mask for years; thus creating an image of incorruptibility (Thavis 2015, 49).

who planned to provide the relic with a duffel bag for the trip (I like the idea of a parka for the relic). While escorted by Regnier to fourteen cities across Canada, the relic received VIP treatment, including its own seat on Air Canada flights. Regnier further states that she knows it is just bones; however, "...connected to that is a living friendship with St. Francis Xavier. So for me, it is like doing a road trip with a friend" (ibid). This behavior illustrates the depth of devotion that these relics can invoke.

Relics are a textbook example of the sacramental mixing of spirit and matter. Associations are formed with the saints through their relics, thus demonstrating the internal (self) and external (physical) importance of connection and relationships developed through religious materiality. Devotees look for a link to the divine through those whose death and salvation are linked to God "uniquely" (Vergote 1982, 17). God may be mysterious and aloof, but St. Francis Xavier's relic is a tactile and tangible connection to a potential spiritual intercessor. More pointedly, Vergote surmises that one "...believes in God and Jesus Christ, but one is attached to Mary," or in this case, a saint (1982, 17). This attachment is made more potent through religious relics that remind the devotee that the saint was once like them and has attained God's ear through their sanctity.⁵³



Figure 20. 465-year-old "incorruptible" hand of St. Xavier.

⁵³ Relics of the saintly dead are not limited to Roman Catholicism, but to other belief systems as well. Relics of the Buddha were distributed soon after his death. These sacred relics can be located at *stupas* or shrines around the Buddhist world (Cruz 2015, 1).

The re-conceptualization of the Church's place in the modern world during Vatican II (1962-4) did little to stem the belief in the miraculous supernatural associated with these holy objects.⁵⁴ Arguably, the importance of saints and their relics demonstrated by early Christians and precipitated by Empress Helena has shaped the future of devotional practices for two millennia in the Christian world.

By the eighth century, holy relics were necessary for the consecration of altars and, later in the twelfth century, for the canonization of saints. A martyr's remains were required to be held in a reliquary and placed on or near an altar (Walker-Bynum and Gerson 1997, 3). More and more relics became a part of liturgical worship. These objects were often fragmented and sent to distant places in the Christian empire (1997, 4). Churches, shrines, and monasteries were part of a broader religious economy of trade and exchange and sought to acquire these objects for spiritual and monetary benefit.⁵⁵ Pilgrimage needed a physical focus point or purpose, and these holy items encouraged many to take the journey. They were "points of encounter" for pilgrims who journeyed far to engage and plead their case before the saints and Holy Family (Orsi 2005, 49). Contact with sacred relics became a central objective for those choosing to move away from the safety of their homes and into the dangerous unknown. For many pilgrims, this was undertaken with the hope that the benefits of the pilgrimage to a holy shrine would far outweigh the negative consequences that could arise along the way (Freeburg 100, 1989).⁵⁶

⁵⁴ For further discussion on this see Robert Orsi's work, *Between Heaven and Earth* (2005) pages 152-161.

⁵⁵ By the early medieval period, holy objects were encased in reliquaries; highly ornate enclosures fashioned to hold the bones and personal objects of the saints and the Holy Family (Freedman 2011, 81). Many of these relics were given pride of place on the altar in churches and monasteries. Reliquaries also allowed for relics to be moved safely to and from churches and shrines, as well as religious display on processional occasions, such as high holy days.

⁵⁶ Not all relics are the bones of one saint or another. Many were just simple objects, or mementos, that had been in contact with the saint or their shrine (third class relics) (Morgan 2009b 17; Sumption 2003, 24). These contact relics could be something as simple as soil, dust, water, or a stone collected at the site, which would be taken home for personal collection and veneration or for community use at a local shrine (2003, 25).

Interactions with sacred materiality through shrines and relics functioned in two ways. Things are asked of the saint, and things are given by the petitioner, materially and through promises made in return for supernatural intercession. Relationships with these holy entities were formed through spiritual prayer, bodily ritual, and material augmentation. Morgan notes that vernacular religion operates as a religious economy where the individual enters into a reciprocal exchange with the supernatural, stating, "These relations are vigorously negotiated in practices of gifting or donation, petition or supplication, and in *quid pro quo*. Each form of negotiation carries different expectations of reciprocation and indebtedness" (2010b, 18).⁵⁷ Supplication to a saint often involves negotiations and promises given in return for supernatural help and intercession. The leaving of physical gifts at the site, such as tokens, notes, flowers, and money, indicates that the petitioner is willing to interact with the saint spiritually through material means with the hope of being granted some form of supernatural help. This kind of supplication, through objects, struck me as spiritually poignant when I visited the Grotto of St. Bridget in Ireland. The shrine can be viewed as a palimpsest on which individuals' needs, desires, and worldly pains were written and rewritten through various offerings. This outpouring of materiality at St. Bridget's shrine revealed the saint's intricate relationship with her role as intercessor. There is something very personal and moving about such a display, and it has stayed with me over the years.

Sacred objects are what I would regard as liminal materiality in that they mediate between the mundane and sacred.⁵⁸ They have little intrinsic religious value; nevertheless, they are given

⁵⁷ This is particularly significant in regards to the two Marian shrines in this study, where Lourdes water—as a secondary relic—acts as a direct connection to the Mary's manifestation. It is the portability of the Mary's presence through small articles such as water, and the divine's ability to move from object to object and place to place, that allows for a broad distribution of holy relics far from their origin.

⁵⁸ Van Gennep's concept of liminality (*Rites of Passage*, 1909) maintains that ritual is a between state or "threshold" wherein normal everyday time is suspended. It is a metaphysical state wherein the individual travels from one state of existence to another often as a rite of passage. Liminal ascetics is materiality that works between the two realms of existence; that of the spirit and that of matter.

their authority through power of holy presence. They are recognized as intermediaries between believers and the sacred, between the material realm and the realm of the holy. They are the carriers, or vehicles, by which the holy "threshold" can be crossed. This power is intensified through the interaction between the supplicant and the object, as the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre recognizes:

When knowledge and feeling are oriented toward something real, actually perceived the thing, like a reflector, returns the light it has received from it. As a result of their continual interaction, meaning is continually enriched at the same time as the object soaks up *effective qualities*. The object thus obtains its particular depth and richness (italics mine, 1965, 89).

Not only are these relics able to absorb the veneration and reflect it, but they transport the believer into the world of the sacred and modify the physical realm through healing and miracles. The essential principle of religious objects in worship is the acceptance of the interchange (relationship) between the creative imagination, image, and meaning-making within this relationship (Cappadona 2014, 221; Orsi 2005, 67-68).

3:4 Early Marian Devotion

Marian devotion began in Christianity's early years, dating from the fourth century C.E. (Kane 2004, 89). Although little is written concerning Mary and her life in the gospels, this did little to stop later authors from creatively writing about her in the ensuing years.⁵⁹ In the middle ages, Mary captured the broader imagination of scholars, theologians, artists, and the populace as *Theotokos*, the Mother of God, recognizing her as the personification of the altar where God was

⁵⁹ Mary's birth and upbringing are (creatively) written about as early as 150 C.E. in the Protoevangelium of James, purportedly written by the brother of Jesus (interestingly, this would have made James over 100 years old). For the full text of this work see: *The Work of God. The Protoevangelium of James* <https://www.theworkofgod.org/Aparitns/PevglJms.htm#THE%20PROTEVANGELIUM%20OF%20JAMES>

made manifest on earth (Morgan 2012, 94).⁶⁰ Her body is the site of the transfiguration of the holy into flesh. Christ's birth into the mortal world can be seen as a departure from the Judeo tradition of religious expression through text and law to the Christian manifestation of God amongst us, as John 1:14 expresses: "...and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Mary became an accessible (liminoid) figure that mediates the world of flesh and the spirit (Orsi 2005, 48-9)

The veneration of Mary as Christ's mother has an ancient lineage beginning with the first Synods held by the Eastern Church in the early years of Christianity. At the First Council of Nicaea in 325, a statement of faith was established, commonly known as the Nicæan Creed. Later

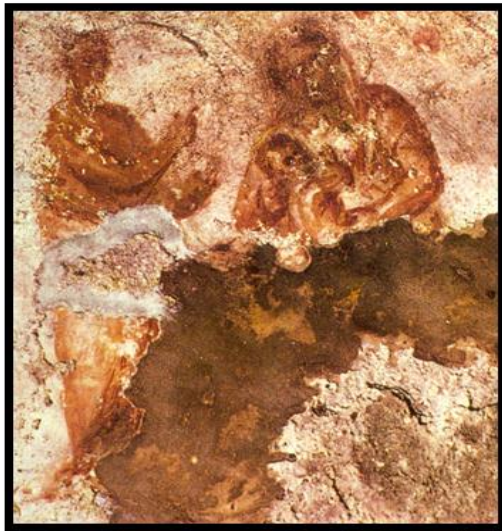


Figure 21. One of the earliest depictions of Mary. The artwork dates to early 3rd century C.E., and was found underneath Rome's Via Salaria in what was once a quarry. Christianity was still illegal at the time of its creation.

at Constantinople in 381, the creed was modified to include the Virgin Mary declaring, "...by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary and became man" (Vatican Archives n/d). Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born to a woman, this doctrine insured Christ's place in a heavenly family and an earthly one. It also ensured Mary's participation in the Christian cosmological drama and stature as the

Mother of God and opened the door to Mary's official membership in Christian veneration and worship.

According to Theologian Norman Geisler, before this,

Marian devotion had already developed at the margins of the Church; however, now, her worship

⁶⁰Mary as *Theotokos*, "Mother of God," was recognized as the personification of the altar where God was made manifest on earth (Morgan 2012, 94). Her body was seen as the site of transfiguration of the holy into flesh. Christ's birth into the world of the corporeal can be recognized as a departure from the Judeo tradition of religious expression through text and law, to the Christian manifestation of God amongst us, as John 1:14 expresses: "...and the word became flesh and dwelt among us." Mary is an accessible connecting figure that mediates the world of flesh and the spirit (See Orsi 2005, 48-9).

has become part of mainstream Catholic devotion (1992, 20).⁶¹ The person of Mary offers a variation in the story of relics as objects of worship. It would stand to reason that the Holy Family would take precedence over lesser holy figures concerning shrine production and procuring relics; however, physical relics of Mary were not available, so innovative alternatives were necessary (Freedman 2011, 174). Primiano remarks, "Given the sacramental nature of Catholic culture, all objects have the potential to become objects of belief" (1999, 197); therefore, it is not unsurprising how the early Church was ingenious, to say the least, in its acquisition of Marian relics.

The Virgin Mary is said to have ascended into heaven "body and soul," leaving no physical remains behind (Cunneen 1996, 237). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* affirms, "Finally, the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things...." (2019). The Church identifies Mary's assumption into heaven as one of the four dogmas; the other three include the mother of God (*Theotokos*), perpetual virginity, and being free from original sin (Ibid). The lack of physical remains did not pose much of a problem for the devout. Articles of clothing, such as Mary's undergarment (chemise) worn during the annunciation and birth of Jesus, resided at the Cathedral of Chartres in France (Burns 2006, 365). Otherworldly objects included her girdle, slippers, and purported vials of her breast milk. Her undergarments were said to have been flung off during her assumption into heaven and thrown to the Apostle Thomas (Freedman 2011, 174). Interestingly, a 1954 article, "Marian

⁶¹In my own research, I have noted that early scholarly work Marian devotion focused heavily on Mary as symbol. I contend that this is a reductionary and somewhat condescending approach to Catholic devotional life and belief. It is clear that symbols are intimately a part of Marian worship, and to outsiders, she is seen as symbolic of Catholicism's differences from Protestantism; nonetheless, Mary is experiential in nature for many believers. When she is approached by an individual, they experience her presence not just as representational, but as real. Her presence is alive and active in their lives.

Devotion in Newfoundland,” by Rev. P. J. Kennedy (whom I interviewed for this work), mentions that a portion of the Virgin’s girdle resides at Archbishop Skinner’s residence in St. Johns (85).

Mary’s girdle, along with Fr. Sullivan’s piece of the true Cross, Lourdes water, and the stone from Lourdes at Renew, indicates the mobility of relics around the globe. Unlike other pieces of religious materiality, they are usually directly related to the saintly human body or have some connection with it, thus, giving them their supra-human vitality and ability to enact miracles. The ambiguity and uncertainty that revolve around the apparent multiplicity of these items are irrelevant to the believer. How many pieces of the true Cross are there, and how many girdles did Mary own? Like reproduced grottos, relics can become an extension of the saint or deity with which they are associated. For example, Medieval Church fathers were aware of the multiple heads of John the Baptist circulating within Christian Europe. However, they reconciled this through the idea of self-regeneration, much like the Miracle of the loaves and fishes in the gospel of John 6: 1-14 (Walsham, 2010, 9). It may not be easy for the modern mind to comprehend the credibility of these stories and objects. However, for the faithful, the relic’s legitimacy rests in their ability to enact miracles and answer the prayers that are laid before them

Today, the Mary of Lourdes circulates globally through artifacts, souvenirs, and blessed mementos. Via the use of holy water collected at Lourdes, Catholics "experience the power of the French [Lourdes] shrine at a distance" (McDannell 1995, 155). This acquisition of religious artifacts is an essential theme regarding replicated Lourdes grottos. These fragments of spiritual matter, such as holy water and soil, can be placed in small crucifixes and vials and worn about the neck as a protection charm (Sumption 2003, 24-26). This form of distribution has made the power of the relic mobile and, to no small degree, beneficial to the pilgrim's desire to channel intercessory forces and blessings (Walsham 2010, 13). Sacred souvenirs take on a life of their own

as Historian Alexandria Walsham reasons, “Unlike sacramentals or amulets, they are not invested with a divine power through human rituals of liturgical consecration or spells: rather their capacity to tap and focus it is inherent in them” (2010, 13-14). Orsi characterizes them as a "media of presence" (2016). They travel to different individuals via inter-personal transactions, such as gifts; thus, benefiting those who could not make the journey themselves.



Figure 22. Archbishop of Genoa Jacobus de Voragine with *The Golden Legend* (c.1230 - 1298).

3.5 History, Ostension, and Saint’s Legends

Relics and saints’ legends are arguably one of the cornerstones of shrine engagement by the faithful. For two thousand years, Christian legends have filled the religious imagination with storied places. As such, they construct sacred geographies, such as the holy land, through imagined narrative. This sacred image in the mind's eye became as much an act of faith and imagination as the physical undertaking of pilgrimage. In western European culture, Christian legend was, for the first millennia, primarily an oral and written form of instruction and example and a source of entertainment among the devout (Jolles 2017, 19). These writings would later be solidified into ecclesiastical texts such as the *Golden Legend*, a compilation of stories of saints’ lives written in the thirteenth century by Archbishop Jacobus de Voragine.⁶² By assembling them into a single work, de Voragine organized what had initially been orally transmitted stories, collected or written down by earlier individuals. He added embellishments to these stories—a

⁶² The Latin for the title *Golden Legend* is *Legendae Sanctorum* or *Legenda Aurea* (Jolles 2017, 20). De Voragine’s work is where we first encounter the word legend as a western literary construct.

common practice in early medieval writing (Le Goff 2014, x).⁶³ These stories were meant to be read aloud to the congregation by Catholic Priests who used these stories to develop their sermons. These accounts were often associated with the saint's day of devotion. De Voragine arranged the book to coincide with the liturgical time (temporal) with the time of the saints (*sanctorale*), thus, integrating saints' legends in an ordered fashion, wherein the pious could celebrate the saint's lives chronologically (LeGoff 2014, 24).

Early archaeologist and folklorist Andre Jolles (1874-1946) comments that saint legends substantially influenced early western society. He recognized them as "...cardinal points on the [human] compass" by which [Christian] society oriented itself (2017, 19). Jolles argues that saints are bound to the Church "by virtue of a fellowship of sainthood" (19). Through death and canonization, the saint's virtue and narrative gain a life of their own; in turn, the saint develops into a creature of legend "created by the community" for the community (27). This category of legend on holy miracles finds its way into the canon of stories we call saints legends.

Whether these sacred stories could be considered vernacular (oral) or elite (written) in their proliferation is a moot point; dissemination originated with orally transmitted religious narratives (Zimdars-Swartz 1991, 15). In her book *Saints in Folklore* (1966), Christina Hole notes that the veneration of the saints began in the first few centuries of Christianity, only later being collected and written up by early Church Fathers and chroniclers (viii). She remarks these narratives are "...often as vividly commemorated in traditional folklore as they are in religious history" (vii). Similarly, in his work on biblical narrative as folklore, Alan Dundes argues that

⁶³ One document in particular, the *Gospel of the Birth of Mary*, written in the fifth century, was responsible for disseminating many of the early saints' legends in the West, particularly after its contents had been taken over later in the thirteenth century by de Voragine in *The Golden Legend*. His medieval collection of stories about the saints perpetuated many of the earlier apocryphal stories and maintained their popularity over many centuries.

recording a legend did not make it any less a legend or a vernacular narrative (1999, 9). Saints legends often do not make it into official religious literature, as Jan Brunvand notes. Some remain folklore and are orally transmitted through generations of Catholics (1998, 198). Although recent, the legend of Bernadette and the Lourdes grotto is an example of an oral narrative that later developed into a written “official” legend based on factual accounts along with dynamic vernacular narrations added by Catholic clergy and laypeople.

Contemporary legend scholars recognize the association between legend transmission, physical action, and mimicry (Degh and Vázsonyi 1983; Degh 2001; deVos 2012; Ellis 1989, 1996; Fine 1991). Many, if not all, early Christian legends began as oral narratives later codified by the Church. In the early years of Christianity, oral legends were part of the driving force that perpetuated the need to personalize the sacred through actual embodied movement to the site of the sacred story. For the most part, early Christians were ordinary people with few literary skills; thus, they relied on the narratives that circulated in their communities about the life of Christ and the saints to fuel their faith. These stories incited in some the desire to see and experience these places and to connect to the sacred physically and personally.

I recognize these journeys as an early form of legend tripping, or what I would term a sacred legend journey, whereby what started as a legend developed into “real-life action” in the form of religious pilgrimage (Ellis 2003, 161). By extension, I also recognize the act of ostension, which refers to the process by which “...people act out themes or events found within folk narratives” (Fine 1991, 179). Legend tripping and ostension concepts have primary considerations in recent contemporary legend scholarship but have infrequently been applied to Christian legends. Christian legends are similar to modern or contemporary legends in that they are emergent, dynamic, and focused on extraordinary supernatural happenings that can contain

elements of torture, death, and the supernatural. However, Carl Lindahl points out that "...there is substantial evidence that ostension can also transcend horror and inspire a sense of wonder in those who bring legends to life" (2005, 164).

Legends are historical narratives from a vernacular perspective that present history and events deemed essential to ordinary people (Tangherlini 1994, 14-15). Therefore, it is vital to recognize the prevalence of sacred legends in Catholic life, as evidenced by the thousands of believers who travel to holy shrines of renowned, such as Lourdes, or sacred geographies, such as Jerusalem, based on religious narratives. Many chose to participate in a legend through re-enactment, such as retracing the steps of Christ's crucifixion by carrying a heavy wooden cross along the *Via Dolorosa* in Jerusalem. In her article on performative landscape and legend tripping, folklorist Lisa Gabbert remarks, "For a legend quest to occur, there must be a legend—that is a narrative about an extraordinary event purported to be true—there must be a specific locale where the event allegedly took place" (2015, 146). The need for a sacred place or locality where the extraordinary happened is as vital in religious legend journeys as in any supernatural-oriented journey. Gabbert further comments that landscape plays a vital role in legend tripping, linking legend and journey to the extraordinary aspects of socially and religiously cultivated landscapes (ibid).

The pilgrim becomes part of the narrative by performing a religious journey as both a participant and an observer. Moreover, the narratives of these journeys mature layer upon layer over time, developing a vernacular body of stories that are both dynamic and relevant in today's religious pilgrimages. In his work on landscape and the Western Apache, Keith Basso comments, "...as places animate the ideas and feelings of persons who attend to them, these same ideas and feelings animate the places on which attention has been bestowed" (1996,107). Both the

pilgrimage site and the pilgrim are intimately tied to the narrative or legend of the site through behavior (attention), action, and memory. Similarly, folklorists Ulo Valk and Daniel Savborg recognize, “Places are empowered through narratives that are recycled in countless variants and which mark them as extraordinary locations” (2018, 10). The desire to participate in religious legend is built upon successive narratives of the “extraordinary” places such as Lourdes, thus adding to the already multilayered narrative of sacred space.

I question why folklorists have neglected saint’s legends recently, along with accompanying ostensive behaviors associated with their re-enactments. Degh, in her 2001 work on *Legend and Belief*, points out that early on, various forms of oral communication have disseminated legends to their intended audiences:

Sermons, exempla collections, vitas of saints and martyrs, chronicles, diaries, travelogues, demonologies, and mystic cabbalistic and astrological books, have contemporized and complemented living and remembered folklore materials to make their points (263).

Degh's list includes sermons, stories, and vitas regarding saints and martyrs, in other words, religious legends. Still, in the discipline of folkloristics, scholars such as Jan Brunvand have maintained that legends tend to be secular in form, thus, brushing past the rich heritage of religious legends (1986, 159). Brunvand argues that saint legends contain religious motifs, but it is only religious legend as long as traditional oral versions continue circulating (160). I would argue that of all the forms of legend, the ones about saints and the Holy Family are the most prolific and repeatedly disseminated form of legend narrative in the Christian world. One only has to attend a weekly church service, baptism, or a Christian wedding to recognize this status or participate in holidays such as Easter or Christmas. Unfortunately, recognizing only secular narrative limits our definition of a legend. It also narrows our understanding of the cultural distribution and influence of sacred stories, whether oral or written, that function in the lives of believers. Appropriately,

Jolles's discussion of legend considers saint's narratives wholly contained legends that have remained relevant for over nineteen hundred years despite their mode of distribution (2017, 19-20).

Today, much of ostension—a legend's dramatic extension into real life— and legend-tripping scholarship are based on contemporary (secular) legends, many involving a somewhat limited adolescent demographic (Lindahl 2005, 164-165). Modern legend trips, some scholars have argued, are for entertainment primarily by young people and are considered a youthful rite of passage (Degh 2001, 243-257; deVos 2012, 29; Ellis 1996, 920-922). Experiential travel to places of legend is not the sole domain of the young and curious. For many Christians, pilgrimage is a rite of passage and can be powerful and life-altering to those who re-create the steps, behaviors, and material expressions of saint's legends. Where else in legend transmission does a narrative, such as biblical stories and saints' legends, remain actively viable and dynamic in everyday believers' lives two thousand years later? Many saint's legends are as active and forceful today as they were at their first telling a millennia ago. I agree with folklorist Timothy Tangherlini in that any legend sustained in tradition can be viewed as a contemporary legend and is effective in all human dimensions of legend participation and re-enactment (1994, 20). In the modern Catholic imagination, narratives take a central stage. According to Andrew Greeley, they are the "first contact of religion," yet they do not remain as stories but translate into the fullness of devotional practices and embodied movement (2001, 4).

For Christians following sacred narratives, the experiential search for the holy and the miraculous leads them. Legends are "maps for action" (Ellis 1989, 218), and these maps denote space and place, offering a template for mirroring the saints' behaviors as a form of devotion. What is a map but a materially expressed form of movement concerning past action?

Respectively, folklorists Donald Holly and Casey Cordy recognize that legends are more than just narratives; they are also “acts” that entail performance and experiences (2007, 336). The central expectation, for many, is the union with the sacred through physical movement to sites of martyrdom and supernatural performances. I cannot help but think that the religious journey and the expectations are a form of spiritual adventure-seeking. In his work on legend tripping, Michael Kinsella remarks, “...after being introduced to the accounts of past happenings,” people may choose to “investigate further” by traveling to the site or area that is of paranormal interest (2011, 85). Investigation can be as simple as a trip to a graveyard or as monumental as a journey to the site of a martyr’s death, where the aspiration to participate in the (sacred) narrative is enacted.⁶⁴

Christian and secular journey narratives differ in purpose and degree of influence in a



Figure 23. Bernadette was exhumed in 1925 and was found to be incorrupt. Canonized in 1933, Bernadette’s body now rests in a glass shrine in Nevers, France.

person’s life; however, they are both journeys of action, direct experience, and the supernatural. If we accept the premise of a narrative's ability to generate action, many pilgrims to sacred sites perform a kind of spiritual legend journey. Christian narratives concerning the supernatural workings of the Holy Family and the saints perpetuate Catholic pilgrimages. If we recognize saint’s narratives as a product of early oral Christian legend, then the idea of a sacred journey done as a right of Christian passage,

perpetuated and encouraged through dynamic narrative, and focused on experiencing the sacred

⁶⁴ In the first two centuries, the Christian cult of saints and martyrs was primarily local. First century Christian often gathered at the tombs of martyred Christians for fellowship. This constituted some of the earliest forms of sacred space creation and devotion, and can be recognized as an early form of religious legend tripping or journey.

and supernatural, can be seen as consistent with the modern concept of legend tripping and ostensive behavior (Ellis 2003, 46-47).

On December 8, 1933, sixty years after Bernadette's death from tuberculosis of the bone, Pope Pious XI canonized the visionary as a saint of the Catholic Church. The story of Bernadette and her visions at Lourdes has now been added to the Catholic canon of saint legends through oral and literary dissemination. It presents both fact and creative invention in its composition. From the early days of Lourdes's visions, miraculous tales of Bernadette's virtues began circulating. Bernadette was viewed as hyper-extraordinary, thus, mixing truth and vernacular embellishments, similar to saint's legends of the past and the uncanny and preternatural secular legends of the present. Narratives maintained that Bernadette could float on air, possessed heroic qualities that enabled her to feel no fear, and had the supernatural ability to heal with just a touch; even after her death, her body was said to be incorrupt (Harris 1999, 141-142). Bernadette did not seek the limelight or fame; instead, she hid from the crowds that demanded she perform miracles in the Virgin's name. Over the years, the story of Lourdes has spread worldwide, resulting in both a book based on her life by Franz Werfel, *The Song of Bernadette* (1941), and a Hollywood movie by the same name (1943); thus, bringing what was originally oral narrative into a post-modern context of mass media consumption.

Why is identifying the story of Bernadette and Mary's apparition at Lourdes as a legend so crucial to this thesis? As a folklorist, I recognize that legend is the impetus behind many actions and behaviors, whether pilgrimage or the construction of a facsimile shrine. Legend as actionable is one of the primary principles underlying my work on sacred grottos. Essentially, saint's narratives must be added to the collection of legends that reflect legend journeys (legend tripping) and the ostensive behavior associated with them. In other words, I assert that replicated grottos are

ostensive by nature, reflecting the desire to re-enact and recreate the legend materially and spatially at a local level. Fr. Sullivan and Fr. McCarthy offered their communities direct conduits to physical participation in the Lourdes legend by bringing the legend home to Newfoundland.

The Flatrock and Renews Lourdes grottos are built on the bedrock of time, history, and precedence. Intimately tied to the Christian history of Mary and the saints, shrines, and relics, replicated grottos display continuity with legends found in Christian shrine production and use over the ages. Essentially, along with adherents' dynamic and creative use, the connection to the past lends religious legitimacy and spiritual endurance to replicated shrines today. Bernadette's vision of the Virgin was one of many in France in the nineteenth century, yet it has remained one of the most compelling over the years with few signs of changing. Her story at Lourdes was only the beginning, continuing today and as empowered as ever by Catholics' devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes.

Chapter Four

Sites of Devotion: Renewes

“At shrines, the means of salvation are to be provided more abundantly to the faithful; the word of God is to be carefully proclaimed; liturgical life is to be appropriately fostered, especially through the celebration of the Eucharist and penance; and approved forms of popular devotion are to be cultivated.”

(The Shrine: Memory, Presence, and Prophecy of the Living God. 1999, para.1)

4.1 Welcome to the Outport of Renewes

Turning off the main highway from St. Johns brings you to a single-lane road passing Holy Apostles Catholic Cemetery. From there, it is only a short drive down to the outport community of Renewes. The most apparent building is the 19th-century church as you enter the area. Built in 1870 by Fr. John Walsh, Holy Apostles Roman Catholic Church is located in what had once been a larger complex of ecclesiastical buildings.⁶⁵ Over the years, three structures were removed; the rectory, the convent, and the 19th-century schoolhouse. From the late 19th century to the mid-1980s, the community boasted a Church, Rectory, Presentation Convent, St Joseph's parochial school, and a clerical graveyard on a small hill behind the church. Several priests, including Monsignor (Fr.) McCarthy and Presentation Sisters are buried in the graveyard. This grouping of ecclesiastical buildings is what one participant from a neighboring community called "the little Vatican." These religious structures sit on a slight rise below Midnight Hill, where local legend maintains that men of the community would stand watch while itinerant priests performed secret Masses.

⁶⁵ The church is registered as a heritage structure by the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The outport of Renew's is split between north and south, with the bay of Renew's between them. The grotto and other religious buildings are on the north side of the bay. One can see the church and the grotto from the bay's south side.

In the past, these religious buildings represented the center of the community and, to no small degree, operated on a visual level to demonstrate the ability of the Church to organize social behaviors. In other words, the Church's eye was never far from the community's daily lives. When describing the area, one participant noted that growing up in Renew's, you were always aware that the nuns were "watching everything you did" (Fowler 2017). The Church's power and the clergy's influence infused the community and left an indelible mark on past and present generations. In my research, I found that this generated both cohesion and conflict, thus affecting Renew's' social fabric.



Figure 24. Holy Apostles Catholic Church

It was here in 2016 that I sat in a small dusty parking lot in front of The Holy Apostles' Church, waiting for others to arrive for the August 15th celebration of the Feast of the Assumption. I watched people drive up, park their cars, and wait for others to arrive. Eventually, they began to leave their cars and make their way toward the grotto, which sits on a slight grassy slope next to the church. Moving with the crowd, I made my way to where preparations were being made to say Mass. Chairs were set out on a small cement bridge over a stream in which "Gave 1930" was engraved in large letters in recognition of the *Gave de Pau* that flows past Massabielle in Lourdes, France.

I was struck by the small gathering of sixty or so people. I recalled seeing photos of past ‘Lady Days,’ as the Feast of the Assumption is called in Newfoundland, in which large processions of well-dressed children and adults moved through the streets on their way to the grotto. One participant reflected, "Lady Day was always the most special day in the harbor—everybody dressed up. As young women, we were in the Legion of Mary. We all put on our blue stoles, and there was always a procession. Everything was always procession here...." (Lawler 2016).⁶⁶ Father Malloy, a visiting priest from St. John's, gave the homily for the occasion. He spoke of the British penal laws perpetrated against the Irish Catholics and the ethnic heritage of the residents of Renews:

The English were the ones controlling Newfoundland. The Irish were the ones who multiplied through birth...now, we have a great many Irish settlements here. The Southern Shore, particularly, and the Cape Shore are very, very Irish. They have a tradition here going back many years, and we cannot lose that... (Malloy 2016).

I was surprised to hear Fr. Malloy address the history of Renews and the Southern Shore and its connections to Ireland. I am not sure what I expected, something less ethnically oriented, but his words seemed to resonate with the crowd.

4.2 Context

The community of Renews was established as a migratory fishing station as early as 1610; however, there are accounts as early as 1506 that there were occupants in the area. By 1630 Renews became a permanent British outpost. The early surnames indicate that the settled families were primarily of English extraction. By 1680 we begin to see the migration of Irish from Co. Waterford, Wexford, and Tipperary as migrant laborers and indentured servants to the

⁶⁶ Lawler, Helen. Interview by Cynthia Kiigemagi (September 2016) Renews, Newfoundland. Transcripts held by author.

predominantly British fishing admirals. By 1836 Renew's had a population of 601, making it the largest settlement in Newfoundland outside of St. John's. By then, most occupants were of Irish origin, many Gaelic-speaking and Catholic. (Keough 2005, 18). In the mid to late 19th century, communities along the Southern Shore, once defined by their initial Irish ethnic identity, began identifying as Newfoundland-born Catholics (Lambert 2012, iii). This Irish-Catholic affiliation

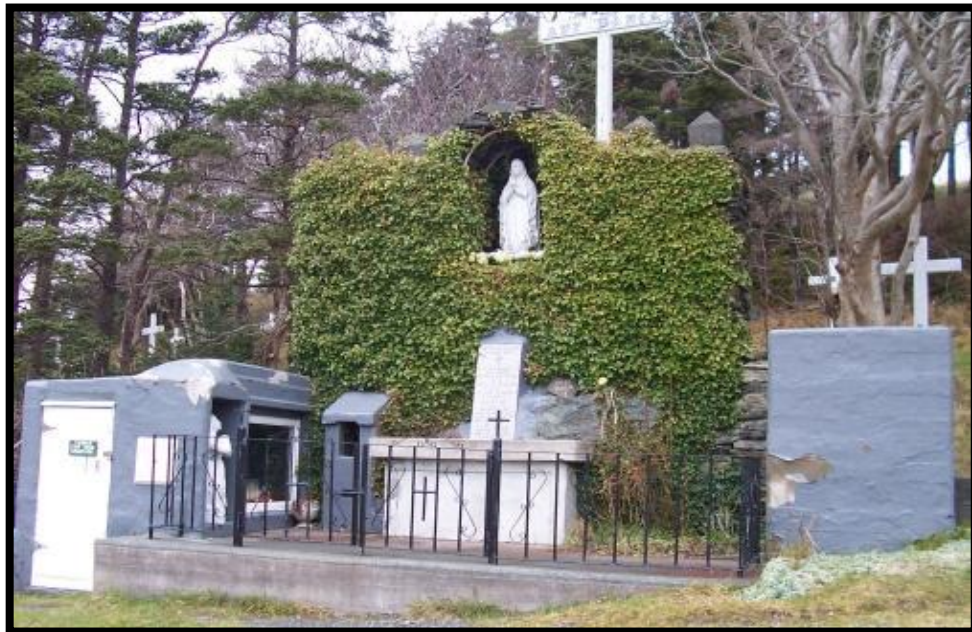


Figure 25. Renew's grotto when I first viewed it in 2016. It has since been fixed up and painted. You can just see the purported Mass rock just below the Virgin and to the right of the stone placard.

and the associated material culture have endured as a direct connection to Renew's Irish past and is, to no small degree, one of the foundations for community solidarity.

Our Lady of Lourdes grotto in Renew's was built before Newfoundland and Labrador's confederation with Canada in 1949. At the time of its construction in 1927, the Island of Newfoundland had dealt with economic deficits since the late 1800s and social uncertainty due to the government's poor decision-making. Many communities were sheltered from modernity, with only dirt roads or fishing boats connecting them to the larger outside world. "It was tough living here in the '30s and 40s, the 50s even," Loyola Hearn mentioned to me "...you had dirt roads until

1970. You had no pavement whatsoever here. To go to St John's was an experience—you went once a year" (2016). To illustrate this, one participant mentions their mode of travel to and from church:

My earliest memories would be when we would go to mass on Sundays. Because we lived on the south side of the harbor and we would have to go to the north side for church. We would go in the horse and carriage. In the summertime, we'd go across in the dory [boat] and walk up to the church. So, a visit to the grotto would always be part of going to mass on Sundays (Lawler 2016).

This geographical inaccessibility for parts of the Avalon Peninsula created a singular sense of ethnic and religious identity different from those of Irish descent in communities that lived within the radius of the capital of St John's, where external socio-cultural influences affected cultural change and identity. Bowman comments on the communal isolation in her 2003 article, "Vernacular Religion and Nature:"

Many outposts (coastal settlements) could only be reached by sea, and it was not uncommon for communities to be completely cut off at the height of winter because of frozen harbors or snow-blocked roads. As one woman said of life in her isolated, predominantly Catholic community before the advent of electricity and the road connection in the 1960s, "Twas the roughest kind of life." Nevertheless, such conditions might also be conducive to the flourishing of religion (287).

Amenities like radios were available, but electricity was not common. Paved roads into Renew's were only built as recently as 1970. For many, a trip to St. John's consisted of a bi-yearly trip for medical needs or shopping over frozen and sometimes impassable roads.

The early period of the 20th century, when the Grotto in Renew's was built, was fraught with hardship (Higgins 2007a, para. 1). The Great War took its toll on communities in Newfoundland, with many young Newfoundland men dying, six of them being from Renew's (Brazil and Lawlor 2008, 4). The war ended in 1918, leaving the Colony of Newfoundland in war debt for thirty-four million dollars (Higgins 2007a). The Spanish Flu hit the island that same year, killing more than 2000 people. The second wave of influenza came in 1920 to an already

beleaguered island, killing even more people (Sattenspiel 2011, 33). Post-World War I society saw a downturn in the global economy, which damaged Newfoundland and Labrador's bottom line on its fishing exports (Higgins 2007, para. 1-2). The fishing industry was still the largest employer but was based only on seasonal employment.⁶⁷ The harsh economy led to poverty in smaller communities like Renew, which relied heavily on fishing and processing for income. In the 1920s, the *Truck System* was still part of the life of small outports in Newfoundland, where merchants supplied necessities to the fishers and took their production in payment. Little to no cash was used, and locals remained in debt to merchants, not unlike their predecessors had for the last 300 years (Neary 1997, 3). Jenny Higgins on the *Heritage: Newfoundland and Labrador* website comments:

Merchants set the price for goods taken on credit at the end of the fishing season, balancing the prices of goods against the prices merchants would get for fish in international markets. Such price manipulations maximized the opportunity for merchants to profit from the fish trade but left their clients with the prospect of simply breaking even or falling into deeper debt each season (2007, para. 1).

Newfoundland lost self-rule because of the government's ineptitude, and a British "Commission of Government" was sworn in to oversee the Island's administration. All these factors, along with the stock market crash of 1929, added to a socially and economically uncertain environment in which Fr. McCarthy chose to build his shrine to Our Lady of Lourdes.

Today, Renew is much smaller than in the past. At its height—the 1992 pre-cod moratorium, anywhere from five to six hundred people occupied the outport, but as of 2019, the population is down to 284. A portion of the population is elderly, but those who work commute to

⁶⁷ On February 25, 1934, Lady Simpson, wife of the Hope Simpson, one of the three British governors to Newfoundland wrote in a letter home, "The poverty of the island is appalling. 25% of the population are on the dole. And the dole is a real dole—so much bread, meat, tea, molasses every month and they eat it up quickly and then have nothing till the next month comes around" (Neary 1996, 36).

St. John's or work on the oil rigs. Fishing, particularly crab, is still active in the area and provides seasonal work at local fish plants.

4.3 A Questions of Identity

Since the 1960s, scholars in Newfoundland have focused on religion and ethnic identity on the Southern Shore, known as "The Irish Loop" because of the historical settlement of predominantly Irish around the bays (Devlin-Trew 2005; Farquharson 2008; Keough 2005, 2008a). Competing dialogues have argued that the Irish identity reflected today on the loop is a modern 20th-century construct driven by romanticism with the past and the desire to sell Irish Newfoundland culture to outsiders (Farquharson 2008, 10; Keough 2008a, 16-17). I remember conversing with a local bookstore owner in St. John's who felt that the Catholic priest had invented the connection to Ireland to shore up their power over the people. As the bookstore owner demonstrated, some individuals have insisted on minimizing or dismissing Irish heritage in Newfoundland's history.

Nevertheless, I found a deep, almost visceral connection to Irish heritage in Renew's that people outside the area have difficulty comprehending. Not all outports along the Southern Shore have maintained their connection to their heritage. However, Renew's has modern and historical elements that have connected the past to the forefront of community consciousness. The socio-religious factors that had promoted ethnic awareness in the community until recently are; clerical influence, religious education (primarily by Irish nuns), religious materiality in the Catholic Church, collective narratives, and commercial tourist promotion. Loyola Hearn, who was born in Renew's and later became the Canadian ambassador to Ireland (2010-2015), mentioned to me that growing up:

We had Irish priests, Irish nuns, and teachers who were Irish. The music on the radio was Irish. The songs we sang were Irish. Our concerts were Irish. The stories we heard were Irish. We knew more about Ireland than we did about Canada or the United States, or any place like that (2016).

I asked him how the younger generations in Renew's viewed Irish heritage. He stated, "It may be changing with the new generation because of our generation; we knew more about Ireland."

However, "...during my time, and even the younger crowd, there is a powerful feeling about their Irish heritage and strong affiliation with Ireland (2016).

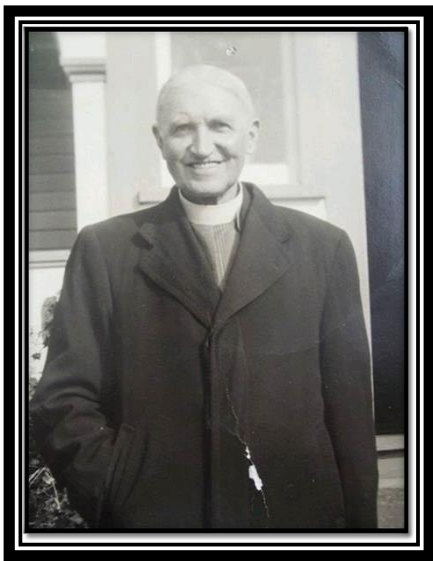


Figure: 26. Rev. Charles McCarthy, Renew's Newfoundland N/D.

In 1903, Father John Walsh, parish priest at Renew's, traveled to Ireland and recruited the young seminarian Charles McCarthy to return with him to Newfoundland. McCarthy had been aware of the need for priests in Newfoundland through correspondence with his sister, who, at the time, was at the Presentation Convent in St. Johns.

Archbishop Howley ordained McCarthy in January 1903. Later in 1920, he was named parish priest in Renew's, where he remained for thirty-seven years until his death in

1957. Renew's resident Noreen Brazil remarks on his devotion to the parish: "Father McCarthy's zeal and dedication to the people of his parish and the Church was recognized by Archbishop Edward Patrick Roche in 1938 when he was appointed Dean of the southern shore. In 1945 he was named Archdiocesan Consultant, and in May of 1952, he was named Monsignor with the title of domestic prelate" (2008, 140). Fr. Hanton mentions that Fr. McCarthy was conscious of his Irish background but often did not speak of it.⁶⁸ He continues:

⁶⁸ Hanton, John Rev, interview by Cynthia Kiigemagi, St. John's Newfoundland. September 2016. Interview # R013-092106. Transcripts held by author.

But now it was there [Irish identity]...with that parish there, Holy Apostles. Fr. John Walsh was his [McCarthy] predecessor, who was also from Ireland...but he was there forty years in the parish, then Dean McCarthy was there thirty-seven years [A span of 87 years] they brought a lot of Irish culture with them.... They kept up that certain amount of association and connection with Ireland.... One of the things this is only a small thing, one of the publications that was circulated among the parish for years and years was the little Irish Messenger of the Sacred Heart (Hanton 2016).

When I asked Fr Hanton what the publication contained, he explained, "Oh, it was very Irish, spiritual things but in the Irish tradition. This would be one of the things that kept them aware of their Irish ancestry. They would have read about places in Ireland more so than Newfoundland" (2016). He further stated that he did not believe Renew's invested much into its Irish inheritance before Father Walsh. As a priest, McCarthy was seen by many in the community as stern but kind, as Renew's resident Terry mentions, "He was a nice man; he was a gentleman. As I said, he had this gruff exterior because he was the boss. He had that for everybody. That was a demeanor that he put on when he was serious" (2016).

4.4 Were you at the Rock?

Oral history is a critical element of folkloristic research. Folklorist Larry Danielson argues, "History is made up largely of stories and tradition, and the folklorist is, or should be, an expert on that relationship" (1996, 191). As folklorists, we recognize that storied history involves the process of transmission, what historian and anthropologist Jan Vansina, in his seminal book *Oral Tradition as History* (1985), calls "...the expressions of experience" through word of mouth (7). It is not just the original person or person's account, but each successive telling gives rise to tradition as each generation is involved in disseminating the event (12-13). Rev. John C. Kennedy comments in his article on Newfoundland communities (1997) that outports were highly oral societies and had an extensive "repertoire of oral tradition that transmitted local knowledge" (306). I found this to be true in the correlation to stories and history about the Mass rock—a

subject I have discussed earlier. During our interview, Fr. Paul Lundrigan, the parish priest from 1996 to 2000, spoke of the relatively well-known local legend of the Mass rock, noting, “The deeper history is, of course, is the Mass rock which had always been a part of the psyche there [Renews]” (2016). The Mass rock legend is an essential part of the Renews grotto story— and one could honestly say it is the bedrock on which the Grotto at Renews is built.

In Renews, the Marian grotto is unique because the local oral narrative asserts that it sits directly on top of a 17th-century "Mass rock," one of only a few in North America. The Renews grotto site is localized. However, the legend of the Mass rock and its influence stretches far back, displaying a continuity with the socio-historic complexity of Ireland's and Newfoundland's past. This ordinary stone reveals the site's "deeper history" by exposing Catholic materiality, persecution, political complexity, and association with social and ethnic identity. The physical location of Mass rock next to the church in Renews materializes the oral narrative for the community in the truest sense. It lends a physical legitimacy concerning the penal days and Catholic persecution.⁶⁹

The story of the Mass rock is known widely on the Southern Shore, especially in those outports around Renews. I spoke to Charlie Dunn from the outport of Ferryland, a few kilometers from Renews, and he commented on his knowledge of the Renews grotto, stating that:

When I stop and really think about the Grotto in Renews and the beginning— and I know the grotto wasn't there when they [early locals] practiced. So they met at the foot of Midnight Hill, and basically, there was a Mass rock...and they built the grotto around this afterward. And, I think if the grotto wasn't there, the

⁶⁹ “Western landscapes are politically laden” as Barbra Bender notes (2002, 105). As I see it, the contested areas of colonial history in Newfoundland have never sat well with the academic post-modern envisioned history of the province, politically or otherwise, which to a large degree, is seen as being one of cooperation and compliance with British colonialism by the working class Irish.

Mass rock would still be there and would still be a safe place [to gather and pray] (2016).⁷⁰

During my interviews, I found it interesting that people quickly insisted that the grotto was not a Church artifice but a communal structure for the people, thus identifying the shrine as a contested sacred space.

4.5 What is a Mass Rock?

Mass rocks have a long and tangled political and religious history. They are tangible ritual sites that have connected Irish Catholicism to a counter-cultural and contested historical past in Newfoundland and Ireland. They are large natural stones, primarily in remote areas. These rocks were used as ritual sites before and during the British penal period in Ireland (1695-1829). They acted as sacramental altars on which a priest would say Mass in the dark of night, far away from British administrators and non-Catholic onlookers.⁷¹ The rocks tended to be unremarkable to the untrained eye. However, they were holy places linked to ritual performance and social and religious legitimacy for those who recognized them. In his work on the history of Mass rocks in Ireland (2013), folklorist Tony Nugent comments that Mass rocks originally "...came into use during the suppression of the monasteries in the reign of King Henry the VIII, and continued to be used until the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, and even later when poverty and bigotry dictated their use rather than persecution" (5). Mass rocks have a long and crucial history in the story of Catholicism in Ireland, and where the Irish went, their history followed.⁷²

⁷⁰ Dunn Charlie, interview by author, July 2016, Renewals, Newfoundland. Interview # R004-07042016. Transcripts held by author.

⁷¹ As an aside, I find it interesting that both the Mass rock and the grotto fundamentally originated as geological and environmental space, which has then been set aside culturally as a site for the sacred.

⁷² In Ireland, there are recorded 272 Mass Rocks that are believed to have been in use from as early as the late sixteenth to the late eighteenth centuries. These sites are scattered throughout the Republic and the North of Ireland, with the largest concentrations in located Co. Cork and Co. Kerry (O'Sullivan and Downey 2014, 26).

Implementation of the penal laws left an indelible mark on the folk memory of the community. This memory remains today a focal point for oral communal history. Religion and Cultural studies scholar Susan O'Brien Crawford recognizes Mass rocks as powerful due to their ability to "...reconcile, contain and reflect diverse historical narratives, personal experiences, and political demands" (2008, 332). Although the oral narrative notes that the use of the Mass rock at Renew's was short-lived, the continuity of accounts concerning the Mass rock connected the community to the worst excesses of Newfoundland's penal laws, thus, locating in the community a shared diasporic identity for those of Catholic descent. Tuan comments that preserving these singular objects occurs because they can reinforce a sense of personal and social identity (1977, 197). It is not much of a stretch to see how the Mass rock and the grotto's placement provide a physical legitimacy to historical memory and identity concerning Irish Catholic persecution in Newfoundland's early years.

4.6 Question of Authenticity

Degh mentions that "The legend is a legend once it entertains debate about belief;" thus, recognizing opposing opinions about a legend's truth is "what makes a legend a legend" (2001, 97). Her assertion directly ties into the argument concerning the Mass rock and its validity as a historically factual narrative. As an element of oral history, the study of authenticity has been debated in folkloristics for many decades (Allen 1979; Bendix 1997; Dorson 1972; Dundes 1999; Upton 1996). Authenticity, as a label, indicates a factual historical reality associated with the narrative. Several local books and pamphlets have been written on the narrative of the Mass rock and nearby Midnight Hill. However, they have only collected what was originally a community narrative and have shed little light on its legitimacy. Arguably, the Mass rock in Renew's raises an issue of authenticity concerning the oral history and the validity of historical memory within a

community (Dorson 1996, 209; Pocius 1979, 65). Western society gives precedence to the written word over oral stories, deeming the written source more legitimate; nevertheless, I contend that we are only selectively elevating one form of memory and narrative over the other.

History is oral until placed on paper; however, oral narrative can remain sustainable and intact over time without written sources, as Richard Dorson argues (1999, 10). Folklorist Barbara Allen takes this further by noting that the differences between the oral and the written lie essentially in how the past is characterized in the present. It is a different kind of history that is complementary rather than supplemental (1979, 113). The issue here rests with the subjectiveness of the information the teller relays. Pocius reflects this view, recognizing that oral narratives are a place of beginning to "launch a detailed study of a particular problem" (1979, 65). However, what if there is no corroborating historical text to verify the story? Pocius further notes that the older an object, the harder it is to gain information concerning its history (1979, 66). It is not its (geologic) age in question with the Mass rock but its cultural relevance through religious use.

With oral history accounts, the nature of memory and what some view as the re-invention of the past raises questions (Vansina 1985, 5). For folklorist Richard Dorson, the definition of oral history is "...a version of past events that have remained in folk memory and folk tradition" (1996, 285). The word "version" in this statement is significant, locating time as a memory modifier and the creator of variants. Dorson further observes that "folk memory may prove surprisingly reliable" and "historic kernels" can endure through time (ibid). Even with the possibility of a "kernel" of truth, there is always doubt whether oral narrative can be taken at face value. This doubt arises from a blend of memory, subjectivity, and time; yet, because history is a retrospective endeavor, the possibility of inaccurate recollections will always arise. Dorson's argument concerning "fakelore" (1976) is also applicable. Dorson identifies this as the invention

of lore to bolster a particular community or national identity. Awareness of the potential for a vernacular narrative to be produced to augment social or national histories has raised questions about how ethnographers and folklorists approach oral history.

When I first heard of the Mass rock, I considered it a possibility rather than a fact. However, I soon realized that it is a fact for my participants. The story is remarkably consistent and widely known among the inhabitants of Renewes and many on the Southern Shore— it is not just the word of a few people. The community has sustained the Mass rock tradition for at least one hundred and fifty years. Although there is no identifiable contemporary record from seventeenth-century texts to support local claims, its oral transmission has been persistent since the early eighteen hundreds, having been told by multiple individuals. Notably, Vansina comments, "Information coming from more people to more people have greater built-in redundancy than if it were to flow in one channel of communication" (1985, 35). Vansina argues that this flow from multiple persons to multiple persons does not create distortion but can enhance constancy (31). I have found the story of the Mass rock consistent with all of my participants. Interestingly, I have found slight variations or embellishments on its elements outside its established themes.

Eddie Chidley, who had been the caretaker of the grotto for over thirty years and one of my primary contributors, mentioned the legend of Mass rock early in our interviews, commenting, "Don't know where priests were at that time, but they [locals] said they won't burn this [like a private home], so they had Mass on the rock...there were two fellows on the hill, Midnight Hill, watchin' if anyone come" (Chidley 2016).⁷³ Before her passing, Eddie's mother, who had

⁷³Chidley, Eddie. Interview by Cynthia Kiigemagi. Renewes, Newfoundland. July 5-17, 2016. #R005/006, transcript held by author.

experienced miraculous healing at the site, encouraged him to take care of the grotto. The site holds a special place in Eddie's heart because of this direct connection to his mother. His comments on the Mass rock present the key themes typically part of the legend's local telling, including religious persecution, secret masses, destruction of Catholic homes, and watchmen on the hill.

My research into the Mass rock led me to believe that the earliest written historical source dates from 1888 in Bishop Howley's, *Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland*, written some years after the amendment of the penal laws. In a minor footnote, Howley writes of the Mass rock, which he calls "Midnight rock," where a Father Fitzsimmons "...would call the people to rosary and prayer" (181). Later in his work, Howley mentions Fr. Fitzsimmons being stationed on the Southern Shore, writing, "He [Fr. Fitzsimmons] was a little eccentric in his piety. He raised a Flagstaff with a cross upon it above a large rock at Renew's, which he uses to celebrate Mass. The rock is still to be seen" (243). Problematically, historical documentation shows that Fr. Fitzsimmons arrived in Newfoundland too late—sometime around 1812—to be part of the penal period on the island. One could surmise that Fitzsimmons would have been in Renew's within living memory of the use of the Mass rock and would have likely heard the stories concerning secret meetings. Alternatively, his use of the rock for Mass could be the origin of the Mass rock narrative (Benson 1999, 9).

Several hypotheses may account for the validity of the Mass rock account. First, Mass rocks are not common knowledge to those outside Catholicism in Ireland. They are an obscure religious singularity with which only a few would be familiar. So, how did the knowledge of their use during a traumatic episode in Ireland's religious history make it over to Newfoundland and entrench itself into local Renew's's memory if not for the possibility of its use? Second, the very

act of secrecy and isolation where Masses at the rock took place may have discouraged any written narrative, which could have fallen into the wrong hands. Orality would have been a necessity, a necessity that would have saved lives and freedom as evidenced in an order given to George Garland, justice of the peace in Harbor Grace, in 1755 by Richard Dorrill, the then governor of Newfoundland:

Whereas, I am informed that a Roman priest is at this time at Harbour Grace and that he publicly reads Mass, which is contrary to law and against the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King. You are, therefore, required and directed on the receipt of this to cause the said priest to be taken into custody and sent around to this place [St. John's]. In this, you are not to fail as you will answer the contrary at your perrille (Mulcahy 1985, 8).

As an act of rebellion and religious subversion, the wrong word to the wrong person would be disastrous for the priest and the entire community. So, would not the very act of secrecy prevent the story from becoming a written source during its use or even some years later?

I was shown an old torn and yellowed note by Fr. Hanton, given to him by Fr. McCarthy in 1957 during his tenure as assistant priest in Renew's, which may shed some new light on the issue. In the note Fr. McCarthy writes:

From an old man named Michael Kane is handed down a tradition that Mass was celebrated near the rock where the grotto has now been erected. This man was born in 1767. [This pre-dates Fr. Fitzsimmons] He was not present at the Mass but had [heard?] the tradition that Mass was [therefore] celebrated before his lifetime... (McCarthy N/D).

As I understand it, the note was given to Fr. Hanton by Fr. McCarthy. Fr. McCarthy had heard the story (and wrote it down) from an elderly parishioner whose parents had told him the story when he was

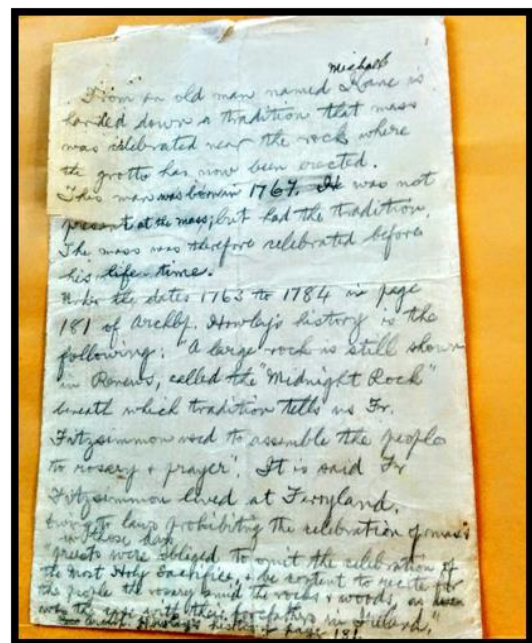


Figure 27. Fr. McCarthy's Letter shown to author by Fr. Hanton

young of Michael Kane and his knowledge of the Mass rock. The document demonstrates the generational continuity of oral history in the community on a tangible level. It also corresponds to Fr. McCarthy's awareness of the local narrative concerning the Mass rock. Having been born in Feenagh, Co. Limerick, Ireland, in 1877, Fr. McCarthy would have grown up with an awareness of Irish history and the penal laws that repressed worship and created the socio-economic disenfranchisement of Catholics. Arriving in Newfoundland in 1903, Fr. McCarthy would have left Ireland during civil unrest between nationalist factions, the British, and the ruling Protestant elite. Beginning his term as a parish priest in Renewals in 1920, during the Anglo-Irish war (1919-1921) and four years after the disastrous Easter Uprising in Dublin, it is not much of a stretch to wonder if there was a more profound impetus to his choosing a site for the grotto directly upon a symbol of Catholic religious defiance.⁷⁴

Not all Irish Catholics in Newfoundland felt the same political concern as their fellow Catholics in Ireland. Several scholars have noted that the Irish question of political sovereignty and emancipation was considered in Newfoundland. However, as time passed, earlier Irish emigrants to Newfoundland took on a nativist attitude towards culture and politics in the Dominion, recognizing themselves as Catholic Newfoundlanders first rather than Irish (Lambert 2015, 355-56; P. Mannion 2013: 137). Religion, instead of ethnicity, became the primary factor in the island's socio-political struggle for rights and political power. Nevertheless, there is an element among later emigrants, like Fr. McCarthy, who brought an awareness of his native country's politics, thus, reinvigorating the connection to Ireland for those in Renewals.

⁷⁴ The Easter Uprising began on April 24, 1916, when seven Irishmen took over the post office in Dublin, Ireland, declaring the establishment of the new Irish Republic. 1,600 Irish rebels occupied other government buildings around the area as well. The failed uprising lasted for a week and left many nationalist Irish dead. <https://www.irishcentral.com/roots/history/dublin-scars-1916-easter-rising>

Irish ethnic consciousness is reflected in attitudes towards Irish heritage in the parishioners of Renew. One of my primary participants and head of the church committee in Renew, Lois Berrigan, remarks, "Fr. Charles McCarthy had a lot to do with the Irish influence here."⁷⁵ Her statement substantiates the idea that clerical influence was a factor in perceiving the community's identity. Similarly, Patrick Mannion remarks on priestly influence in his work on Irish identity stating, "... it was the clergy, particularly those of Irish birth or descent, who nurtured popular connections to Ireland from the 1880s to the 1920s (2012, 141). Terry notes this attitude towards Irish identity in Renew, commenting:

Most of the Irish that came to Newfoundland came here pre-1845. Most of them were indentured servants, especially along the Southern Shore. When you have that kind of situation where you're forced to leave home, you never leave home, and part of you is always there. And all the things that you had back there, the songs, the music, the attitudes, the religion, all of that, you cling on to that like never before because that's part of you.... We never sat down with our children, saying this is what is going on in Ireland right now. Yes, we sang the songs, the Irish rebel songs, and that. We've been doing that for a hundred years.... We're more Irish than the Irish because we hung on to the old stuff (2016).

Many of my participants have expressed this sentiment concerning the continuity of Irish Catholic identity. One wonders how much of this was passed down by Fr. McCarthy to his congregation or how much came from the day-to-day living in an area settled by the Irish. Historian Willeen Keough comments on the experience of the Irish identity in Newfoundland, stating, "Irishness was simply part of the rhythm of life; in the cadence of speech and customary practice, gently modulated by Newfoundland experiences" (2008, 12).

After Fr. McCarthy's 1924 visit to the Lourdes shrine in France, he wrote, "I wished to erect a Lourdes statue somewhere. Somebody suggested the Mass rock" (quoted in Hogan 1980,

⁷⁵ Berrigan, Lois, interview by author, July 2016. Renew, Newfoundland. Interview # R003-7420019 Recordings and transcript held by author.

8). This statement raises the question of whether it was Fr. McCarthy's idea to place the grotto on the Rock or that of someone else in the community. Either way, the grotto's placement demonstrates a mindful awareness on the part of the community that the Rock held a central position physically, emotionally, and spiritually in the minds of the congregants of Renewals. Some participants believe the grotto was placed there to commemorate and recognize the past. Others, such as Terry, feel there was a more sectarian reason:

Do not forget [Fr.] Charles McCarthy was an ol' Irishman himself. When he created the grotto around the Mass rock, he fully knew what he was doing.... In a real sense, he didn't talk about it being a rebellious thing; it was a religious thing, but there was no doubt that what he was doing was under a guise of a religious structure— he was persevering a little bit of religious defiance; he was erecting a monument to defiance

Terry continues:

[The Mass rock] certainly was identified and recognized as part of our religion...and before his [McCarthy's] time, the church was put there by Fr. Walsh. That church is located where it is located because of its proximity to the Rock because that is where secret services had been traditionally held...so there was a recognition in the building-placement of the church that recognized the Rock as well (Hynes 2016).

Terry points out that the nature of the grotto was not as important as the placement, "Our Lady of Lourdes was purely a personal preference of Charlie McCarthy. Nobody else that I knew had an affinity for Our Lady of Lourdes. They would have just as easily latched on to Our Lady of something else. But the rock is completely different" (2016). The community's relationship to the grotto and the Mass rock generates tangible symbols between the here and now, past and present, and the sacred and the everyday. This site creates a powerful means of connecting time, place, identity, and the past to Renewals' community.

Another curious story Terry told me concerns the possible remnants of a tradition from the time of the penal laws:

The other thing is that in church, every man in the fifties [1950s] was in the back of the church; all the women were in the front. Men would come in and would stand at the back; women would go up and take seats at the front. There was a reason for that, the same reason as the Mass rock. They were the outriders. They were there in case it was raided, and that became a part of...they were there to fight off while everybody else escaped. This continued even after there was no threat. Even in the fifties, in my time, we went to Mass and would find the men standing in the back of the church. Husband and wife didn't sit together in church. I went out to my wife's church, and they didn't do it there. It was normal everywhere else. They had a family pew where all the family went, but that wasn't the way it was here. The reason why it wasn't here is because we had a fall over from the penal days where the men stood on guard. I suppose there came a time when they realized what they were down there; it was just what we do. I'm sure they didn't stop to think about why they did it.

Accounts such as these create an added layer of legitimacy to the narrative of the Mass rock.

Historian Paul Thompson comments, "All history depends ultimately upon its social purpose" (2000, 1). This story serves its purpose by filling out the edges of the Mass rock narrative and adding certain validity to the legend. Community storytelling concerning historical upheavals and changes can be addressed in more contemporary terms, even if the reason for the behaviors, such as the men in the back of the church, is no longer remembered or necessary. This type of narrative is always emergent, meeting the orator's needs and the audience's interests. These ancillary stories add an outer layer to the central narrative of the Mass rock, thus, bolstering the feasibility and sustainability of the legend. It is offered as further proof of the Mass rock's legitimacy for the listener. The story also demonstrates that the community was not just a passive observer of fate but an essential factor in the struggle for religious freedom, thus, supporting an active role in their Irish Catholic identity.

The Grotto placement on Mass rock by Fr. McCarthy was considered by some who knew him as much about Irish-Catholic cultural identity as it was about devotion. Whichever the case, it can also be recognized as part of the continuity and adaptation of sacred space. My participants

have expressed their knowledge of the connection between the grotto and the Mass rock and its affiliation to their Irish ethnicity and Catholicism. Loyola sums it up by stating:

The grotto was built on a rock where your ancestors had to hide away because they did not have the freedom. My people came from Tipperary...They left Tip in 1797... that beautiful lush area to come here? To try and eke out a living. To go through the type winters like we use to have. Why would you do it? Two words, of course; freedom, the big one, and your own land....Even when they came here, they didn't have the freedom they wanted. It evolved, and we got it, but first, they didn't have the religious freedom. And if they had to go through that and did it, then it's not very difficult for me to stop by a finished grotto or a finished church, go in, and say a prayer (2016).⁷⁶

Movement and change are part of the dynamics of tradition (Toelken 1996, 10). By building the grotto on the site of the Mass rock, Fr. McCarthy breathed new life into a community legend, thus giving a new purpose to a sacred site that had laid dormant for over hundred and fifty years.

Notably, reusing a site once sacred to people in the past is not new in Catholicism (Coomans 2012, 221).

Although the Mass rock is not a human-made structure, it is part of religious material culture through intent, importance, and use. By building a markedly Catholic shrine, such as a replica of Lourdes on the Mass rock site, Fr. McCarthy materialized Catholicism's early struggle in the Dominion of Newfoundland in a profoundly Irish way, linking the site to a vibrant world of global and historic Catholic religious practice. Chidester and Linenthal argue, "...a sacred space is not merely discovered, or founded, or constructed; it is claimed, owned, and operated by people advancing specific interests (1995, 15). These interests placed Mary in the center of the community via the grotto, bringing to life the Lourdes legend and Catholic defiance both geographically and metaphorically. Thus, one of Catholicism's most recognizable figures, the

⁷⁶ Hearn, Loyola interview by author, *Renews*, Newfoundland. August 2016, Interview # R011-08222016. Transcripts held by author.

Virgin Mary, marked out space and place religiously, socially, and politically. The Lourdes grotto became a religious boundary marker for all to see. Historical architect Thomas Coomans importantly points out:

Erecting a building [or edifice] on a sacred place is one of the various acts of appropriation or colonization of the place by man. With buildings, the ‘owner’ of the place not only *materializes, represents, and symbolizes* the sacred in the space, but he also expresses his identity within the complex relationship between religion and power (italics mine, 2012, 210)

Demonstrative outdoor displays like local Marian grottos are about religious devotion, social identity, boundaries, and power. These boundaries are not limited to geography but to deeper ethnic, spiritual, and political ties that lay under the surface of a community. Religious scholar Paula M. Kane recognizes Marian shrines, particularly Lourdes grottos, which sprung up in the late 19th century, as representing divergent practices among ethnic Irish Catholics, thus, establishing “boundaries against other Christian churches” (2004, 93). It would have been necessary to create a devotional distinction against the backdrop of a fractious and multi-religious society such as Canada and the United States. The fences built through public religious material images, such as the Virgin Mary, defined perimeters around space and place between Roman Catholics and the plethora of Protestant denominations (ibid). Indeed, it could be argued that this is a delineation between what the Protestants considered idolatry and what Catholics considered sacramental devotion.

Similarly, Reinberg writes in her work on pilgrimage shrines in early modern France, “Each shrine had (has) its particularities, growing out of local topography, natural resources, forms of community, and *governance and history*” (italics mine 2019, 9). For Renewals, the multiplicity of community narratives concerning historical and religious concerns played an influential role in shaping the shrine. Valk and Savborg note that places such as these are

"empowered through narratives" (2018, 10). These religious narratives overlap with the world of politics, history, community concerns, and society writ large. The history of the Mass rock only serves to deepen the community's ties to their Irish heritage. Add the power of a global icon, such as Our Lady of Lourdes, and the site takes on a new dimension as a place of ritual and worship.

4.7 Memory and Landscape

The Grotto at Renew's, Midnight Hill, and Mass rock are mnemonic edifices that rely on community narrative—imbued with memory and nostalgia, to be brought into the present. Time and memory are vital actors in communal remembering. Community histories of place reach far back into the past and connect the present through continuity via oral history and material objects (Bender 2002, 107).

One thread running through local narratives concerns individuals' efforts to deal with the rapid change of modernity within the community. Memory and nostalgia are intensely personal experiences; yet, they are also social processes where community objects can act as triggers linking the past to the present (Ryden 1991, 83). Participants have expressed various meanings, definitions, and emotional memories associated with the grotto. Some have reflected on an almost idyllic childhood associated with Church and grotto and lament the modern loss of this community cohesion. Like folklorist Ray Cashman's analysis of Protestants and Catholics in the Derg River Valley of Northern Ireland, some individuals struggle to deal with the rapid change in their worlds through a selected vision of the past (2006, 138). Cashman points out the positive value of nostalgia and its use for negotiating meaning in the present from past memories (138).

Objects, like the Mass rock, can remind people of past socio-religious conflicts overcome through community perseverance. On a more affirmative note, the grotto is a reminder of a simpler past when the community and the Church were at the forefront of everyday life. Some

may see change as a blessing, a movement into a better life, but many others see change as disorientating, especially for the elderly. Older participants recognized the role that the grotto played in connection to their childhoods and frequently associated it with home and family:

[A]nd, of course, the church was part of childhood growing up. It controlled everything, and everything we did was done around what was happening in the church...especially during holy week and Christmas. Everything was geared around the church. And the grotto for us was just a special place, and most everybody...we have such a special respect for that grotto. And in our household, my mother was very faithful to her faith, but she was especially devoted to our Lady of Lourdes (B. Chidley 2016)

Folklorist Gerald Pocius's work on Calvert, a small outpost 23.2 km from Renew, locates memory and meaning in space and social networks rather than objects (1991, 32). In Calvert, history and memory directly connect to the land, place names, and people rather than objects of nostalgia; it is not dissimilar in Renew. However, I have also found that people in Renew emphasized their local structures, such as the convent, the school, the rectory, and the grotto. Unlike other outposts in the area, Renew functioned as a hub of Church activity regionally. Others around the area would travel for prayer and ritual at Our Lady of Lourdes grotto. Terry comments, "In the early days of the grotto, it was a mecca almost. Religion was strong, really strong. There was a lot of pomp and pageantry that went into the things that happened in the church, and so it was as much as a religious thing as it was theater" (2016). I found it interesting that Terry expressed much of what went on with the grotto communally as "theater." I am reminded of a quote from the Turners concerning their work on Christian pilgrimage, "The unity of a given ritual is a dramatic unity" (1978, 243). The performative value would be part of the overall community activity of the grotto. Yet, I recognize it only as a superficial element of the deeper meaning of the site to the laity, where the coalescences of drama and unity underscore the power of human ritual action and unify those who participate in a shared understanding of identity

and shared relations within a community, be it social or religious. Put simply, ritual performance "constructs the community, ideologically and emotionally" (Noyes 1995, 471).

The religious pomp and pageantry in Renewals during Fr. McCarthy's tenure was pre-conciliar in its performance. Reforms around Mass and other high rituals would not come for another thirty-five years when Vatican II established a new liturgical movement that substituted the old Tridentine Mass for less traditional and more lay-inclusive rituals.⁷⁷ Along with the old liturgical movement went much of the longstanding liturgy's high pageantry and historical religious objects. Unfortunately, what we recognize as a dramatic religious ritual has been diminished, to no small extent, in our post-modern western society; whether this is good or bad must be decided in the heart of the believer. Fortunately, high religious pageantry and formalized ritual are still active in many parts of the world today within other ethnically oriented Catholic traditions. The beauty, symbolism, creativity, embodiment, and collective cohesion that ritual pageantry establishes should not be underestimated for its ability to work on the human psyche by acting out faith and values as a cohesive communal entity. Chapters six and seven will focus more on this. I will discuss the grotto's interactive human components, such as ritual, miraculous healings, and personal spiritual experiences regarding the two grottos.

4.8 Bricks and Mortar

The replicated Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes in Renewals is situated above the town, between the Church of Holy Apostles, and just below Midnight Hill. From the late 19th century to the mid-1980s, the community boasted a church, rectory, a Presentation Convent, Stations of the

⁷⁷ This was established by Pope Paul VI's promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* in 1963. According to William D Dinges, it represented a shift away from "hierarchy, tradition, conformity, and rigid sacred/profane boundary maintenances" thus offering variations and options to lay persons and clergy alike (1987, 141).

Cross (just behind the grotto), St Joseph's parochial school, and a small Presentation graveyard set on a hill behind Holy Apostles Church where several priests and Presentation sisters are buried. The community has seen the demolition and removal of the convent and school in 1984 and a fire that destroyed the rectory in 2015.

The community has been at odds with the diocese regarding the taking down religious structures that were the very heart of the community. Recently, the Archdiocese has taken a hands-off approach concerning the church and the grotto. Over time, though, it has been one extreme to another concerning control over these structures in the community.⁷⁸ The grotto was established as the central monument in what was already a multi-complex religious locale. The grotto itself is not large, yet, the surrounding area, which I see as the aggregate grotto complex, demonstrates the creativity, dedication, and imagination that the community put into its construction and subsequent additions over the last ninety-three years.

Construction on the grotto began in August 1927 and finished in November of the same year. The building of the site was a collaboration between the community, clergy, and local builder and architect, Patrick Dunn. Working alongside Mr. Dunn, parishioners contributed a dominant part of the labor. Eddie Chidley remarks, "Patrick Dunn he says [to Fr. McCarthy], "...it's going to take much work" The old people then were strong. They went down to *Slaty Rocks* and brought rocks up in a wheelbarrow, and they built it up like that" (2016). Arguably, both grottos in this study are vernacular structures in that the stones gathered were local, as was

⁷⁸ Historically, it was the Church ruling with an Iron fist in every aspect of outport life, and in late years, leaving communities rudderless. This schema is reflected in many of my interviews. I'm not sure how this is reflected around the rest of the Southern Shore, but in *Renews*, there is a real feeling of being abandoned.

the labor and, to some degree, the design. This can be said for most locally built grottos in Newfoundland, where only adornments and statues are made outside the province.



Figure 28. Altar at the Renew's grotto. McCarthy's dedication plaque rests against the Mass rock.

Today, it is hard to see the grotto's rock structure due to a large quantity of ivy growing over the back wall.⁷⁹ Pictures of the early years show flat slate-like rocks stacked one upon another to the height of fifteen feet. The statue of Mary is set in a recess or niche towards the top of the grotto wall. The statue is four and a half feet tall and made of Bianca marble. The statue of Bernadette sits below Mary and stands three feet high. The altar sits centrally between the two statues, and behind the altar is a plaque erected by Fr. McCarthy that states:

Grotto De Lourdes on Mass rock.
In loving memory of my parents, brothers, and sisters, RIP.
Mass was celebrated at this rock in penal days, about 1745.
Hence it is called the "Mass rock."
Msgr. C.A. McCarthy, 1927.
Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us.
Erected 1927.
According to local tradition, it is the only rock we have
regarding such a tradition in this country.⁸⁰

Next to the stone plaque is a small slate sitting on what is believed to be the Mass rock with the hand-painted words "Mass rock." Eddie's son placed the signage much later in the 1980s. The

⁷⁹ I have heard two origin stories concerning the Ivy. First, Eddie told me it had been brought back by Fr. McCarthy from Lourdes, France. Second, I was told that it had been brought back by Fr. McCarthy after a visit to Ireland. Whichever the case, it is a prominent feature of the grotto.

⁸⁰Fr. McCarthy saw fit to include his family as part of the dedication, many of whom held religious vocations in the Catholic Church as well. His aunt, Sister Mary Raphael McCarthy, preceded him by coming to Newfoundland in 1863. She entered the Presentation convent in St John's on her arrival and later was able to attend her nephew's ordination on September 29, 1903 (Brazil 2008, 140). Fr. McCarthy knew through his aunt's correspondences to family back in Ireland that there was a need for priest in Newfoundland.

grotto base is 23' 6" by 13' deep and primarily made of stone and cement; the wall where Mary sits is stacked with local slate. The back of the grotto measures approximately 15 feet high. To the right of the altar stands a tall pulpit made of the same cement material. To the left is a small glass-enclosed area where prayer candles are lit. Two items of great interest are the tap where holy water can be accessed and a small stone from the principal Grotto at Lourdes. As a contact relic, holy water can be multiplied for the use of devotees and never lose its potency (Cameron 2010, 59). The tap where the holy water is poured is located near the altar. Unlike Flatrock, where the water looks to be coming from a natural spring—the tap at Grotto in Renew is one you would find in anyone's garden.

The stone from Lourdes rests in a small white plaque on the outside wall near the statue of St. Bernadette, next to a door by which a small candle room is accessed. On the plaque is written, "A piece of the rock where our Blessed Lady stood at Lourdes." According to several of my collaborators, the stone was brought back by Fr. McCarthy after one of his several visits to Our Lady of Lourdes in France. However, I have found another possibility for its origin. In the pamphlet, *Renews and Its Grotto*, written in 1927, the author notes that the stone was given by the Rev. Thomas N. Taylor of Carfin, Scotland (1927, 7). Around the 1980s, the stone was pried loose, possibly by the town's teenagers, and disappeared into the unknown. After this, a letter was written to Lourdes in France requesting a new stone. The new stone is the one that sits on the wall display today. I have noticed that this third-class relic is often touched as a blessing by those who pray at the grotto.

In front of the grotto sits a wrought iron railing with intermittent silver crosses that mark the front just above two cement steps. Earlier photographs show a small cement barrier with an opening leading to the altar; however, this changed to a more open and inviting railing in later years. Behind the grotto sit three tall crosses. To the right of the grotto is a small pond with three angels that the parents of Allison Maher gifted in memoriam. Their daughter, Allison, died on the 12th of March, 2009, in a helicopter accident while being flown on flight 491 to the Hibernia Oilfield, 34 miles east of Newfoundland's coast.⁸¹

After the grotto's construction in 1927, Fr. McCarthy encouraged local families to plant trees near the grotto in commemoration of the grotto's construction. These trees can still be seen, each with a small placard dedicated to local Renew's families who helped build the site. Personal family memorials are spread around the kept lawn, and in recent years, a memorial garden has been set up in front of the grotto to remember those who have passed. Behind the grotto are the Stations of the Cross.



Figure: 29. Small stone relic from Lourdes at the Renew's grotto.

They are marked with five feet tall white crosses, with each raised depiction of the passion of Christ placed in the center of the cross. The Stations were constructed during Fr. Gordon Walsh's tenure as a parish priest in the 1980s, and they lead up to a small wooden building that houses the water source to the grotto. Here, Fr. McCarthy poured the holy water from Lourdes to complete the reproduction of Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto and lend spiritual authenticity and authority to

⁸¹ Cougar Flight 491 carried fifteen passengers, only one of whom survived.

what had been only mortar and stone before. Eddie Chidley's uncle built the well, which housed the holy water. Eddie remarks:

"My uncle worked for him [Fr. McCarthy]. He said, [McCarthy]"Now I want a spring dug up there; I want it to run through the grotto...Larry do what he's told, and he dug down two or three places. He said [Larry], "Father, there is no water here, b'y...." No water here." He said [Fr. McCarthy], "walk down with me now." "Larry dig here," he said. Uncle Larry dug down about two or three feet; he said, "Nothin' here," but oh b'y, up comes the water (2016).⁸²

Here, Fr. McCarthy performs a minor miracle, such as finding water where none was meant to be (Reminiscent of Bernadette's doubt when Mary told her to dig in the dirt and a spring appeared).⁸³

I had heard stories similar to this concerning Fr. McCarthy's priestly powers. Eddie is the local storyteller, and much of the details concerning the grotto are polished and performative from years of telling. Folklorist Elliot Oring notes that a story's weight depends on the teller, which holds true for Eddie, who is recognized among the locals as a repository of stories concerning the community (2012, 110). His age and knowledge of the grotto give Eddie legitimacy and authority to recount local history. The grotto's sanctity inspires his telling of the well's story, thus emphasizing the grotto's distinctiveness and supra-spirituality. Degh recognizes that this type of supernatural narrative creativity engages the modern listener (1995b, 44). This story concerning the grotto space's supernatural power only heightens its sacredness. I was intrigued by the pseudo-mystical components of Eddie's story. Narratives concerning men and women who hold godly supernatural powers can be traced back into Christianity's history—it is modern flesh on old bones. These narratives are as important as the grotto's material aspects for those investing time

⁸² The use of b'y (boy) by Newfoundlanders is a common vernacular term used in the heavily accented dialect on the Island. Eddie had a particularly heavy Newfoundland Irish accent which made it hard to understand him at times.

⁸³ Stories of Fr. McCarthy's powers as a priest will be discussed further in chapter six and seven.

and capital at the site. They add depth without which the site would be spiritually one-dimensional.

4.9 Contestation, Disruption, and Change

The grotto has seen its ups and downs over the years. According to several of my collaborators, the grotto's heyday was during Father McCarthy's tenure as the parish priest. Over the years, depending on the priest, the grotto experienced various forms of neglect. The conflict between the parishioners and priests began after Vatican II in the mid-1960s when Father Lewis decided it was necessary to rid the church and the grotto of its overt and outmoded signs of excessive material sacramental devotion. He removed thirty-seven holy statues and a large marble altar in the church, then turned his attention to removing six decorative arches on the grotto in a bid to bring the people into a modernized concept of Catholic worship. Agnes Fowler recalls the time that the church at Cappahayden, just up the road a few kilometers from Renew, was dismantled as well:

Agnus: "We took St. Joseph [statue], and someone else took St. Patrick, that was the name of the church [in Cappahayden]. Someone else took the blessed Virgin. And, the dead Christ, my God, he was longer than that counter [she points to a long counter in her parlor— approximately five feet]. Shure, he went over the cliff. [*He went over the cliff?*"]. Yes, he went over the cliff, tossed over the cliff!" [Into the ocean].

Cynthia: "What did father Lewis say to justify all of this?"

Agnus: “I was just a little girl at the time, but I still couldn’t understand why it was being done, and my mother was raging. [*The altar too?*] Oh, everything was gone. I think there was a lot of faith shattered and lost because of all that had to be” (2016).

Church interiors were changed dramatically to reflect the liturgical and theological reforms of the 1960s; unfortunately, not without anger and dismay among many laypeople. The destruction was not done tactfully but with brutal disregard for the laity. Fr. Lewis tossed holy statues, which parishioners had valued over many years, into a pile behind the Renew’s church. Others were smashed and used to reinforce the concrete for steps at the convent. Several participants had spoken of one priest’s attempt to break down parts of the grotto in “a fit of rage.” He was stopped when the community’s workers became angry. Eddie gives an account:

We had two men working up there then [the grotto]. One morning they went working, they heard a noise coming from the grotto. They see this man [Fr. Lewis] up on top of the grotto, and he had a maul, and he was breaking the spirals off the grotto. So one man said, “For God’s sakes, Father, stop that; if you take down that grotto, you’ve got to leave Renew and don’t do anything else to that” (As quoted in M. Chidley 1996, 4)

Luckily, the grotto survived the carnage because the workers challenged the priest.

However, the desecration of the holy site only created a more powerful bond between the grotto and the community. Orsi recognizes that these abuses, as many parishioners considered them, came as a surprise. He comments, “One day, the statues disappeared, the rosaries stopped, and the novenas ended just like that” (2005, 56). This radical change and loss created confusion and dismay. It raised resistance among the many, who saw what had been sacred and all-encompassing in their spiritual lives demolished without explanation. I believe these actions began the unraveling of clerical deference in Renew, which would become even starker in later years as the Church entered a time of dark allegations

concerning sexual abuse. The abuse scandal would affect the community of Renew's and the grotto profoundly. This episode in Renew's history will be discussed in chapter eight.

The generations of Renew's Catholics who had "intensely lived" (Orsi 2005, 154) their religious experiences through material devotionism were left angry and confused after the modern Church's forced removal of sacred objects. It heralded a time of attitudinal change and the loss of priestly influence in the community. In the Catholic Church, removing historic holy objects became part of embracing modernity and a new direction in worship. Historian Jay P. Dolan (2003) comments that many Catholics resented these changes. Until the 1960s, they believed the Catholic Church was unchanging and eternal. Now, modernity, in the form of radical deconstruction of their sacred icons and Church structures, were removed and replaced by an aesthetic resembling Protestantism (Dolan 2003, 195-196). However, these items were not merely objects to be eliminated; instead, they acted as focal points for personal relationships with the sacred. As religious scholar Gordon Lynch notes, "...relationships with the sacred object can affect the psychological structures and feeling-states of the adherent" (210, 43). The emotional toll of this demolition affected the older generations of Renew's and left a scar on the communities psyche.

History has shown that Catholic Christianity has marked sacred space and place with religious objects and images for the last two thousand years. Publicly, these religious images define a place of permanency and the right to exist as a social and religious group and evoke a sense of pride in the congregants. Helen Lawler grew up in Renew's and remembered the church's beauty before removing the statues and ornate altar: "The altar and railing around it was made of marble. It had the nicest cut glass embedded in the altar itself—all kinds of ornate little spires and

things around the altar and little side altars and everything. It was beautiful” (2016).⁸⁴ I asked her what had happened. She replied that they had been removed with little or no consultation by the priest. She further commented that the people “weren’t very happy,” yet, because they were intimidated by the priest, they did very little about it (ibid). The priests completely disregarded this emotional connection to sacred objects, and the destruction went too far for many in Renew. The statues were intimately tied to both earthly families and the Holy Family. These objects were linked to a historical and religious past that was vitally important to Renew.

Religious sites act as markers of denominational identity by spatially organizing a locality through semiotic indications of the sacred. (Morgan 2005, 56; Voye 2012, 77-78). After removing sacred objects from the church, the Renew grotto remained a focal point for vernacular religious devotion due to the community's overt protectiveness of the site and a general absence of Church influence. Several of my collaborators noted that some priests took little interest in the grotto over the years, to the point that the site's upkeep was minimal. Thus, locals began to view the grotto removed from overt clerical control. Eade and Sallnow discuss the contestation of the sacred in their work on pilgrimage to the Lourdes grotto in France (2000). They note that contradictions between official and unofficial discourses at holy places are not uncommon (12). The parish priest, who might be considered the custodian of the grotto at Renew by the Catholic Church, and those who were its devotees and often caretakers have different perceptions of the site, thus, creating conflict and, to a large degree, resentment. This contestation over who held sway over the Renew Grotto, and the dialogue surrounding it, never varied with the laypeople; they were consistent in their devotion to the site. They had built the grotto with their sweat and toil at Fr.

⁸⁴ Lawler, Helen, interview by author, August 2016, Renew, Newfoundland. Transcript # R10-0822216. Transcripts held by author.

McCarthy's urging and took great pride in its beauty and spiritual influence; for them, it belonged to the laity

Over time, each successive parish priest brought his interest and meaning to the community's grotto. The laity had little recourse over what happened in the Church concerning the destruction of sacred objects; they did hold more significant control over the grotto. My research shows that this destruction of sacred materiality was the first cut to the strings that tied the community to clerical authority. For those whose world was comprised of spiritual devotion through the Church and religious materiality, it was a time of change and acknowledgment of their social and spiritual power.

The Renew's grotto intersects religion, belief, ethnicity, politics, and the miraculous. Orsi recognizes that "religious cultures function as one of the primary mediators between historical circumstances and individual experience and response" (2005, 169). This notion is particularly appropriate for the outpost of Renew's and its grotto. Since 1927 the grotto has been at the forefront of religious and social fluctuation in the community. It has remained constant as an edifice where stories and sentiments are entwined with old and new memories. "[R]eligious meaning is constructed and reconstructed over and over," as McDannell points out (1999, 272). As a mimetic material structure, the grotto remains unbroken, but as an emblematic structure of the sacred, its meaning is in constant flux with the changing world.

My participants' were happy to discuss and share their stories, recognizing that the grotto was a vital aspect of Renew's culture. The grotto holds sway over vernacular memory in Renew's, and all I spoke to had stories and memories intimately wrapped up in the Catholic Church and the grotto. However, I found their caring and protective approach to the site compelling. The grotto and the Mass rock encapsulate the greater meaning of Renew's with its four hundred years of

social and religious history. Each generation negotiates and reassesses the grotto's meaning both in a social and spiritual context; thus, actively including the site in their religious practices as their families had before them.

Chapter Five

The Lourdes Grotto at Flatrock

“Certain privileges can be granted to shrines whenever local circumstances, the large number of pilgrims, and especially the good of the faithful seem to suggest it” (Church Canon, §1233).

5.1 Welcome to Flatrock

Situated 12 km northwest of the capital St. Johns, the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes in the outport of Flatrock sits high on a small cliff face overlooking the North Atlantic Ocean. The grotto is strategically placed behind the church of St. Michaels above Windgap Road. The grotto and church face the seafront, where they can be seen by local fishing boats coming into Flatrock harbor. The grotto is open to the sea and inclement weather, without natural protection from the elements.

Historically Roman Catholic, Flatrock was one of the earliest fishing settlements in Newfoundland, appearing on English maps as early as 1630 (Smallwood et al. 1967, 209). Its early population included English, Irish, French, and Scandinavian settlers, making it (a little) less homogenous than Renew's with its predominantly Irish antecedents. Nonetheless, settlers largely came from Ireland and England (ibid). The community is named for the flat cliff rocks surrounding the shoreline. In 1842, Naturalist Joseph Jukes gave an account noting:

We then proceeded along the bay's north shore by a little footpath on the edge of the cliff and, crossing over some highland, came down on a small place called Flatrock. Along the south side of this little cove, the thick red sandstone dips at a slight angle towards the sea, forming a long smooth sloping pavement, whence the name of the place (quoted in Harding 1998, 55).

As early as 1640, people fished the waters off of Flatrock (Smallwood et al., 1981, 209). In the early years, fishing, farming, and later sealing were the mainstays of Flatrock's economic productivity. According to the *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, the settlement of Flatrock was established in 1762 (1967, 209). Later in the mid-19th century, a Scandinavian settler came to Flatrock by the name of Edward Everson. According to a 1982 article in *Decks Awash* entitled "Flatrock," Everson jumped ship in 1858 and settled in the community. He married a woman by the name of Larkin and converted to Catholicism. The surname of Everson is still found among Flatrock residents (8-9).



Figure 30. Aerial view of the town Flatrock and Flatrock Bay.

Unlike Renew's, Flatrock is within walking distance of Torbay and St. John's, where necessities can be purchased.⁸⁵ Seal hunting was a mainstay for many families when, in what was known as 'hungry March,' men from Flatrock would hire on to the sealing ships going to the coasts of Labrador. By then, food rations for winter were scarce, and sealing was the only way to bring money and food home to the family.

In the 19th century, Flatrock's Catholics walked to Torbay to attend church. Later, as the story goes, two brothers named Wade obtained permission to build a road, at their own expense, along the path that the parishioners walked to Sunday mass. Finding out they would not be paid for their work, they built a gate (some say a house) over the road and refused to let anyone pass

⁸⁵ The first paved roads were built in Flatrock in 1966 and connected the town to the small outpost of Torbay approximately 6 km south.

until payment was received. The Wades removed the gate and opened the road when the government finally agreed to pay them. Harding tells the final part of the story in *Exploring the Avalon* (1998):

Their chance came when the Church of England priest from Torbay went along the road. The Wades would not let him pass. The priest had the Wades arrested and brought before the captain of an English naval vessel anchored in the harbor. The brothers argued that if their road was to become a public thoroughfare, they must be reimbursed. The captain thought this a reasonable request and, upon receiving a promise to remove the obstruction, reimbursed the brothers (54).

The road's name was Windgap Road, which the grotto now sits above today.

In 1884, the community built its first church, St Michael the Archangel. Due to the small congregation, no priest was warranted; therefore, they shared one with St. Agnes's Church in Pouch Cove. The old church was removed in 1967, and a new modern church was built. In 1975 a town council was formed, and a new mayor was elected. Flatrock remains a thriving town due to its location. It has become a bedroom community for St. Johns, and many of the newer residents are not Catholic as Joe Power, one of my primary sources and caretaker of the grotto, comments:⁸⁶



Figure 31. St. Michael the archangel sits below the grotto, overlooking Flatrock harbor

See, it was all Catholic here then. There were no non-Catholics; you'd have a hard job to find them back in the '50s and '60s. All of a sudden, in the '80s, they started to move in. Then you're getting different names. We had our own names in the community. There was Martin's, and Power's, and Houlihan's, and Cavanaugh's, and

⁸⁶ Power, Joe and Jeanie Keough, interview by author. September 20, 2017, Flatrock, Newfoundland. Interview #FO20-0920-17. Transcripts with author.

if someone said, “Is he from Flatrock,” I’d just know by the name. Now you don’t know (2017).



Figure 32. Full view of Our Lady of Lourdes grotto in Flatrock, c. 2017

Flatrock is thriving due to its proximity to St. John’s, the influx of new residents, and tourism. Recognized as the largest grotto in Eastern Canada, the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes in Flatrock has provincial heritage status. Each year the community receives hundreds of visitors from as far away as Egypt, Iceland, and Japan. Grotto committee member Jeanie Kehoe leaves a visitor’s book at the grotto from June through October. She mentions that “looking through the visitors’ books for the past fifteen years, I noticed that people came to visit not just from Newfoundland but from all over Canada and the USA, and other countries of the world” (Kehoe 2006).⁸⁷ The site is a regular stop for the tourist buses abundant in the summer months on the island. Jeanie estimates that more than 4000 visitors come to the grotto each year.

⁸⁷ Kehoe, Jeanie, interview by author, Flatrock Newfoundland. September 2017. Interview # F021-092017. Transcripts held by author.

5.2 Fr. Sullivan's Grotto

Driving the winding Windgap Road, you are taken by the area's beauty with its small houses and craggy cliffs. This panoramic environment is typical of most Newfoundland outports; the scenic beauty is striking and challenging. As you pass the harbor on your left, to the right, you see the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes set back onto a sloping rocky hill. When I first saw the grotto, I was struck by its size; it is no small shrine. Instead, it takes up a suitable two or three acres of land, starting at the bottom of the hill by the gate and going up winding stone steps containing the Stations of the Cross to the top, where a large crucifix stands looking out to sea. A small parking lot accommodates the church, grotto, and community center that once was the local school.

The Lourdes grotto was the concept of Father William Sullivan, parish priest of St. Agnes parish from 1932 to 1961, encompassing the villages of Pouch Cove, Torbay, and Flatrock. Fr. Sullivan made a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Lourdes shrine in France in 1954. It was the same year Pope Pius XII had declared a Marian year, honoring the centenary of the declaration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.⁸⁸ According to Joe, Fr. Sullivan had a great devotion to the Rosary and the Virgin, hence,

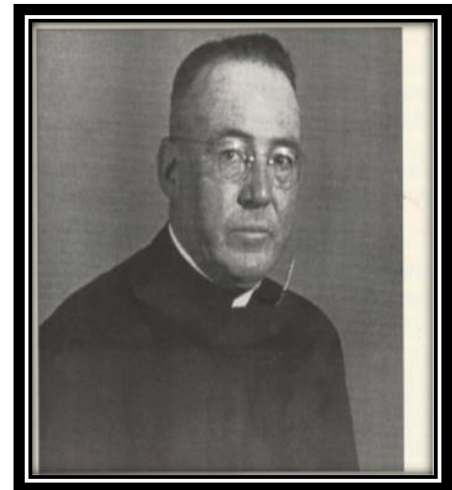


Figure 33. Father William Sullivan, parish priest of St. Agnes parish from 1932 to 1961.

⁸⁸ In 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed, "...as an infallible dogma of the Catholic faith that the Virgin Mary at the first moment of her conception was, by a singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, preserved exempt from all stain of original sin, is revealed by God and therefore to be firmly and resolutely believed by all the faithful." This was the exact description told to Bernadette by the apparition on March 25, 1858. Bernadette asked four times who "the girl in white" was, the apparition finally replied, "' Que soy era Immaculada Conceptiou,' I am the Immaculate Conception" (Harris 1999, 8). Up until then, Bernadette never spoke of the apparition as the Virgin Mary but instead called her "Aquero" or "that one" (ibid)

his desire to travel to France during the Marian year. The experience left a powerful impression on him. After his visit, Fr. Sullivan spoke to his congregation about building a replica of the French grotto in Flatrock. Fr. Sullivan stated that he wanted to build "...a shrine to Our Lady that would suggest Lourdes, but in a Newfoundland place, the kind Our Lady might have chosen if this country had been the scene of her appearances (quoted in Smallwood et al., 211). Joe commented on Fr. Sullivan's ambition in one of our interviews, "He for some reason went over to Lourdes, France, and he got this inspiration when he saw the grotto over there of Lourdes he sees such a resemblance back here that he thought he could put a similar type of grotto here" (Power 2017). One resident remembers Fr. Sullivan speaking to the congregation, "What an ideal spot for our grotto. Look at that cave up there for the Blessed Mother. Right in the center, we can put our Blessed Mother. "We'll put the crucifix right up there, and he can look out over the ocean where the fishermen are" (quoted in Goldstein 1978, 5). The people of Flatrock established a building fund shortly after Fr. Sullivan's return from France, and soon Fr. Sullivan was well on his way to seeing the construction of his Lourdes-inspired shrine.

The construction of the Marian grotto began in July 1956. Fr. Sullivan wanted "A shrine that would have its special effect on the beholder in the winter as in the summer" (Archdiocese Archives 400/27/5, N/D). Men of the parish dedicated free labor, moving 3000 tons of earth and rock and uncovering the hill and the rocky niche where the statue of the Virgin would be placed. For over three years, the earth was moved by hand by local laborers, who, by day, attended their regular jobs fishing and, by evening, would work late, moving as much soil as they could in buckets.

Forman, Michael Curtis of St. John's supervised the construction, but it was the people of Flatrock that did the backbreaking work, according to Joe Power:

Now there was a terrible lot of work to be done because that was only a cliff, and half the topsoil was halfway up the cliff. It had to all be dug out all the way to bring it down further to get more rock and get the height. So he [Fr. Sullivan] called on all the men in the parish to come on Sundays to help out, as we never fished on Sundays. They wouldn't get in a boat on Sunday to go fishing; you'd never see a boat on the water fishing then. As bad as they needed the fish and the money, you'd never see it. But they'd come every Sunday after Mass and bring their horse and carts. They probably got thirty-five to forty men here, even the teenagers.... helping out. They dug all that out and carried it away, and it started to look like something, and then they started to put rocks there....he [Fr. Sullivan] had a vision of putting rocks there (Power 2017).

Thousands of hours went into the construction. According to a document from the Archdiocesan Archives, the work was done by the men of Pouch Cove and Flatrock as a "...expression of devotion to Mary" (400/27/5, N/D). Curtis donated his time and talent as well. He spent many of his evenings and Saturdays at work on the grotto. Folklorist Diane Goldstein, in a paper on the Flatrock grotto, quotes one of her informants, Cornelius Power (who has since passed on), as stating:

Yes, that poor man Michael Curtis, he certainly helped him [Fr. Sullivan] out wonderful. He done most of the concrete because he understood it, you know, on account of workin' on the docks. Yeah, he was wonderful like that. And, all he'd have to do is get the stone from them. And, I'll tell you they wouldn't be long fixing it up. You'd take your pail and go on with her, and then another fella would take a pail and go on with her again. All of the steps were built like that. There were no horses, or carts, or trucks; it was all done by hand (quoted in Goldstein 1978, 6).

A document containing general information on the grotto construction, which I examined in the Archdiocesan Archives (AA), notes that the erection of the statues, altar, and pulpit was designed by Mr. Curtis (400/27/5). Curtis used donated marble and salvage from previous jobs to create the items. Sadly, Michael Curtis would live only a few months after the grotto's completion in 1958 before he passed away. A plaque was placed on the grotto in tribute

Say one Hail Mary for the eternal rest of Michael Curtis
who loved our Lady's grotto,

Died September 24th, 1958.

On November 5th, 1956, a white Italian Carrara marble statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, purchased by the parishioners, arrived. The statue was placed in a small cave-like niche carved from natural cliff features. The Virgin sits above and to the right of the central pulpit, approximately fifteen feet below. The small cave where Mary stands resembles the recess at Massabielle with its shallow inset and dark interior. Later, lights were set up around her to enhance viewing. Unlike Massabielle, which has the river Gave, Flatrock's vast Atlantic Ocean constantly shifts with the weather and tides. The grotto's location is understandable in a community whose lives are shaped by the sea. The grotto acts as a boundary marker between the wild landscape, sea, and the community; who better to guard against turbulent waters than the Virgin Mother, whose alternate title is *Stella Maris*, Our Lady Star of the Sea.



Figure 34. Bernadette at the feet of Mary, Flatrock grotto, c. 2017.

After placing Mary's statue in the niche, the marble statue of Bernadette was placed below and to the right of the Virgin. The statue of Bernadette was a gift from the children of the parish. Below this sits the marble altar built by Curtis. It is approximately ten feet wide and four feet high. It is unadorned, with only an inset of a cross on the central pillar. Michael Curtis obtained the marble for the pulpit at his

own expense to help offset some of the cost to

the parish. Below the pulpit are cement steps, where in 1984, Pope John Paul II would pray and bless the fleet during his papal visit to Newfoundland. One of the more striking statues is Michael

the Archangel, the church's namesake, which sits on a large boulder to the right of the pulpit. He stands upright, holding a spear. Below is a stone plaque with the Latin inscription *Imperiet Tibi Dominus*, “The Lord Commands You.” St. Michael is the namesake of St. Michael's Church in Flatrock, and its striking presence looks as if it is standing guard over the grotto.

On each side of the grotto are winding stone steps that circle the grotto up the hill to a sizeable twelve-foot crucifix placed at the top. The steps to the left have incorporated the Stations of the Cross into a stone wall. The stations were donated by various individuals of the parish in memory of loved ones—Father Sullivan donated the twelfth station.

When you reach the top, a large crucifix is set facing the sea.

Father Sullivan writes of this in his letter to Archbishop

Skinner dated July 8th, 1958. He states, “The people provided the money to erect a Carrara marble crucifix on the hill above

the grotto, and I would love to have it dedicated by your grace in this centenary year.” He further

writes, “The crucifix arrived from Italy just in time to be erected for the first [unreadable] the Immaculate Conception in 1957....”⁸⁹ Floodlights were later added to illuminate the Crucifix

above the grotto. One of my participants noted that the cross could be seen when coming into

Flatrock from the sea, signifying safety and home to the fishers. Unfortunately, the marble cross was blown down and broken in a windstorm in 1988. Later the community erected a duplicate in fiberglass in its stead.

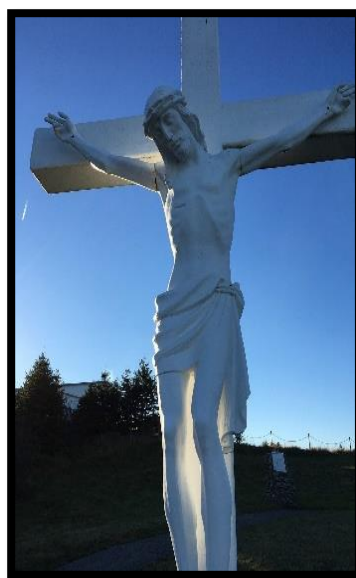


Figure 35. A new fiberglass crucifix sits above the grotto. It replaced the one destroyed in a storm in the 1980's.

⁸⁹ Sullivan, William Fr. 1958. Letter to the Archbishop Skinner. Basilica of St. John the Baptist archives. 400/27/5. St. John's, Newfoundland.

Like Renewals, the Flatrock grotto has a natural spring that supplies Lourdes with healing water for the public. The spring is behind the pulpit where water from Lourdes in France was placed in the final act to make the shrine a ‘true’ Our Lady of Lourdes grotto. In our discussions, Joe explained, "Then there was a little well up there behind the pulpit there. That well was always a well up there, and Jeanie [Kehoe] and them use it because it was part of their property... use it for the cattle and horse. It's a natural spring" (Power 2017). Recently, when I was there, the small cement cistern where the miraculous water had in the past flowed looked overgrown and unkempt. The spring, however, continued to trickle lightly down the rock face to the ground below. In her essay on the Flatrock grotto, Goldstein mentions that Fr. Sullivan had brought home a quart of holy water from Lourdes to put in the spring after the grotto was finished (1978, 7-8). Joe mentions to me the importance Fr. Sullivan placed on the miraculous water and the grotto to keep the community prosperous:

Now when he came back from Lourdes, remember there's a spring over in Lourdes too. This is where our spring is, right next to Bernadette...so the spring was there, and that was another big addition to it, right? And he brought back the holy water, the Lourdes water, and he put it in the well, and he said, "This place will never be without fish," and boy, there is always fish here [*You mean out in the bay?*] yeah, out in the ocean, because that's what they depend on is their fish (Power 2017)

Father Sullivan's devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes is reflected in his dedication to his congregants and their lives. Through my research at the Basilica archives, I was struck by his veneration of the Virgin and his love for the laity. His veneration for the Virgin went far beyond himself and translated into the inclusion of the parish and its people. In a letter dated July 2nd, 1958, to Archbishop Skinner, Fr. Sullivan writes how he set up a simultaneous devotion with his parishioners while he was in Lourdes, France. He arrived on June 1st, and later that evening, the parish of Pouch Cove and Flatrock visited the newly built grotto and recited the Rosary. Sullivan

writes to the archbishop, “And, this was timed to coincide with the time of the torchlight procession in which I took part that night in Lourdes” (Sullivan 400/ 27/5). On his return, Fr. Sullivan brought the lantern he carried during the torchlight procession from Lourdes, which was later used in the Flatrock grotto ceremonies.

From many of the stories I heard, Fr. Sullivan seemed to be quite a charterer. He was also seen as a stern figure as Joe reflects:

In his own right [he laughs], he was very strict; he was very strict, you know. You had a lot of respect for him. You had a lot of respect for all priests at that time, of course. He had a big black overcoat and a big black hat, right? Especially if he comes to the school and you were in school” (2017).

Bernadette Hawko and Anita Dyer of Flatrock remember Fr. Sullivan as being very strict concerning social norms, such as girls in jeans.⁹⁰ They mention he had no time for Protestants or dead Catholics. “Then he’d be talking about the old fellers up in the graveyard—are a bunch of antichrists! [*I had to ask*], who, the Protestants? “No, the Catholics buried up there” (Hawko 2017). Fr. Sullivan also called out those who did or did not pay their tithes from the pulpit. “Nobody questioned him—they had nobody to question him then. They [priests] were put on a pedestal,” Anita comments (2017).

Fr. Sullivan was seen as an imposing figure by the parish laity, yet, Fr. Patrick Kennedy, now Monsignor Kennedy, parish priest from 1972 to 1977, told me a story that might soften his image. It seems that Fr. Sullivan owned a Newfoundland dog he was very fond of, and Father Sullivan also smoked. The dog would go to the local store with a few dollars in his collar and return home with the cigarettes. According to Fr. Kennedy, on one occasion:

⁹⁰ Hawko, Bernadette, and Anita Dwyer. Interview by C. Kiigemagi (2017), Flatrock, Newfoundland. Transcript F025-09012017. Transcript held by author.

Archbishop Roach, who was a rather austere fellow, was visiting Pouch Cove one day, and Fr. Sullivan would allow the Newfoundland dog to come in and go to Mass, you see. He'd let him lie down and stay there. Anyway, one day, the archbishop was going up the aisle on his official visit with Fr. Sullivan—I forget the name of the dog. The dog started walking up the aisle with the archbishop in the procession. The archbishop stopped and shouted, “Who owns that dog!” Then, Fr. Sullivan looked around the congregation and shouted [straight-faced], “Who owns that dog!” [It was his dog] (2017).⁹¹

Bishop J.P. Skinner dedicated the grotto on August 17th, 1958, the two hundredth anniversary of the Marian vision at Lourdes. In a letter dated August 15th, 1958, to Archbishop Skinner, Fr. Sullivan requests that at the same time as the dedication of the shrine, the parish be formally consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary:

I am sure that the knowledge that you had done this for us on the day of the dedication of our shrine would be something that the people would treasure in their hearts for the rest of their days. It would be very encouraging for me to feel that our Archbishop had done that for us himself before a very memorable day came to a close (AA 400/27/5).

The importance of the archbishop dedicating the grotto was not lost on the congregation or Fr. Sullivan. In another letter to the archbishop, he stated that he wanted to make an “occasion of the event.” For the dedication, the Knights of Columbus attended as the guard of honor (Goldstein 1978, 8), and Fr. Sullivan gave the homily. “I feel the sermon on that day of dedication should this time be preached by myself,” he wrote to the archbishop (AA 400/ 27/5). Fr. Sullivan felt the need to personally recognize the dedication of the people of Flatrock and their sacrifices to bring his vision to fruition.

5.3 Contested Material Presentation

Two three-foot white marble angels are placed on the side of the short stairway leading up to the Flatrock grotto's pulpit. They face each other; heads bowed in prayer. Each is missing an

⁹¹ Kennedy, Patrick. Monsignor, interview by C. Kiigemagi (2017), Mobile, Newfoundland. Transcript F002-08162017. Transcript held by author.

arm that had broken off some time ago. When I first visited the grotto, one angel had rosaries



Figure 36. One of the two angels by the pulpit.

draped around its arms and neck. Later, when I returned, they had been taken away. Unlike St. Bridget's in Ireland, the Renewes and Flatrock grottos are routinely cleaned of any external offerings that may be left. During my visits to Ireland, I found the ex-voto offerings at St. Bridget's grotto to be one of the more profound aspects of the grotto's religious materiality. However, unlike St Bridget's, the upkeep and care of Renewes and Flatrock are carefully monitored concerning what is left at the sites.⁹²

Joseph Sciorra addresses votive offerings in his work on the Mount Carmel grotto. Like the grotto of St. Bridget in Liscannor, Ireland, Mount Carmel has an array of sacred objects and momentous left by visitors. Sciorra points out that it adds to the site's appeal (2015, 142). The absence of these religious votives or offerings can leave a sacred site polished yet devotionally sparse, lacking in the materiality that reflects the emotional and spiritual human dynamism that supplicants use to interact with the holy. In earlier work on Italian ex-votos (2012), Sciorra writes:

The reciprocal system linking heaven and earth in thaumaturgy and votive offerings is a basic tenet of Roman Catholicism that takes many forms, from everyday objects, such as a healed child's dress, a pair of crutches, or jewelry, to acts such as walking barefoot in a procession or dressing a child in the facsimile of a canonized monk's robes" (39).

Quotidian items, such as a child's dress or crutches, can act as offerings and expressions of devotion in the hopes of gaining the attention and intercession of the deity. Votive offerings also

⁹² I remember several interviewees in Renewes who expressed their extreme dislike of the plastic flowers that would occasionally be placed on the grotto by visitors.

act as gifts of thanks for supernatural actions by the deity in the petitioner's life. As an example, in her work, *The Cult of the Virgin: Offering, Ornaments, and Festivals* (2000), Marie-France Boyer locates communication with the Virgin in two ways; supplication and thanksgiving (48). Both of these acts, she notes, are often accompanied by offerings. She recounts the story of Pope John Paul II's escape from an assassination attempt in 1981. The attack occurred on the anniversary of the Virgin's apparition at Fatima. After the event, he had the bullet that spared him dipped in gold and sent to the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima as an offering of thanksgiving (ibid). I consider this story indicative of vernacular behavior among the elite of the Church. No one lives an "officially" religious life, including the Pope, Primiano argues in his article on vernacular religion (1995, 46). Like many pre-Vatican II devotions, these material testaments to faith are disappearing at sites in the western shrines where Mary is honored (Boyer 2000, 48). Not all offerings are as extravagant as Pope John Paul's. Most are letters of petition or thanks, candles, money, Mass cards, or depictions of an afflicted body part known as *Milagros* in the Latin American Church.

The original Lourdes grotto in France likewise demonstrated a desire for believers to leave offerings, much to the consternation of the local authorities. From the beginning, the apparition site became a place of *presence*, Mary's presence. Therefore, many locals felt the need to leave gifts to the Holy Mother. According to Harris, when the locals set up their makeshift chapel at the grotto, "...they ignored the clerical and civil authority and entered a spiritual world of gift-giving that led them to break the law and bend the boundaries of orthodox worship" (1999, 86).

Numerous statues of Mary were placed at the site, along with bouquets of natural and artificial flowers, chains, medals, coins, and crosses in gold and silver (87). According to Harris, these offerings reflected the importance of the local setting and displayed the "spiritual loyalties of the

poor” (ibid). Many devotees felt that this was the least they could do for the honor of being recognized by the Queen of Heaven.

As I see it, the lack of these offerings at the Flatrock grotto exhibits an aesthetic concerned with an orderly and unadorned presentation, indicating a post-councillor approach toward demonstrative religious material culture. Early photographs of Lourdes in France show hundreds of crutches stacked against the back of the wall attesting to the healings that had come before. Ascetically similar to Renewals and Flatrock, the crutches and other ex-votos have been cleared away to make room for a more Church-sanctioned visual appeal.

Votive offerings are ubiquitous around the Catholic world (Graziano 2016, 11). They reflect a long lineage of direct vernacular supplication through material objects in continuance with the cult of relics from early Christianity. Offerings are material and spiritual currency often used to coerce, cajole, bargain, remind, and placate the deity. The website *Catholics & Cultures*, which focuses on lived religion in Catholic communities, notes that this expression of devotion is reflected at many shrines worldwide:

Catholic shrines are often marked by flowers, candles, notes, or money left by devotees. Ex-voto offerings, including metallic pieces that might signal the body part for which one needs healing, a motorcycle helmet, a wedding dress, or a baby bib, are left at shrines in many countries as signs of need or thanks, often as a witness to the power of the saint celebrated at the shrine (N/A 2022, Para. 4).

These votives are offered to the deity for answering prayers or placed at the site to remind the deity to grant the supplicant's petition for intervention. In some ways, they act as stand-in material indicators, thus, taking the place of the supplicant who cannot always be before the deity in prayer. David Morgan states, “Votive practice may be understood as a technique or ritual procedure that operates ad hoc, that is, as an intervention tasked to solve a particular problem”

(2017, 110). Morgan's "ad hoc" behavior is truly vernacular in its element. The faith brought to the images at the shrines is clothed in the hope that the gifts given will reap the spiritual and material rewards. These objects' sheer variety and public display are what make them so interesting. Votive can be considered a form of material entreaty by which the supplicants bring a portion of themselves, or those being prayed for, in the form of an object, or written prayer, to lay at the altar. What I find most compelling about votive offerings is that they represent requests for and from every aspect of human life, from direct appeals to do well on an exam, for health and healing, prayers for the deceased, and everything in-between. However, more intriguing is that votive offerings are a spontaneous vernacular practice as old as humanity itself, which continues to this day, unabated by institutional Church authority and the modern world (Morgan 2017, 112).

Both grotto sites in this study seem absent of this layer of devotional offering but more so at Flatrock. In many ways, Flatrock, and to a lesser degree Renew, are products of Vatican II and its new asceticism for places of worship. Gone are the plethora of saints' statues, written petitions, Mass cards, and Rosaries left around the sites, and in their place are a few plaques dedicated to the deceased. However, recognizing a need for such spiritually demonstrative materiality, Renew has incorporated a memory garden in front of the grotto where people can leave objects on and around plaques and small religious statues dedicated to those who have passed. In my field notes dated August 2016, I write of meeting two ladies who were minding a memorial in the memory garden:

It's a beautiful evening. The grotto area looks freshly mowed, with fresh flowers placed along the altar (Plastic flowers are not encouraged). I met two ladies painting a little white angel that sits in front and to the right of the grotto. It is a memorial to their daughter and granddaughter, who died from cystic fibrosis at the age of 19— it's a bit heartbreaking.



Figure 37. Small commemorative to a loved one at the Renew's memorial garden.

I cannot help but empathize with the women whose labor keeps their daughters and granddaughter's memory alive. This is the power of a sacred place—the holy embraces both the living and the dead.

Several informants from Renew's told me this has been helpful because people no longer leave objects directly in or on the grotto. I understand that there is a need to balance those viewing and those using the grotto

and how the grotto committees of both grottos should interpret this. Sacred built environments are often the object of conflicting opinions on how a site should be presented. At both grottos, the choice is up to the laity rather than the clergy, and an effort has been made to accommodate a diversity of religious expressions and meanings brought to the sites.

5.4 Why Build a Grotto?

One of the questions I had going into this study is what makes a person or priest choose to undergo a long building project? Is it just pious duty or devotion, or are there other more personal motivations? Fr. Sullivan's motives are not completely clear, nor were Fr. McCarty's. I can only surmise through my research and interviews that there were several driving incentives behind the construction of the grottos.

I had asked Joe specifically why he thought Fr. Sullivan had built the grotto. One possibility he mentioned was Fr. Sullivan's great devotion to Mary and praying the Rosary, which gave him the impetus to build once he returned home from his pilgrimage to Lourdes, France. Another reason may have been more practical:

Every year, they have a pilgrimage over to the [Pouch Cove] church has a small Marian shrine next to the Church]. We'd be bussed over to Pouch cove and say the Rosary. That probably inspired him. We used to have to go over there, and he said we were going to have one of our own at home here in Flatrock (Power 2017).

The lack of their own Marian shrine in Flatrock was an issue for Fr. Sullivan, as mentioned in a letter written to Archbishop Skinner dated July 2nd, 1958; Fr. Sullivan writes:

During the Marian year 1954, the whole parish went on a pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Rosary in Portugal Cove. I contemplated holding an annual pilgrimage to that church. However, the cost of hiring busses for the children was high, so instead of an annual pilgrimage to Portugal Cove, I began a fund to build a Lourdes Grotto in the parish (AA 400/27/5).

This letter sheds some light on Fr. Sullivan's reasoning for building a facsimile of the Lourdes grotto other than his trip to France. He was aware of the practicality of having a Marian grotto in the community; thus, he seemed on some level to be justifying to the Archbishop the practical reasons why the grotto should be built. For the Archbishop, it presented a practical thing and a way to allow the parish to participate in Marian holy days in their community.

Furthermore, Fr. Sullivan was aware of the broader Catholic community's attraction after the grotto was built and the possibility of raising its popularity through tourism. Joe mentions that as a young boy, he and his friends would sit outside and use hand counters to count the cars coming into the grotto parking lot at Fr. Sullivan's instructions. Joe remarks, "We sat on the church stairs and counted the cars coming up with the clickers. We had as many as 500 cars one Sunday afternoon....well, boy, there were an awful lot of cars, and she [grotto] was new then, right? [It was] his way of knowing people were coming" (2017). The draw of the grotto was significant for Fr. Sullivan. It is hard to determine his interest in how many people used the grotto, and I would hate to question his motives. However, I infer through this that he felt great pride in the community's creation and the interest it stirred in

those outside the community. In Fr. Sullivan's mind, the grotto seemed practical and spiritual. Ultimately, the cost to build the grotto (through donations of both time and money) will never be fully known as Fr. Sullivan's files were lost in demolishing the old church (Goldstein 1978, 9).

I spoke to Fr. Kennedy, asking him why he thought Fr. Sullivan built the grotto. He stated that Fr. Sullivan and Archbishop Skinner were great admirers of Lourdes and would go there fairly often. "Every couple of years, the archbishop would make his pilgrimage to Lourdes, and maybe Fatima, but Lourdes was his favorite" (Kennedy 2016). Fr. Kennedy also mentions that he believes it was because of the similarities in geography between the two areas, Flatrock and Lourdes. The idea of a geographical determination for Fr. Sullivan's motive became a reoccurring motif in the Flatrock grotto narrative.

Fr. Sullivan had made another pilgrimage to Lourdes in France in March of 1958, before the dedication of the Marian grotto in Flatrock. Through my archival research, I realized Fr. Sullivan was in poor health through many of these events. He had suffered from heart disease for some years and often wrote Archbishop Skinner, giving him updates on doctor visits and his health. In a letter dated October 7th, 1961, he states, "...in a personal letter written to you a few days ago to advise you of my physical condition...." (AA 400/27/5). His correspondence often mentioned his need for time away from the parish to recuperate. One letter to Archbishop Skinner dated September 5th, 1961, offers greater detail of his health issues, "Recently I had a cardiogram and more recently an X-ray of the heart at St. Clare's....There seems to have been an improvement in my condition since the original turn for the better" (ibid). The letter states that Fr. Sullivan felt well enough to continue his priestly duties, such as attending Mass and attending the

sick. Father Sullivan would pass away a month later, in October, from a heart attack at the age of 61. A plaque was erected at the grotto in his memory:

This grotto is his visible expression of his great love for God and Holy Mary

Plaque erected by his parishioners

In memory of Reverend William Sullivan

Born January 14th, 1900—

died October 19th, 1961

I cannot help but wonder if his original pilgrimage to Lourdes in 1954 was as much about personal healing as it was about pious devotion. Was Fr. Sullivan's desire to build a grotto dedicated to the curative abilities of Mary a way of bringing the healing shrine home with him to be ever-present and available? This observation is only speculation on my part, and I will never know the true motivation other than Fr. Sullivan's great devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes.

A few renovations have been added over the years by others. Fr. Kennedy expressed that the grotto was a bit "run down" when he first became parish priest. He was instrumental in putting the rock wall in front of the grotto, fixing the steps, and placing a cement walk to the top. Fr. Kennedy commented that they did considerable work each summer, and he would have the parish men come and do the physical work. A new altar was installed during his tenure to replace the previous damage done by inclement weather. When I asked Fr. Kennedy if the people felt a sense of ownership of the grotto, he replied, "I think they were proud of it, and certainly in my time when we had to restore and improve it, they came out and did the work" (2016). Fr. Kennedy notes that during his tenure, the grotto was used for the annual Mass on August 15th, a rosary evening, and a Stations of the Cross event.

5.5 A Visit from the Pope

On September 12th, 1984, Pope John Paul II traveled to Our Lady of Lourdes grotto in Flatrock, Newfoundland. His visit was part of a historic twelve-day visit to Canada. According to an article in the Catholic *The Monitor* (1984) entitled “Why Flatrock,” the idea for including the

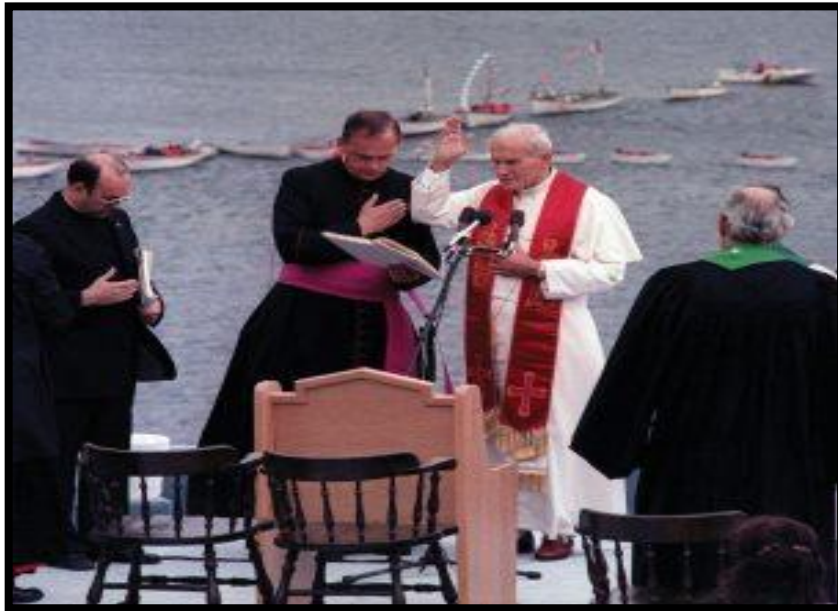


Figure 38. Pontiff giving the blessing of the fleet. Note the boats in the shape of a cross behind him.

small outpost in the Pope's itinerary was to have him visit what was considered a “rural site” where he would pay tribute to “...the place of workers in the family unit;” principally Flatrock fishermen (18). According to the article, Flatrock was ideal for Pope John Paul II to give his homily on working people's dignity and contributions to the family and society. A memorial overlooking the sea on Wind Gap road was built for Pope John Paul II to honor his blessing of the fishing fleet. The *Monitor's* article highlighted the visit's religious symbolism by comparing the local working fishers with the apostle Peter, a fisherman, and the Catholic Church's first Pope. In his homily, the Pontiff spoke of the human dignity of work, correlating it to the local fisheries remarking, “It was from their boats on the Sea of Galilee that Jesus called Simon, Peter and

James, and John to share His mission. I am immensely pleased to be with you, the members of the fishing community” (Canada’s Historic places 2005, para 4). Appropriately, on the day of the visit, men of the village formed their boats in the harbor like a cross welcoming the successor of Saint Peter's lineage to the grotto.

On a windy, rainy day, the Pontiff moved through the large crowd assembled in front of the grotto, kissing children and blessing the people. Standing below the grotto and with his back to Flatrock bay, he gave his homily to those assembled, acknowledging the "blight of unemployment” and “the changed conditions in the fishing industry and the world economy” before the people he deliberated on the social and personal harm of unemployment:

Here in Newfoundland, even more than in other parts of Canada, you feel the heavy burden of unemployment, which has settled like a blight on the hopes of so many, especially the young, who experience in their own lives how the absence of rewarding employment affects the many aspects of their existence and society, destroying prospects for the future, affecting the livelihood of families and disturbing the social fabric of the community (John Paul II, 1984, para 5).

In 1985, a year after, a small memorial was built by the town of Flatrock commemorating Pope John Paul’s visit. Referred locally as the “Lookout,” a plaque of engraved slate with a likeness of the Pontiff was placed in a monument made of local stone directly across from the grotto on Windgap Road.

The Pontiff’s visit could be viewed as the culmination of Fr. Sullivan’s dream; the grotto was recognized and celebrated by the highest authority in the Church. Fr. Kennedy, on the planning board for the papal visit, expressed that it took two years of preparation to go smoothly. Nevertheless, why would Pope John Paul II visit a Marian grotto in a relatively obscure part of the world? He intended to honor the family and workers and celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Catholic Church in Newfoundland. In previous years, Newfoundland’s cod fisheries experienced a

downturn which later, in 1994, would become a moratorium on fishing. The papal site selection committee felt the grotto would be ideal for Pope John Paul's homily and his blessing of the Flatrock fleet due to Newfoundland's association with the fishing industry. In an article in the *Newfoundland Herald*, reporter Tom Furlong called it the "highlight of Flatrock's history," such was the importance of visiting the locals (1996, para. 10).

5.6 Pilgrimage to the Grotto

Victor Turner recognizes that "...for every major social formation, there is a dominant mode of public liminality, the subjunctive space-time that is the counterstroke to its pragmatic indicative texture" (italics mine, 1979, 467). In contrast to the practical side of a religious shrine, there is no more potent liminal activity for the individual than a pilgrimage to said site.

There is no firm doctrine underpinning Christian pilgrimage, but it is the undertaking of individual choice (Coleman and Elsner 1995, 80). It is a sacred journey and, to some degree, free from ecclesiastical control. It involves experiential relationships with religious places and objects that act as conduits of the miraculous. Anthropologist Edith Turner observes, "...the heart of a pilgrimage is the folk, ordinary people who choose a materialist expression of the religion" (emphasis mine, 1978, xiii). The choice to make this arduous journey depends on the pilgrim's needs and piety. Acts of penance, proof of devotion, spiritual rewards, and healing are all incentives that drive Christians to travel toward holy places. Historian David Freeburg recognizes that the focus of every pilgrimage is the shrine, and the primary focus within the shrine, is the central image of the divine deity (1989, 100). Holy objects, such as relics and images, and physical spaces, such as shrines and churches, are the foremost objective of the traveler's movements (Coleman and Elsner 1995, 6). By stating this, I do not intend to reduce pilgrimage to

its lowest common denominator: materialism. A pilgrimage is a multidimensional spiritual undertaking that incorporates all elements of human emotion and activity.

Nonetheless, by locating the material aspects of religious movement to and from the holy, we can identify the impetus, the power source, you might say, that stimulates the individual to travel long distances in the hopes of connecting to the sacred. The theologian and Trappist Monk Thomas Merton put it succinctly, "In the traditions of the great religions, the pilgrimage takes the faithful back to the source and center of the religion itself, the place of theophany, of cleansing, renewal, and salvation" (emphasis mine, 1964, 5). In other words, pilgrimage is rooted in three dimensions; the material (including time), spatial (space and place), and spiritual realm.

The Flatrock grotto has an annual fall pilgrimage (dates vary between late August and early September). Instigated by the St. John's Prayer Group in 2004, the pilgrimage to the Flatrock has continued with only a break due to Covid 19 (in 2020 and 2021). I spoke to Susanne, one of the pilgrimage leaders who began facilitating the pilgrimage in 2017. She became interested in the pilgrimage after a visit to St. Ann de Beaupre, where she had a powerful conversion experience that set her on the path to a pilgrimage ministry.⁹³

Beginning at 11:30 am, the four km procession originates on Torbay Road and proceeds down a winding two-lane road to Flatrock and the grotto. Led by an individual carrying a large crucifix, many sing and pray the Rosary during the short trek. Once there, they are free to do their devotions until 3:00, when Mass is said. They finish around 4:30 and meet together after eating and fellowship, adding a social element to the sacred journey. They return the next day at 6:00 pm

⁹³ Suzanne did not wish to give her last name.

for a candlelight procession if the weather is good. The pilgrimage is open to the public, and all are welcome to come and join in.⁹⁴

Notably, one of the hallmarks of religious shrine engagement is the undertaking of pilgrimage. When we think of pilgrimage, we tend to visualize journeys to large-scale shrines or holy places such as Lourdes or the long trek to Santiago de Compostela. However, not everyone can journey to France or Spain, but many can find ‘sacred geographies’ in their backyards. The journey involves traveling through time and space to a place of religious engagement (Coleman and Elsner 1995, 6). Nonetheless, the endpoint is not the only primary objective; the journey can be as vital as the arrival. Physical movement and interactions with like-minded others play an essential role in the collective religious experience by initiating a rite of passage that can spiritually transform an individual’s life (ibid). Edith Turner refers to pilgrimage as a “kinetic ritual” that, at its heart, is vernacular. (1978, xiii). She ascertains that pilgrimage is spiritual, but its outward expressions are in the material, where physical ritual, prayer, holy objects, and architecture flow together, creating a significant spiritual journey (ibid). Similarly, anthropologist Jill Dubish points out that pilgrimage to Marian shrines “...is often undertaken by the marginal and less powerful” (2009, 231). Dubish, like Turner, identifies the “folk” are at the heart of the Marian pilgrimage.

Local communal rituals, such as small-scale pilgrimage, position everyday people bodily in the larger story of Mary and the Holy Family. It also places them in the continuity of the Christian past, where ritual journeys to the sacred center have precedence in two thousand years

⁹⁴ I had planned to go to the pilgrimage in 2017 but I was unable to find the location where we were to meet. When I did find it, they had already left. I decided to attend one later the following year but that was postponed as well. Finally, I had hoped to go in 2020, but due to Covid 19, it had been cancelled.

of history. In a 2011 article, Edith Turner discusses her trip to the shrine of Our Lady in Knock in Ireland. Here she considers what pilgrimage means to “ordinary people:”

Visionary manifestations mean much to ordinary people. All over the world, in all religions, such people go out of their way to seek pilgrimage centers. Those who are attracted to such centers come from common folk who have not unlearned their spiritual sensibilities. I see a profound division between the faith of ordinary folk and the Catholic hierarchy (124).

Turner sees pilgrimage as a great equalizer of societal status and position. In the procession, all are alike in their quest for spiritual connection. In her early book on pilgrimage, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (1978), which she co-wrote with her husband Victor Turner, Edith Turner states, "At the heart of pilgrimage is the folk...." (xiii). Turner recognizes pilgrimage as a vernacular devotion, similar to how I view the building of replicated Marian shrines as a vernacular practice. There is no need for clerical oversight, but it is welcomed nevertheless. Clergy also become part of the masses of pilgrims, but I consider their participation even more liminal than the average pilgrim. Priests function as pilgrims for personal reasons and simultaneously signify the established Church, thus straddling two worlds. In 2016 pope Francis also recognized pilgrimage as a form of “popular religiosity” (Vatican Information Services 2016, para. 2). Therefore, the journey is as much about private vernacular devotions as it is about Church-sanctioned sacramental observances.

5.7 Changing Tides

The grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes in Flatrock has changed physically in small ways since 1958; most of the change has been in the grotto's use. The grotto has developed from a locally based holy site, where ritual is centered in the community, to include a broader demographic of religious organizations outside Flatrock. It also operates as a destination for tourism. In some ways, this may have been what Fr. Sullivan intended. Whereas the Renew's grotto is almost

wholly a localized site of devotion, with a few tourists, the grotto at Flatrock is on a scale meant to bring outsiders to the community.

Joe and Jeanie have expressed that they worry about the grotto and its upkeep after they leave. As Flatrock becomes more demographically associated with St. John's, interest in the grotto is negligible among new townspeople without a spiritual connection to the site. Much of this can be accorded to the influx of non-Catholic families, yet, it is also due to an aging demographic within Newfoundland outports as well. I attended a Sunday morning service at St Michael's in 2017. I observed that there were only twenty-five or so people, who were older, in attendance, reflecting the overall demographics of change in the western Catholic Church. According to the Wall Street Journal, since 1965, "Demographic changes and shifting religious attitudes have altered the fabric of the Catholic Church in the US and Canada" (Rocca, Hong, and Ulick n/d, para. 3). This change in religious attitudes can significantly reduce interest in local Catholic religious sites requiring the grotto committee in Flatrock to be more creative in the promotion of their Our Lady of Lourdes grotto.

Despite the foundational religious similarities of the two grottos in Flatrock and Renews, I found the Lourdes grotto at Flatrock divergent from Renews in several ways. The most obvious differentiation is the size. Flatrock is on a larger scale than the one in Renews, and I surmise from my research that there is more of a display element in its presentation. Having its location so close to the capital city of St. John's, Fr. Sullivan would have realized that the site needed to be on a notable scale to bring in sightseers and religious tourists. Settled into a dominant hill on a frequently traveled road, the Flatrock grotto requires those passing by to look and reflect on the location, unlike the smaller grotto at Renews that sits comfortably tucked below Midnight Hill and concealed from the main road—the placement of the Flatrock grotto fits the local environment to

a tee. Secondly, in appearance, the Flatrock shrine is more suggestive of an appeal to a broader audience than Renew. It reflects the grandeur of the Lourdes site after the initial apparitions to Bernadette and the ensuing Marian pilgrimages to the grotto in France. My intent is not to spiritually minimize the Flatrock site by placing it in the realm of religious display. Instead, I recognize the variations in the forms of shrine presentations found all over the Christian world.

Chapter Six

Ritual

“Ritual, like language, tool use, symbolism, and music, is one of the constituent elements in the mix of what it means to be human.”

Barry Stephenson (2015, 1)

6.1 Changing Aspects of Ritual

Catholic grottos and shrines are dynamic, drawing on the internal devotion of the individual as well as the communities' shared values, beliefs, and symbols. Anthropologists Morrill, Rodgers, and Ziegler comment, "Catholicism is a faith of lived experience, approachable through the world's bounty: via festive foods, ornate altars, and concrete life passage events embedded in kinship networks uniting actual persons...." (2006, 3). Fr. Sullivan and Fr. McCarthy built replicated grottos with these collective participatory events in mind. Both grottos frame or encase physical spaces, where material and ritual aspects symbolize the potential for divine manifestation and change. Sacred spaces incorporate borders, Turner reasons (1979, 468), and movement within these sacred borders can take on new meaning because it is apart from the mundane behaviors of the quotidian. The grottos at Flatrock and Renews are outdoor venues where public expressions of spirituality are open to all; yet, these spaces also prescribe behaviors that are encouraged if not required where "...ritual time is ordered by rules of procedure, written or unwritten" (Turner 1979, 468). These spaces create the "form" of ritual, whether walking, kneeling, speaking, or praying (ibid). Anthropologist Talal Asad defines our modern concept of ritual:

[R]itual is now regarded as a type of routine behavior that symbolizes or expresses something and, as such, relates differentially to individual consciousness and social organization. That is to say, it is no longer a script for regulating practice but a type of practice that is interpretable as standing for some further verbally definable but tacit event (1992, 57).

The keywords here are "routine" and "symbolizes." Repetitive symbolic behavior within a frame of place marks ritual as one of religion's most dramatic and performative aspects. Religious ritual engages individuals and the collective in a formalized set of actions and utterances not of one's own making but laid out by doctrinal consensus within the Church. These behaviors are inherited or received through religious tradition (Stephenson 20-15, 84). Ritual expressions can be as simple as repetitive prayers, such as saying the Rosary, to more extensive complex rituals, such as Mass or pilgrimage, performed by the many.

Nevertheless, it could be said that most human behavior is, in some form, ritualized (Honko 1976, 372). Primiano articulates this concept in his observation that "...verbal, behavioral, and material expressions of religious belief mean a variety of instruments and occasions of expressive culture...." (1999, 47). Thus, it stands to reason that religious grottos, through their use and meaning, are situated at the center of participatory and expressive vernacular religious culture through ritual behaviors.

Honko defines religious ritual simply as a "... traditional prescribed communication with the sacred" (1979, 373). Intellectually, researchers recognize rituals as communicative performance; yet, there is the alternate side of ritual, the intangible and the ephemeral, as anthropologist Joanna E. Ziegler points out (2006, 243). These attributes are, in many ways, unknowable to the onlooker. Researchers endeavor to understand this observed and unobservable dichotomy in ritual without misrepresenting the underlying nature of religious intent and what it

means to a participant. However, we do not always uncover the core of the esoteric meaning in religious performance because it is multifaceted and, to some degree, mercurial.

One of the overarching themes in my research has been the ability of the grottos to bring Catholics together in a ritual performative expression of belief. This links ritual to socio-cultural relationships within a community of believers (Honko 1979, 373). Collectively these communities create a hyper-reality of religious behavior where sensory perceptions are heightened and directed spiritually and emotionally to the central object of worship. Durkheim calls this the "vital tone" of collective worship (1965/2005, 303). Nevertheless, as researchers, can we genuinely understand the depth of spiritual meaning via observation and interviews? My guess is no, but it is not for lack of trying.

As a living and expressive community of faith, Catholics in Flatrock and Renewals recognize the value of community-centered rituals that draw like-minded individuals together in group worship. In the past, this was a part of everyday life. However, many of those I have spoken to relate their fear of losing group cohesiveness due to attrition from the Church and modern indifference to Catholic tradition by those raised Catholic but no longer practicing (cultural Catholics). Folklorist Dorothy Noyes recognizes that cohesiveness is often found in group practice, "The performance that constructs the community ideologically and emotionally also strengthens or changes the shape of networks by promoting interaction" (1995, 471). What will become of the community if this interaction diminishes or ceases to exist? Whatever the future holds, it is essential to recognize that for Catholics, their very awareness of spirituality is, at its core, a faith-steeped ritual practice.

Ritual behavior lies at the heart of the Lourdes apparition. After the first visions, villagers often followed Bernadette in procession to watch her speak with the holy apparition. Harris notes

that the devout from the town and neighboring villages built homemade altars at the vision site (1999, 83-84). After the visions ceased, a small chapel was built and decorated by the locals, what Harris calls a "nature shrine" that was wholly vernacular in its construction and presentation, much to the consternation of the Catholic Church (ibid). Whether Church sanctioned or naturally occurring, ritual seems to arise from the human need for demonstrative action regarding preternatural events and relationships. In other words, to make order from the unordered, establish connections to the unseen through repetitive and symbolic physical movement, and address and entreat the sacred in a prescribed manner (Salamon and Goldberg 2012, 123). These early rituals at Lourdes were not as stylized and proscribed as later Church rituals at the shrine. Instead, they expressed the vernacular or popular need to honor the Virgin through deeply felt group behaviors outside the Church's control. These early ritual behaviors at Lourdes arose out of a necessity for the communal expression of traditional values and beliefs of the local community, whether Church sanctioned or not (Asad 1993, 57; Simms and Stevens 2013, 99).

As a form of human action, ritual performance can be recognized privately (individual), locally (parish), and at international (global) levels. Rituals, by their very definition, are complex and multifaceted. (Salamon and Harvey 2012, 120). Ritual behavior becomes even weightier when narrowed down to high religious rituals, such as Mass, confirmation, and ordination. Durkheim recognized that by drawing together at certain times to perform specific rites, communities experience separation from the very day (profane) and enter into communion with the realm of the sacred (2008/1912, 39-40). His functionalist model of religion is premised on religious ritual as an integrative cultural element (Bell 2009, 15; Salamon and Harvey 2012, 36).

Since scholars' recent desire to understand religious practice holistically rather than relying on text-based research, the unique use of the human body to perform religious belief has been

central to our understanding of ritual praxis. Rituals, or rites, consist of commonly shared beliefs that operate through communal symbols and collective imagination. Ritual uses space and movement to exhibit internally held beliefs concerning the sacred, thus, codifying collective understandings of the social world as prescribed by these beliefs. Religious scholar David Torevell (2000) argues that ritual performances entail "extraordinary" behaviors that are stylized and deliberate, thus, creating a place where the participants are transported into another reality (23). Catholic ritual, particularly high rituals, such as Mass, uses all bodily senses to underscore for the participant the extraordinariness of sacred enactment, thus shifting the human imagination into the realm of the supernatural.

David Morgan recognizes worship as a "presentation of self—personal and collective—to the divine" (2010, 65). Morgan further locates ritual as ordering the social field by creating public attitudes and shared consciousness, producing a consensus among a group (66). How people perceive, experience, and interpret ritual experiences depends on age, gender, and degree of belief. Many of my informants have told me that their parents were much more devoted to the Church and the Virgin than upcoming generations, where religious memories and experiences were confined to childhood remembrances.

In his work, *Rites of Passage* (1919), Arnold Van Gennep identified rituals as shared formal processes that every person in a given society will eventually go through (3). These rites reduced the stress of moving into a new phase of life for individuals within society, whether they be socio-religious or in the realm of the secular. He recognized these as liminal or transitional times. Influenced by Van Gennep, Victor Turner argued that rituals are a "stereotyped sequence of activities" performed in a sequestered place and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors' goals and interests." (1972, 1100). Turner's passion was human

performance. Anthropologist Roger D. Abrahams, in his forward to Turner's *The Ritual Process*, relates, "...with folklorists and sociolinguists of the time, he [Turner] became ever more fascinated with performances as they emerged in the actual practices of people celebrating life in its fullness" (Abrahams 1969: viii). For folklorists, recognition of expressive and performative behavior has been central to ethnographic analysis since the early 1970s when Ben Amos's pivotal essay, "Toward a Definition of Folklore in Context" (1971), asserted that "artistic communication" was a hallmark of folkloric transmission (1971, 9). With the emergence of this new approach, folklorists recognized "...performance and contextually centered understandings of folklore as a social process and as situated communicative interactions" (Limon and Young 1986, 437). I recognize that I have downplayed, to some degree, the performative side of religious behavior. This is not to say I dismiss performance altogether. Instead, I see it as only one of many intertwining expressions of the sacred that should be looked at in its entirety to understand religious devotion and its meaningful relation to the devotee.

6.2 Ritual and Imagination

Imagination, or what Colleen McDannell calls "imaginative reconstruction" (1995, 39), holds particular primacy in the case of ritual and replicated Lourdes grottos. As I have already stressed in earlier chapters, Catholicism is a religion of the imagination; the holy is ever-present (sacramentally) in the world through the religious imagination (Greely 2001, 1-4; McDannell 1995, 161; McGuire 2008). Aesthetics and ritual are the lenses through which the religious imagination is focused, where the "...creation and re-creation of images that form a vital link between artistic imagination and religious faith" are most displayed (Thiessen 2014, 77). In other words, for Catholics, ritual is embedded in cultural, social, material, and spiritual contexts (Arweck and Keenan 2006, xv). Nevertheless, each time a ritual is performed, a new creation is

instigated on the precedence of the Christian narrative imagination and enacted multi-dimensionally as a transaction between humans and deities.

Orsi recognizes religious imagination as vital, commenting that "...imagery was there to assist people in imaging their way into the narrative of salvation history, aiding the inner eye to reconstruct the landscape of the sacred world" (2005, 67-68). I particularly like the idea of "imaging your way into the narrative" since this is what happens during a religious ritual or sacred re-enactment. The everyday world is suspended during the ritual, and the religious imagination takes precedence. Let us look at the ritual liturgy of the Mass, particularly Holy Communion (John 6:53), where the transfiguration of the Eucharist is experienced as the body of Christ. The participant is conveyed into the world of the sacred narrative through the enactment of Christ's last supper. In turn, the imagination transports the individual to Christ's sufferings on the cross and the great mystery of redemption. This is a form of religious ostension where the individual is transported into a multi-experiential narrative of Christ's life via the Eucharist.

6.3 Narrative Imagination and Ritual Behavior

Motz asserts that rituals are potent arbitrators of belief; "They symbolize, enact, teach, actualize, challenge, and explore beliefs, and mark the intersection of planes of reality" (1998, 340). I would add that the veil between the sacred and the ordinary is pulled back through ritual, creating a hyper-reality that allows the participants to enter and experience the Holy Mother in her realm. Furthermore, a religious ritual is a door that opens in both directions, thus allowing the holy to impact the quotidian. Motz maintains rituals must "crystalize" belief in the participants for them to work. For this "crystallization" to occur, there must be a history of narrative imagination preceding the ritual action. Psychologist Molly Andrews recognizes this in her work on narrative, stating, "Narrative imagination both synthesizes and deconstructs the knowledge we acquire from

being in the world...." (2014, 14). Sacred narrative awareness (both oral and written) synthesizes ritual into imaginative action. In her work on ritual theory, Bell considers two aspects of human experience, "thought and action," to be primary in ritual behavior (2009, 16). One could easily recognize "thought" as the conscience-active form of mental behavior necessary for the more profound act of imagination. In other words, for the ritual to be transformative, the narrative around the ritual must be internalized and imagined. Orsi points out that Catholics were often taught to do just this "...to conjure up scenes from the lives of Mary and Jesus in real detail while praying the rosary...." (2018, 13). Both religious imagination and action are essential for the devotee to absorb the ritual experience fully.

For a non-Catholic first encountering an Our Lady of Lourdes shrine, the narrative imagination is not necessarily in play—or only superficially. Bernadette's visions carry no meaning and power to transform the location into sacred realism for those who have not incorporated the story into their conceptual world. This is particularly true for replicated Lourdes grottos. McDannell argues that outsiders, or non-Catholics, may not see the resemblance to the original shrine; however, "...between the original and the replica, for the devout even the barest hint provides an imaginative orientation toward the sacred" (1995, 161). Religious narrative imagination fills in the blanks for those participating in the sacred theater of ritual.

Correspondingly, sociologist Peter Berger argues that a ritual is a form of remembrance where the action of the ritual typically consists of two parts— "things that have to be done and the things that have to be said" (1967, 40). This "reminding" makes extant the past, thus reasserting religious legend into Marian devotion where the narrative of Bernadette is experienced here and now. I agree with Berger's argument; it corresponds with the need for ostensive enactments, which are narrative at their core and corporeal in their performance, bringing together the heart of sacred

ritual conduct, in other words, as Burger notes. "...religious ideation is grounded in religious activity" (ibid). Rituals and the behaviors they engender are the principal tools by which we as humans remember, celebrate, honor, express, and perform our sacred internal narratives and beliefs.

As I have maintained throughout this thesis, Catholicism is a highly visual, tactile, and embodied belief system relying on a shared faith in sacramentality and the presence of the sacred in the physical world. A highly ritualized system that is central to Catholic life, and it can arguably be said that ritual is the backbone of Catholic worship, where belief is realized and executed with self or with like-minded others. Anthropologist Roy Rappaport recognizes that ritual entails a social contract whereby individuals agree to act similarly to achieve an end (1992, 27). Functionally, group participation at the two Marian grottos reinforces core beliefs that the community recognizes and follows. In the case of Marian rituals, mutually agreed upon symbols, locations, bodily action, and oral recitation bring the community together in sacramental behavior (Bell 2007, 19). Durkheim observes that "No society can exist that does not feel the need at regular intervals to sustain and reaffirm the collective feelings and ideas that constitute its unity and its personality" (2005 (1965), 322). The grottos, as physical structures, inform these symbols and behaviors as to the direction they will take.

6.4 Lady Day at the Renews Grotto

I want to begin with ritual at the grotto in Renews. I reason that the Renews grotto contrasts pre and post-conciliar rituals and the shift in worship after the Vatican Council. In contrast, Flatrock saw its beginnings in 1958 at the beginning of a 'new' era of the Church. Here, old structures and behaviors were beginning to be reimagined in the light of modernity, which scholars such as David Torevell (2000) perceive as a "devaluation of the importance of ritual after

the council" that was substituted with a "cognitivist disembodied approach" that centered on the engagement of the mind rather than full bodily participation (5). Torevell further asserts:

The foremost importance of the role of the sacramental and devotional life within the Roman Catholic Church testifies alone to the significance that has always been placed on ritual practice; its teachings on salvation and distinctive sense of spirituality have never been divorced from their foundation in ritual practices (ibid).

The dichotomy between pre and post-conciliar rituals reflects a postmodern deconstruction of past rituals. The strategy of the Council was to incorporate the lay into a fuller religious experience by removing obscure religious language (Latin to the vernacular), inclusive lay participation, and a direct, less hierarchical engagement with the congregants by the clergy, to name a few.

So, where does Marian ritual stand in all of this? According to Kane, in the years after the Council and until 1977, Marian devotions were a "catch-all." Every type of devotionism to Mary was advocated despite her diminished position in the Church (2004, 114). In 1967, Pope Paul VI reiterated the position taken by Pope John XXIII in 1959, that the Church was living in "a Marian age" (115), observing that devotionism to Mary was still alive and well among her faithful—it seems Mary was not going anywhere.⁹⁵ Grassroots (laity) rebellion against the suppression of Marian devotion became prominent in the 1970s, according to Spretnak (2004, 19). However, there was an overall reduction in the Church in Marian devotionism. Whether this was due to Vatican II and modern influence on the congregants or possibly both remains undetermined.

In the early years of the Lourdes grotto in Renew, ritual and pageantry were customary. Steeped in pre-councilor doctrine and devotions, Fr. McCarthy staged a Feast of the Assumption (August 15) procession to the grotto beginning at Holy Apostles Church. Lady Day (as the feast

⁹⁵ Marian scholars recognize the Age of Mary, or the Marian age, as being a period between two Church decreed dogmas, "1854 (Immaculate Conception) and 1954 (The Assumption into Heaven)." (Van Osselaer 2019, 580).

was called in Newfoundland) at the grotto was one topic that my participants spoke of with a sense of fond recollection. All were children then; their remembrances are understandably associated with childhood memories and nostalgia. As a calendrical custom, the celebratory aspects of Lady Day are remembered as one of the community's highlights in the Catholic ritual year. These rites express communal identity and are repetitive in ritual behavior and time (yearly). According to anthropologist Mischa Titiev, calendrical rites secure a group's collective identity (1960, 294). Titiev further recognizes that the community anticipates these calendar rites throughout the year, as reflected in a comment by Helen, "The biggest thing we all would remember was in the summer, Lady Day, or August 15....That was a big, big celebration." Helen further remarks:

The girls wore their white dresses and veils; there were different levels, of course. I think the younger group that had just made their communion that year they would wear a red ribbon and a medal, ones that were older would have a green ribbon and a medal. Then there were the teenagers were called Children of Mary, and they would wear blue cloaks....pinned at your shoulder....and we would carry flowers, but...they had to be just buttercups or daisies. If anybody had flowers in their garden they would bring them. We would have to assemble at the school which is no longer there....and we'd process up to the church yard, and up to the grotto.

Lady Day celebrations were unique in Renewals because of the Marian grotto. The site offered a distinctive venue other than the local church. In the early years of the grotto, the outdoor location was fully dedicated, through material decorations and pageantry, to the celebration of the Virgin, reflecting the central motivation for the day; to honor the Virgin. Here, more than any other time, the material and physical aspects of Marian belief were on full display. Banners, bodies in costumes, flowers, arches made of greenery, and religious regalia and trappings would be present. For the community, Lady Day was seen as a celebration that went beyond the high ritual of the Church, as Helen recalls:

Helen: The whole community would be there, anybody that was able to walk.

Cynthia: People from outside the community?

Helen: Oh, a lot of people all down the southern shore. They would come from as far away as St. John's. But definitely, I remember people coming from Tor's Cove. They would come in trucks or a pickup or something. They would come, and you could watch all the people going up to communion. Some people would have crutches, or they'd have other ailments. They were going to seek a cure (ibid).

Belief in the Virgin's ability to cure would be part of the undercurrent of expectation during Lady Day's joyous yet devout occasion. Even in a ritual whose primary focus was the collective celebration of the Virgin's assumption into heaven, the devotees still viewed the grotto as a place where the miraculous happens—woven into the ritual celebrations were expectations that the holy could manifest to an individual through a curative experience. Religious scholar Don Saliers stresses, "...every [ritual] tradition carries with it both explicit and implicit convictions about how the physical and the spiritual realms are related (2014, 407). Thus, "Seeking a cure" is recognizable as an explicit expectation at the grotto, where the sacred and the physical are intimately woven into individual and collective expectations. On the other hand, the implicit hopes and needs would be myriad and unspoken by people as they processed to the grotto.

In 1927-28, when the grotto was completed in Renew's, times were still hard in Newfoundland, especially in the outports. Poverty was always on the doorstep, and doctors around the Avalon Peninsula were few. Nevertheless, not all was bad for those in Renew's; a thriving fishing economy maintained the residents for most of the year. In later years, the stories locals wrote concerning their childhoods in the Renew's *Come Home Year Book* (2008) present the outport as unique due to the firm hand of Fr. McCarthy, the community of Presentations nuns, and local support. Many of the stories from my participants paint an idyllic time in their lives—several

mentioned to me that they would not have traded it for anything.⁹⁶ This bucolic outlook by many of my informants has made it necessary to read between the lines as I try to ascertain the influence the grotto held in the community. In one of our interviews, I asked Helen if they thought they were poor, and she replied, "Everybody was alike. I grew up at the end of the '40s into the '50s and '60s, so we just had what we needed, no extras. There were just two in my family, my brother and me. I think we were like anybody else" (Lawler 2016). Lady Day offered a time of celebration for the community. Here, the populace could suspend ordinary time and focus on a ritual festivity in which all participated.

Like the fiestas that Orsi speaks of for *Our Lady of Mount Carmel* (1985), Renew's celebrations were not too dissimilar from his descriptions of the large procession with *La Madonna* that the Italian community enacted on July 16. Though the Festa celebrations were much more extensive than the local Lady Day in Renew, lasting for days with music, food, and dancing, the same joyous expectations were revealed in my interviews. However, unlike the Festa in Italian Harlem, where a fractious undercurrent lay between clergy and the populace (Orsi 1985, 59), the early rituals in Renew were primarily overseen by the priest, Fr. McCarthy (and, later in 1958, Fr. Thomas Moakler). Fr. McCarthy and the Church held a firm hold on the proceedings. From what I gather from my informants, this loosened after McCarthy's death. By the 1960s, the rituals seemed less in line with the pre-councillor pomp and ceremony and began to take on a less ornate quality. This period corresponds to when the clergy began destroying what they considered obsolete religious objects, such as statues and other religious items, in the community.

⁹⁶ Contrastingly, in one story from the Renew's *Come Home Year Book*, Delores Benningfield mentions the parish records up to the 1950s demonstrated the fragility of life in the outport. "Disease and accidents were everyday companions. Women died in childbirth and left husbands with small children" Diphtheria, tuberculosis, and polio were also concerns among the community (2008, 78). Several of the stories also speak to losing a husband at a young age and having to raise children alone (174).

The Catholic Church in Newfoundland claimed its own on Lady Day in the early years of the grotto through the obligation of the local fishers of Renew's. This day was when the "catch of fish" was turned over to the Church:

Bishop Michael Anthony Fleming of Newfoundland received in 1834 from Pope Gregory XVI the faculty to dispense the fishermen subject to his spiritual jurisdiction from the obligation of fasting on the vigils of saints. This allowed Bishop Fleming to permit the fishermen to fish for the Church on holy days, like Lady Day" (Dohey 2019, para. 5)

The catch ended the traditional fish harvesting season (para. 2). As Honko points out, calendar customs are cyclical rites organized by the community and emphasize turning points placed at an essential time of seasonal change, such as the end of summer (1976, 375). As well as being a religious occasion, Lady Day was a time for blessing the harvest on the island, and the emphasis on the sea's bounty and fish harvesting is reflected in this tradition. The Ecclesiastical dispensation for this endeavor was unusual because the day was regarded as one of holy obligations where all Catholics would stop their work and participate in the celebration. After the catch was brought in, dinner and music would be held at local parish halls around Newfoundland.

Religious material culture in public rituals has significant meaning socially and religiously (Konieczny 2009, 419). It functions communicatively as a public religious narrative. By this, I am referring to narratives concerning the Church, the community, and the Virgin. Cappadona (2014) recognizes that these material narratives communicate through the visual arts by revealing "...religious truths, religious ideas, and practices, which facilitate worship for both the individual and the community" (221). She further reflects on how religious objects promote a "re-experience of the original encounter" (ibid). This quote is significant concerning my argument on religious

ostentation and the re-living of Bernadette's legend at the two grottos. Experience is at the heart of an ostensive legend encounter.

Morgan argues that material culture is the skeleton on which religion's thought world and felt life takes shape (2010, 7). This "felt-life" of religious belief is demonstrated through early



Figure 39. Lady Day in 1950's Renew's. The grotto sits up and to the right of the church.

images of Lady Day in Renew's, which reveal a rich religious aesthetic. Photos show young girls in blue and white with veils covering their faces, processions from the Holy Apostles Church to the grotto. These were the Children of Mary.⁹⁷ The sepia-tone photos give them a ghostly look as the veils obscure their young faces. They look like young brides, symbolically pure and emulating the conservative ideals of Catholic womanhood in the early twentieth century where the Pre-Vatican II Mary embodied moral purity and were sharply divided gender roles played an integral part of daily life in Catholic families (Kean 2004, 104-108).⁹⁸ Behind the Children of Mary came

⁹⁷ According to one of my collaborators, to belong to the organization, you had to be from Renew's.

⁹⁸ According to Paula M. Kane, post-World War Two saw a consolidation of conservative ideals concerning womanhood. Retuning service men's jobs that had been held by women were in demand; subsequently, a revival of domesticity and the return to the home for women was imperative to restore social and community equilibrium. The emphasis was on motherhood and homemaking, and modesty. Religious rhetoric concerning the Mother of Jesus as everywoman was symbolically necessary to achieve this (2004, 104).

the young altar boys, followed by the Presentation Sisters. At the forefront would be Father McCarthy, and on occasion, the archbishop would be in attendance. Terry describes the scene:

So like our Lady Day processions...they were theatrical performances. You had all the different groups dressed in their costumes. You had the Ladies Sodality, the Children of Mary, and with the boys, you had the Crusaders of the Blessed Sacrament. Then you had the altar boys, and you had a whole bunch of young priests and the Monsignor [McCarthy] with his flowing robes and this big umbrella that he stood under, and there was incense as he walked by with this big thing with all the thorns coming out of it. Altar boys rang the bells; it was spectacular.

Terry's memories of the day are founded on childhood reflections that offer a youthful impression



Figure 40. Early Lady Day procession in Renew N/D.

of the proceedings. Unfortunately, since the adults who participated in the rituals early years are no longer with us, I cannot fully determine what the proceedings meant to the older population of Renew at that time. From my informants' photos and writings, I can only glean that the whole of Renew and some of the surrounding communities enthusiastically participated in the Lady Day ritual. In the early years, Lady Day in Renew worked on numerous levels to construct religious identity, re-establish sacred bonds, and confirm the power of the Church.

The Lady Day processional is an aspect that has profoundly changed in the grotto's ensuing years. In the early days, processions to the sacred center, both metaphorically and physically, with all of its attending pomp, were one of the primary objectives of the Lady Day ritual. Encoded into these processions were expected social norms and behaviors, reflected in demeanor and religious deference to the clergy and the religious, such as the Presentation Sisters. The proper behavior would be visible and in line with Catholic liturgical expectations. These actions are central to the ritual's visual performance. The need for adherence to proper ritual conduct from each participant was vital to the enactment and viability of the ceremony—ritual conformity was also vital to keeping social cohesion in the community. This behavioral awareness is not innate but instilled through years of doctrine and ritual practice handed down to successive generations.

From what I gather from my interviews and the photographs, these processions could be reimagined as a form of pilgrimage—a mini-pilgrimage of sorts, where the center (Lourdes grotto), both literally and metaphorically, is the ultimate goal. In some ways, one could argue that this kinetic undertaking to the center is a pre-liminal movement toward a sacred destination, much like in more prominent religious pilgrimages. Emphasis on bodily placement in the processions reinforced community values and religious ethics, which are crucial for cohesiveness. Moreover, the community recognized that the grotto (and the Catholic Church) was central to civic life. The message transmitted through this ritual behavior is both emic and etic. Externally, there is a system of behaviors that must be adhered to within the community. Emically, it infers a hierarchy by which one must approach God via Mary and the saints (Torevell 2000, 26). Similar to the *Social Contract Theory*, which stretches back to early Greek philosophers, later to be picked up by Thomas Hobbs and modified by John Lock (1651), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1755), and Immanuel

Kant (1797). Here, a community of believers' benefit by complying with the religious institution's established norms and rules. I reason that ritualistic behavior requires individuals to agree to perform in tandem to achieve a prescribed result. Consequently, through mutual consent to participate, individuals remain part of an active religious community with all the social and spiritual benefits.⁹⁹

Religious rituals are mirrors not only of spiritual beliefs but of societal change. The loss of the religious and social contract can happen collectively and individually, thus changing how rituals are performed and actualized. This breach in the (unspoken) contract is reflected in recent years, where "cradle" Catholics and clergy have left the Church in droves due to what they perceive as a rupture of values on the part of the Catholic Church. How has this come about? First, it began after the changes established by Vatican II, where modernization of all things liturgical created a gulf between past and present. Second, modernity has challenged the basic tenants of the Church through secularism and postmodern thinking (a deconstruction of the center, which began with the Council). Third, new ideas of gender roles via the women's movement started in the early twentieth century. Forth, I would argue that the devaluation of the saints and Mary by the Church has left those who have invested their spiritual lives in their devotions disoriented. Finally, the capstone to this exodus would be the child abuse and deception perpetrated by the clergy and Church hierarchy—this was one of the primary reasons that many of my informants lost heart in the Church. This is not to say they abandoned their spirituality; instead, the institution became a stumbling block for many. I will discuss this more fully in chapter eight.

⁹⁹ I realize this smacks of functionalism, which has lost much of its influence as a theory in social science. However, I still maintain that on a societal level, ritual functions to communicate, bond, solidify, teach, transform, and sacralized the religious collective—this is only the tip of the ritual iceberg.

6.5 Modern Ritual

Vatican II did away with many of the longstanding ceremonial entities of Catholic worship, such as the Latin Mass and the plethora of religious statuary in the Church; as a result, many people became disaffected. Catholic rituals changed dramatically, affecting how people related to the Church and their religious devotions. In a *New York Times* article by Michael Brendan Dougherty, Dougherty argues against this, stating, “The new Mass portrayed itself as a narrative and historical remembrance of the events recalled in Scripture. The offering and sacrifice were not of Christ but the assembled people.... (2021, para. 17).

As one of the disaffected, Dougherty sees the recent changes as part of the mass exodus from the Church. He argues that for Catholics, "...how we pray shapes how we believe. The old ritual physically aims us toward an altar and tabernacle" (para.16). This statement also applies to the fundamental changes in new rituals that no longer employ the same grandiosity displayed in the early years in *Renews*. Dougherty sees this change as humanistic, conforming to the moral norms of the society around them (para. 19).

The ritual downgrade is also a product of modernism, reflecting a changing and more mobile secular society, as well as the effects of post-modernism. The general disillusionment with the Church correlates with demographic movement and change, lack of religious engagement or interest, modern media, and secular educational influence. These are only some issues that have created this gap between ritual engagement and Catholics. Nevertheless, there is a real sense of loss. Many of my collaborators had mentioned a nostalgia for when the grotto offered religious continuity and community. This continuity has faded in recent years. When I attended Lady Day in *Renews* in 2016, there was no procession, pomp, and little ceremony. People gathered around the grotto in their own time, and the priest said Mass and gave the homily. Afterward, people

dispersed and went their ways, only to meet later at the *Regina Mundi* hall for a community dinner. I have realized that the Marian grotto in Renewals has become more about personal rather than collective spirituality. In the early days of the grotto, it was about community bonding, social and religious order, and communicating religious traditions. Now, the grotto has become a strategically safe place for those who have disaffiliated themselves from the Church proper; they see the grotto as a space that will allow them to continue their spiritual relationship with Mary outside of the Catholic Church's parameters—this will be discussed in depth in my final chapter.

6.6 Ritual at the Flatrock Grotto

Other than the visit to the Flatrock grotto by Pope John Paul II in 1984 and the ensuing ritual pageantry, I realized that community ritual at the Flatrock grotto was not as extensive as I believed. Part of my expectations came from my work in Renewals, where each participant I interviewed spoke of the uniqueness of Lady Day rituals in their youth and how it was one of the year's highlights. Due to the attrition of early residences, I was hard-pressed to find many people who participated in the rituals at Flatrock during Fr. Sullivan's time. Those I did speak to were children or teens during Fr. Sullivan's tenure. Furthermore, as expected, the rituals at Flatrock's grotto were not as materially elaborate, even in the early years, as the pomp and celebration enacted in the early days at Renewals. This is not to say there was little to no ritual performed at the grotto; instead, it recognizes that the grotto reflects a different time and ethos within the Church. Anita Dyer and Bernadette Hawko of Flatrock remembered candlelight processions in the early years of the grotto.

During a conversation we had at Bernadette's home in Flatrock, Anita commented that "We used to have lovely ceremonies at the grotto, candlelight procession. Good Friday morning we use to have a procession, it was lovely" (She is referencing the Good Friday morning

candlelight processions to the grotto). "But, it is like everything else; we don't really appreciate what we have, right?" Bernadette added, "You don't get many from Flatrock going to stuff, do you Anita? Maybe twenty at most." (Dwyer 2017). This lack of religious participation is one of the contemporary issues in both communities.

Both ladies mentioned that even though there are not many ceremonies at the grotto anymore if locals get sick or something happens in their life, it is the "first place they go to pray." They note that incomers, or even younger local families, will come to Church if they want to get their children confirmed, but that is the last they see of them. Bernadette comments on this lack of engagement by today's youth, "I find, my God, when we were growing up, you never missed Mass. When I was really young, everybody had their own pews—[This was a way to observe if someone was not at Mass]. This religious apathy reflects the disengagement of Catholics and has been an issue in the Church since the 1960s. Religious scholar Kathleen Garces Foley (2019) notes that the trend among the younger Catholics shows them to be less religious or engaged than earlier generations "...less knowledgeable about their faith, and more individualistic in their approach to religious authority and beliefs" (173). There is the use of the grotto by those outside the community, such as the Knights of Columbus and The Legion of Mary, and priests in the past have staged candlelight processions for the congregation; yet, the days of community ritual procession are no longer a part of the grotto's itinerary.

I attended Lady Day at the Flatrock grotto in 2017. Approximately sixty people sat in chairs on the grass in front of the grotto or around the rock wall built by Fr. Kennedy. The legion of Mary and the Knights of Columbus also attended the ceremony. My 2017 field notes recount the day:

Plastic chairs are set up on the grass in front of the grotto. A Blue mantle is draped on the altar, and an electronic organ is set below the St. Michael the Archangel statue. The Legion of Mary has set up a large placard to the right of the altar. Other than that, the beauty of the grotto holds its own. People are spread out on chairs set in the grass, and those who have come late sit on the wall surrounding the grotto. It is casual to some degree compared to Mass in a Church. I find the uniforms worn by the Knights of Columbus interesting; they look like admirals in the British navy. The demographic is primarily elderly, with a few middle-aged folks and a few children. Jeanie mentions that as recently as five years ago, more people attended.

There was a casualness to the way people were gathered, not like the processional proceedings of pre-councillor Renewals. Arguably, the grotto in Flatrock straddles the line between old and new, past and present. Where once there were children and young families dressed in their finest, there are now mostly older people, reflecting a modern demographic change in the Church and the community. Titiev comments on loss and change in collective ritual, noting, "...since they are always social or communal in character, calendrical rites invariably tend to disappear when a society loses its

distinctiveness or radically alters its old ways of life" (1960, 294). Unlike Renewals, Flatrock is affected by a significant influx of new faces, many not Catholic.

"Flatrock is divided, the old folks use to say, between 'in

along' and 'out along.' Out along was by the ocean. If I walk the road now, just about every house there's somebody out of country living out there" (Hawko 2017).

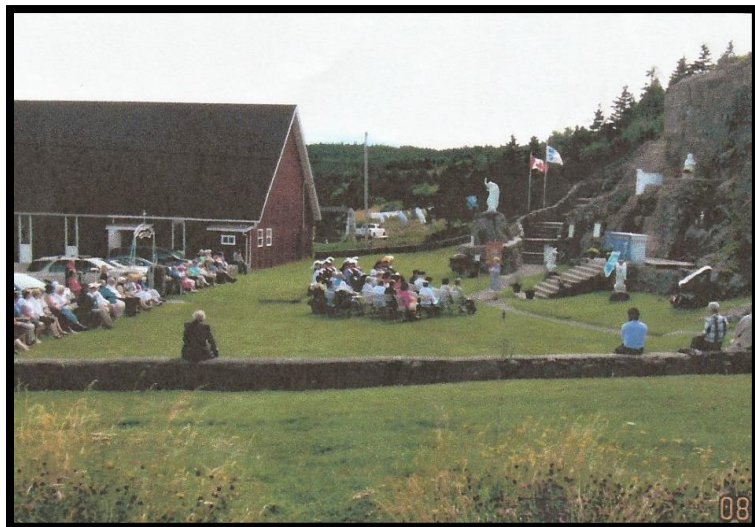


Figure 41. Lady Day 2016 at the Flatrock grotto.

In the following chapter, I will focus on local narratives concerning the miraculous associated with the two grottos. Although Mary is encountered through various means in the privacy of religious devotion, her miraculous side, that of performing miracles, is often encountered in public religious spaces, such as shrines and grottos. People seek these sites specifically to entreat the Holy Mother for healing for themselves or their loved ones. These are spaces where Mary's miracle-working powers are at their zenith.

Chapter Seven

Signs and Wonders

God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his own will.

Hebrews 2:4 KJV

7.1 Hallowed Ground

The grottos at Flatrock and Renewals offer a lucrative environment for narratives regarding vernacular religious belief. The last chapters demonstrated the grottos' material aspects, offering a physical touchstone for community ritual praxis. This chapter will focus on the grottos' impact on the intangible world of supernatural healing, protection, grief, and divine intervention.

Unquestionably, the possibilities of miracles like those at Lourdes, France, animate the grottos' power on a tangible level and encourage devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes. Greeley (2001) locates a world filled with the miraculous and the enchanted as center-stage to the Catholic imagination and the concept of religious belief. Robert Orsi refers to this as “supernatural realism” or “real presences, where the supernatural presence of God and the saints permeate real life” (2016, 32-33). In Roman Catholicism, the holy is revealed on earth through the everyday world and the miraculous.

As a folklorist, I am interested in the stories that deal with the unseen world of vernacular religious belief. While in the field, I questioned my informants about healings and miracles at the grottos. I was made aware that people were healed at the grottos and, remarkably, that the priests, Fr. McCarthy and Fr. Sullivan, could also heal the sick and calm the seas. Unsurprisingly,

informants hesitated to open up about what they saw as supernatural. They worried that I would find their stories foolish or, in their words, “superstitious.” I reassured them that judgment was the last thing on my mind. This concern is reflected in Joe’s comment on the local Lourdes’s water, “You know, something you might laugh at it, but I don’t go fishing unless I have a bottle of holy water. You know a lot of people just smirk at it” (Power 2017). Disbelief is not an uncommon concern. In *“Alas, Poor Ghost!” Traditions of Belief in Story and Discourse* (1999), Gillian Bennett observes in her interviews with elderly women regarding their supernatural experiences that they were “intensely aware of their opponent's case” (1999, 37). This fear of being ridiculed when telling a supernatural narrative is common in our Western rationalist society.¹⁰⁰ Nonetheless, supernatural narratives are the bread and butter for folklore researchers interested in how individuals and communities navigate a complex world of religious doctrine and personal religious experience.

Personal experience narratives and belief narratives (memorates) are single-episode stories told (usually) in the first person to recount experiences of a religious or supernatural nature that involve the narrator or somebody the narrator knows (Cartwright 1982, 57; Degh and Vazsonyi 1974; Honko 1964). However, a personal belief narrative can be much longer and entail or encompass a more significant portion of an individual’s life. Only recently, folklorists and scholars of vernacular belief have utilized these narratives to understand the inner workings of the human capacity for spiritual experience. How religion is practiced and expressed entails creativity, imagination, and embodied action that makes “visible” the more profound understanding of belief as practiced (McGuire 2008, 98).

¹⁰⁰ In 2010 the Pew forum did a survey and found that a vast majority of [North] Americans, nearly 80%, believe in miracles. The results are from a wider study, "Religion among the Millennials" (Conan 2010 para.1). This included many who were non-affiliated with a religious faith.

I am conscious that these stories concerning the miraculous are personal and emotionally and spiritually charged. Supernatural healing stories can bring to light people's views concerning the authenticity of the grottos' spiritual power, much as it has done at the Lourdes shrine in France. These stories solidify the conviction in the Virgin Mary's power to act through the material conduit of replicated Lourdes grottos with each retelling.

7.2 The Laws of Nature

A miraculous experience can be seen as the desired event that reinforces belief and can transform an individual's life. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines a miracle as "A surprising and welcome event that is not explicable by natural or scientific laws and is therefore considered the work of a divine agency." This simplified definition does little to incorporate the robust body of miraculous "events" over thousands of years of human history. These miracles are recognized as having a divine underpinning and can be found in most world religions.

Miracles were an accepted reality of early Christian religious life.¹⁰¹ In *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971), historian Keith Thomas remarks that the early Church, and later the Medieval Church, relied on miracles to encourage converts and demonstrate the efficacy of Church doctrine and authority (28). Stories of Jesus performing public miracles proliferated through oral narratives in early Christian development. The Gospel of John 2:1-11 tells of Jesus's first miracle, turning the water into wine at a wedding in Cana. In John 9: 1-7, Jesus heals a blind man. They were questioned whether the man or the man's parents sinned to cause such blindness. Jesus answers that it was neither but instead "...that the works of God should be made manifest in

¹⁰¹ Jesus executed many miracles over his three-year ministry. Most of his miracles were performative public displays of physical action. Feeding the multitudes, healing a person with paralysis, raising the dead, and turning the water into wine were all communal displays of God's intercession into human affairs.

him” (KJV). From Christianity’s inception, healing miracles have been integral to public demonstrations of God’s hand working among the faithful.

Historically, Christianity has an underpinning of demonstrative action, particularly the healing of the body. As noted in chapter three, miracles were a part of the conversion and practice of early Christianity. These acts or displays were demonstrations for the believer and non-believer alike. Miracles directed the onlooker’s attention to God’s power to change and physically disrupt the normal patterns of natural law (the very definition of a miracle), thus, amplifying God's power and Jesus's direct connection to this source. “Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father.” Jesus states in John 10: 37-38, “But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, which you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.” Those who witness these miracles firsthand experience the manifestation of the sacred on earth; in other words, God’s tangible presence. Here, the supernatural for the Catholic imagination is made real, becoming a new certainty for the believer and possibly for others who hear of the accounts of healing.

The cult of saints perpetuated the belief in the miraculous. Brunvand notes that a religious legend is more than a saint’s account. It also identifies miracles and blessings as part of the canon of traditional religious stories. “Traditional stories about miracles, revelations, answers to prayer, marvelous icons, and blessing bestowed upon the faithful,” Brunvand maintains, and “may all be called religious legends” (1998, 200). This comment is essential as we locate local miraculous stories told by individuals in *Renews* and *Flatrock*.

The Protestant Reformation challenged the Catholic Church’s authority and devotion to the miraculous. John Calvin argued that miracles were subservient to scripture and were unnecessary for the believer because the scriptures, and Christ's works, served as proof of God’s

hand in human affairs (Mullen 1996, 13). In response to open criticism, the Catholic Church at the Council of Trent (1545-1563) instituted a counter-reformation that revoked some practices, such as selling indulgences, encouraging greater laity participation, and establishing seminary to better prepare individuals for the priesthood. Alexandra Walsham, in her article on miracles and the Counter-Reformation (2003), remarks that the Catholic hierarchy "...actively distanced itself from the excesses and abuses of late medieval religious culture" (779), as though putting the proverbial lid back on the box would stop laypeople from expecting and accepting the miraculous in their lives.

The Western philosopher and historian David Hume (1711-1776) defines a miracle as "...a violation of the laws of nature," placing a miracle in the realm of a deviation or aberration of the natural order. (as quoted in Clark 1999, 49). In his article on Hume and miracles, Philosopher Steven Clark notes that Hume's definition has been one of the more influential over the last few centuries since its expression in 1748 (ibid). This definition is reflected in our post-modern age of skepticism toward the supernatural. Hume's definition reveals Enlightenment philosophy's intellectual thinking that placed the age of miracles in the 'superstitious' past.

On the other hand, Degh writes, "We should be aware that the religion-based stock of supernatural belief is stronger than the power of enlightenment...." (1996, 39). It has been comparatively recent in the history of humanity that religious experiences have been met with skepticism. This recent attitude is reflected in Hume's early treatise on miracles. His third argument makes this issue very clear:

It forms a strong presumption against all supernatural and miraculous relations that they are observed chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations, or if a civilized people has ever given admission to any of them, that people will be found to have received them from ignorant and barbarous ancestors, who

transmitted them with that inviolable sanction and authority, which always attend received opinions (Hume 2007, 204).

There is no ambiguity in Hume's statement. With the understanding that the age of miracles had passed, Hume concludes that if you use reason to discern if miracles were factual, you would inevitably conclude that they did not exist. "Upon the whole, it appears that no testimony for any kind of miracle has ever amounted to a probability, Hume writes, "much less to a proof" (112). Historian Michael Scribner, in his article "The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the Disenchantment of the World" (1993), remarks, "The Reformation removed this ambiguity by taking the "magical" elements out of Christian religion, eliminating the ideas that religious rituals had an automatic efficacy, that material objects could be endowed with any sort of sacred power, and that human actions could have any supernatural effect" (475). Even so, the average person was not involved in the ecclesiastical and philosophical debates concerning the Holy Family and saints and their supernatural intervention.

The belief in God's ability to perform miracles remained relatively constant among lay Catholics even through the Enlightenment (McGuire 2008, 33-44). Despite our modern concepts of belief in the supernatural, the connection between the seen and unseen in everyday Catholic life has lasted well into the twenty-first century. For Catholics, miracles are based on faith rather than reason. For those who see God's hand working in the material world, it is not a violation but rather an extension of what is seen as part of the continuity of divine presence on earth; not a contravention of nature, but rather an intrinsic aspect of the supernatural residing in the natural world.

My reason for presenting Hume's argument is that it still applies today. When confronted with the possibility of a miracle, many modern scholars, intellectuals, and secular individuals look for rational reasons to explain continued belief in miracles in the modern world. Hufford

articulates, “ That the assumption that supernatural belief cannot be logically associated with either experience or reason has been basic to this process of assimilation since it was articulated by the Enlightenment philosopher David Hume in his essay on miracles” (1983, 26). Folklore scholars such as Gillian Bennett come across western skepticism in their work, noting that when she mentions doing work on the supernatural, she is met with hostility and negativity (1999, 15). Skepticism permeates our society at all levels. This disparaging and sometimes fearful attitude towards the supernatural has left those who have experienced the paranormal unwilling to put themselves in a place of being criticized. Established academic and social paradigms on supernatural belief have been challenged recently. New approaches to the paranormal have been provided by folklore scholars such as Gillian Bennett 1999; Linda Degh 2001; Diane Goldstein 1995; David Hufford 1982; Sabrina Magliocco, 2011. Contemporary emphasis is now on how religion is lived through experiential and material worlds. Diane Goldstein reflects on this change in her statement, “...it is our responsibility to discover the meaning of religious beliefs for those who hold them without judgment as to truth value” (1995, 25).

7.3 What is a Religious Miracle?

In *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1259-65), Thomas Aquinas lays out the Church doctrine to the newly converted gentiles. In his third treatise, he argues for three types of miracles that are to be considered the workings of God:

1. The highest rank among miracles is held by those events in which something is done by God, which nature never could do.
2. Then, the second degree among miracles is held by those events in which God does something which nature can do, but not in this order.

3. Now, the third degree of miracles occurs when God does what is usually done by the working of nature but without the operation of the principles of nature (chap 101).

Aquinas discusses observable criteria that are part of natural law and should not be considered a miracle by the “ignorant.” Events such as the polarized attraction of magnets, and fish who follow boats at sea, were given as examples of natural behaviors in the known world. Therefore, those with a working knowledge of natural laws would not believe that all that is unknown to humans would inherently be a miracle. His primary argument is that his first principle was “...something is done by God which nature never could do.” Thus, miracles are something extraordinary, setting the natural apart from the supernatural.

To further answer this question, I turned to the website *Catholic Answers: To Explain and Defend the Catholic Faith*.¹⁰² This site searches the largest database of pressing questions concerning Catholicism. An article by Karlo Broussard (2016) on the website offers five aspects of a miracle. First, “Only God can be the cause of a Miracle.” I assume this would include intermediaries such as The Virgin and the saints—who acquire their abilities to perform miracles from God. Second, a miracle is “Beyond the *power* of created nature.” Third, “Beyond the *order* of created nature. Fourth, it must be *extraordinary* or “contrary to the ordinary natural and supernatural course of things.” This aspect is interesting in its use of the term “supernatural.” In other words, it must be beyond the already accepted supernatural doctrines taught by the Church, such as the resurrection of Christ, the transubstantiation of the Eucharist, and salvation. Finally,

¹⁰² The *Catholic Answers* web site offers the large database of information concerning Catholic practices and beliefs. Resources include; podcasts, videos, articles, encyclopedia, speakers and events. The site maintains it is the largest media company “dedicated to sharing what the Church really teaches,” as well as being a “reliable resource “for information on doctrine, and tradition...” (para.1). www.catholic.com

“The last aspect of a miracle is that it is *sensible* or subject to perception by the senses,” as defined by the First Vatican Council:

Nevertheless, in order that the submission of our faith should be in accordance with reason, it was God’s will that there should be linked to the internal assistance of the Holy Spirit external indications of his revelation, that is to say, *divine acts and first and foremost miracles and prophecies, which clearly demonstrating as they do the omnipotence and infinite knowledge of God*, are the most certain signs of revelation and are suited to the understanding of all (emphasis mine, The Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chapter 3, para.1).

If we deconstruct Broussard’s article and pull out the operative words, the definition of a miracle would be; an *extraordinary* event performed by a supernatural *agent*, beyond the *power* and *order* of the natural world and discernible with human *senses*. Because of the multiple usages of the term, and its ambiguities, religious scholars and other academics are still trying to define a miracle (Corner 2005, 13). I would argue that this ambiguity of what constitutes a miracle is subjective, primarily based on context and the beneficiary's beliefs.

Lourdes's revelatory experiences offered the faithful a physical location where divine healing was possible. Miracles at Lourdes are still being reported, and the most recent occurred in 2008 when Sister Bernadette Moriau made a pilgrimage to the shrine. She had suffered from spinal complications since 1980 and was wheelchair-bound. She attended a prayer for the sick at the shrine. As reported by the Catholic News Agency (CNA), it was then she “...felt a [surge of] well-being throughout my body, a relaxation, warmth...I returned to my room, and there, a voice told me to take off your braces.” Sister Moriau found she could move, much to her surprise, and she was able to dispense with her wheelchair and braces (CNA 2021, para.6). The Church recognized Sister Moriau’s healing as the 70th miracle at the shrine. Testimonies such as this only deepen the belief in the Virgin’s ability to intercede on behalf of the people.

7.4 Ostensive Healing

Replicated religious grottos are a product of ostension and mimetics, or pious a mimicry of the original site. This mimicry works on the physical, emotional, and supernatural levels. Physically, the replicated grottos resemble— to varying degrees, the site in France, complete with Mary's statue above in her niche and Bernadette below in prayerful adoration. However, even if there is a minimal resemblance, the faithful have no difference regarding the sacred power available at the sites. Bernadette's visions and the healing miracles associated with the site in France are the primary drivers of this conviction. We have already established that Lourdes is principally a healing shrine; therefore, it stands to reason that (at least in expectation) all replicated Lourdes shrines would take on the same capabilities as places of healing. Those who visit the shrines in Renew and Flatrock bring knowledge through the story of Mary's healing abilities. It is the expectation of the miraculous that facilitates ostensive behavior. These memetic grotto sites are tangible proof of Mary's transformative interaction on a spiritual and material plane. Those who seek divine intervention at the sites practice legendary ostension or recreation of the legend each time they pray or seek a cure at the two grottos, where the legend of Lourdes acts as a religious model for physical action (Degh 1996, 426; Honko 1964, 10).

Local narratives concerning healings at the grottos of Flatrock and Renew only strengthen the possibilities of Mary's intervention in the imaginations of the seekers. Honko has argued, "Memorates are a valuable source for the study of folk religion primarily because they reveal those situations in which supernatural tradition was actualized and began directly to influence behavior" (1964, 10; see Cartwright 1982, 57). In the following narratives, we will see how supernatural healing memorates or stories have resonated with others, thus creating the desire to meet Mary at the grotto.

7.5 Miracles in Renewals

First-hand accounts of supernatural happenings, or memorates, are a window into community belief as it is practiced (Bennett 1989, 290). Miraculous healings at the grotto in Renewals are known and sought by locals around the Southern Shore. Orsi points out that people often seek cures at these reproduced Lourdes grottos, recognizing them as genuine even if they have only a remote resemblance to the grotto in France. (2018, 6). Helen comments that in the past, on Lady Day (Feast of the Assumption) that they would:

...come in trucks or a pickup or something. They would come, and you could watch all the people going up to communion. Some people would have crutches, or they'd have other ailments. They were going to seek a cure. Now, unlike the shrine of St. Anne's, I never saw anybody lay down their crutches, but I have heard people talk about their cures. Somebody who had a cataract on their eye...and crossed it with the Lourdes water, and they claimed it went away (2016)

The Feast of the Assumption (Aug 15th) was an occasion when the sacred was particularly potent in the faithful's eyes; as Loyola mentions, "There have been stories over the years about people who have had trouble with, you know, legs or arms, deformities or whatever, and after visiting, coming here on Lady-day, in particular, it got better, or they were cured. That certainly enhances the faith of anybody" (2016).

Healing at the grotto was not limited to Lady Day. People traveled far and wide in the hopes of a miracle. As discussed in chapter four, life in Newfoundland in the early twentieth century was hard. There was only one doctor in a sixty-mile radius of Renewals (Neary 1996, 90). Fr. Lundrigan comments on the importance of faith to get people through traumatic times in Newfoundland, especially regarding illness, "When we did not have the wonders of modern science and modern medicine, we really depended on religious practice to help us get through these awful and horrible traumatic times" (2016).

One of the more well-known community narratives regarding healing at the Lourdes grotto in Renew's concerns grotto caretaker Eddie Childly's mother. A good portion of Renew's has heard this story, and as a result, locals told me early in my fieldwork that I should speak with Eddie and hear the story of his mother's miraculous healing. Five minutes into my first interview with Eddie, he wanted to tell me his mother's story. It should be mentioned here that Eddie had written about this story in *Keeping the Bond Alive: Sharing the Memories* (2008), a spiral-bound book written for the Renew's-Cappahayden come-home year. Nonetheless, I wanted to hear it directly from Eddie, so I encouraged him to go on:¹⁰³

I want to tell you about my mother. She used to take me to the grotto. I remember I was only about six years of age. My mother got so sick; she had TB [*tuberculosis*] glands. [*Tuberculosis was rampant in Newfoundland during the first half of the twentieth century*] She went to the doctor, and the doctor said, "Go home; the head is dropping off of ya." Now my father was fishing too. She was so bad she couldn't get out of bed, and she had no bandages. She had towels wrapped around her neck. There was all this puss and ...right along. Anyhow she was up to the bed, and she couldn't eat a slice of toast, something like that, and just water, that's all. Anyhow, she got so bad, and we were down one Sunday ...my father went to the top of the stairs, and he said to me older brother, "go and get the priest" So I knew then that something was wrong, but we thought mama was going to get out of bed some morning. You know, we were young. So, he went up for the priest, and he came to the door. He went up...he [McCarthy] never spoke to us. He went upstairs to talk to me mother. When he comes down, he talked to my father. My father's name was Richard; everyone called him Dick.

He [Fr. McCarthy] said, "Dick, it's shocking weather now, isn't it." But my father said, "It's not too bad this time of year." So he went on [Fr. McCarthy] and my father went upstairs, and my mother was crying. Her name was Nell. So he [the father] said, "What's wrong with you? Why are you crying?" [Nell stated that] "The priest told me that I would see him up at the grotto at three o'clock Friday evening." Lord Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I can't go there by myself. I can't get out of bed yet." Now we had no running water. We had only [unintelligible]...and it was in a pail, right? [Nell] I can't go to the grotto because I can't get out of bed" He [Fr. McCarthy] said, "We'll see about that" He went on [he left the house].

Monday came [she was] just as bad as ever. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, you know, getting no better at all. Friday morning [Eddie makes a knock on the

¹⁰³ Eddie has a very broad Newfoundland/Irish accent. I have tried to keep as much as possible to give a true vernacular rendering of the narrative.

kitchen table, indicating there was a knock made upstairs in the bedroom]. My father said, “What’s wrong, dear” “bring us up a slice of toast, will ya? So that’s what he done. She knocked again, and he brought up more [Nell]. “Now, for dinner, I’ll have [salt] beef soup. Somewhere around 1:00, she dresses herself up and came down the stairs [unintelligible]. She walked over the hill, walked right up around up to the top of the hill, up to the priest’s yard, and up to the grotto. Sure, there was no sign of him [Fr. McCarthy]. She saw him come out of the Church. He said, “I knew you’d be here” [Fr. McCarthy] Now there’s a little stone there [The original stone from the grotto in Lourdes, France], kiss it” He took the cowl [stole] thing and blessed her with that. He said, “Carry on home now and don’t take the towels off [her neck] yet until Sunday; so she came home. Sunday after dinner, she’d taken them towels off; there wasn’t a stain on the towels, and the [unintelligible]...was completely healed over. She lived to be ninety-five.

Eddie’s account to me was performative but heartfelt. For him, belief in the grotto and Mary’s healing powers has been “fused into a definitive narrative form” (Degh 2001, 83). When I first began my research in *Renews*, this was the story everyone I spoke to wanted me to hear, so it is no surprise that Eddie’s story is part of the traditional narratives concerning the grotto. Memorates told over time tend to “become codified and approach a collective tradition,” Honko notes (1964, 11). Eddie's memorate carries on generationally, becoming part of the more important stories of the grotto. Moreover, the possibility of believing in Our Lady of Lourdes’s healing power is elevated for those who hear it.

The power of Eddie’s certainty in the healing power of Mary at the grotto came through as he narrated the story, even though it has been told many times before. I genuinely believe that Eddie lives in a miraculous world where the hand of God, and the Virgin, reach down and interact with the faithful. Eddie maintains he has seen the results of the grotto's healing abilities firsthand, as well as the influence of local healing narratives on the popularity of the grotto, as he commented here:

Now there’s people who got cured up there [grotto]. At that time..., there’s some words gettin’ around about people getting cured over here. People just get aboard their trucks, the old trucks, and those trucks were just loaded with people...a dirt road.

You couldn't see them with the dust on them. But they all come up here to [Lady Day] Mass (Chidley 2016)

He is deeply committed to the shrine because of its association with his beloved mother and his own experiences at the site. Over the years, he has seen people's needs met through prayer, thus solidifying his faith in the miraculous. Eddie expresses, "I have a lot of faith in the grotto, and it is all passed down to me by my mother" (Brazil and Lawler 2008, 157).

In the 2008 *Renews* yearbook book, Eddie's healing account shows variation from the oral one. It is longer with more embellishments. Eddie creatively reconstructs the past by inserting dialogue between his parents and the priest. Nevertheless, the underlying heart of the story remains the same. The climactic ending of the miracle narrative in the book goes into more detail than the oral prose:

Nell, when you go home, don't take off those bandages or towels until Sunday. "Father, if I don't take them off, I will smell terrible." She did what the priest said, and after a couple of days, there was no smell. She thought Sunday would never come. So Sunday evening, when all the children were out playing, and there was no one in the house, only my father and mother, Mom said, now Dick, this is it; I can take off these towels." They expected to see a real mess with the clothes stuck to the sores. She removed them very slowly. The two of them nearly went into shock. The towels were spotless, and the four wounds were completely healed over (Chidley 2008, 159-160).

Eddie includes what could be regarded as an apologetic comment at the end of the written account by stating, "Oh, yes, if that was your mother, would you mind being seen working or praying at the Grotto?" (Brazil and Lawler 2008, 160). I am unsure whether this reflects his awareness of the loss of belief in the grotto by the younger locals and the possible disbelief of others, or it is just a statement of pride. He had honed the story over the years to reflect a past that required divine intervention when it was the only option for many sick people. One primary actor in Eddie's story is the priest, who acts as a conduit for healing. In the story, I was struck by Fr. McCarthy's matter-of-fact behavior; it was all in a day's work

for him. The priest often plays a prominent role in healing narratives I have gathered, acting as brokers to the holy. Later in this chapter, I will examine the priestly role in the miraculous.

Accounts such as Eddies act as building blocks of belief that rely on faith and objective results. “Faith and reason are both sources of authority upon which beliefs can rest,” philosopher James Swindal concludes (1996, 112). These stories are not just words but demonstrable actions in the tangible world of the physical. Sally Cunneen, in her seminal work *In Search of Mary* (1996), writes, “Miracles could be attributed to Mary everywhere precisely because her power was so well established that it did not need to be reinforced” (178). It was the belief in sacred Marian stories told to the faithful over millennia that led Eddie’s mother to rise from her sickbed and make her way to a small grotto where anything was possible

With healing miracles, corporeal outward displays, such as physical healing by a deity, act to externalize and amend faith's uncertainties. Belief must be recognized in terms of the “world out there,” as folklorist Barbara Walker remarks (1995, 21). The holy manifests in the physical world, allowing for greater belief and tangible evidence concerning God's interest in personal and public human affairs. Miracles, particularly physical ones, such as healings, establish or re-establish religious convictions through subjective encounters with the *mysterium tremendum*, the sacred mystery. Such events increase the experiencer’s faith, but it also has an add-on effect of reinforcing the beliefs of those in close proximity to those healed. Eddie’s mother’s story attests that these healings are communal and personal.

Not all healings at the grottos are as spontaneous and dramatic as those of Eddie’s mother. Beth Chidley from *Renews* tells of her brother, who contracted tuberculosis at the age of six:

My brother [John] was about six years old, and my father was already gone to work, but mom was just getting us all up for school, and my bother called out to mom, “John can’t walk” She said he must be able to walk over to the room. So, he got out of bed and hobbled over, but he was crying and not able to walk. She said to us; we didn’t have a car at the time. “On your way to school, find your father and tell him to come home.” He arrived home with the priest. They went right up to the bed, and the two men looked at each other and not saying anything to my mother; they knew right away— polio [Later, it was found to be TB, not polio]. So the priest said to my dad, you better take him on to Ferryland, and the doctor sent them right on into St. John’s, and John didn’t come home for the best part of ten months. The following day my father came home, and my mother packed up and went down. It was a very emotional scene, and very emotional when she was leaving. She never missed a night, absolutely never missed a night going to that grotto.... What got her through that year was all her trips at night to the grotto (B. Chidley 2016).

John eventually came home from St. John’s. He was healed by the power of a mother’s devotion to the Virgin and her willingness to pray day and night at the grotto, rain or snow. Many would question whether this was just a natural course of events or whether the disease would have worked itself out eventually, prayer or no prayer. This is not the impression Beth gave me; instead, she believed, as did her mother, that the prayers offered for the young boy were the foundation of his healing.

Why is it important for the petitioner to physically be in contact with these sites to be healed? Why could healing not just be done from home? Over the years, the hope of a cure has drawn people to the grottos and elevated experience-centered belief. The confidence that these spaces are charged with supernatural efficacy is absolute for many. Here, the Catholic doctrine, ‘communion of the saints’ as stated in the Apostles Creed, takes on its full potential. These sites are direct contact points to another realm where Mary is at her zenith.

Another healing story about the power of prayer at the shrine concerned the sacramental of lighting candles in supplication to the Virgin. To the right of the statue of Bernadette at the Renewals grotto, there is an area where candles can be bought and lit as a devotion to Our Lady of

Lourdes. A resident related that a friend of hers who was not a Catholic had a lump on her thyroid and was soon to undergo surgery:

I remember that [name withheld] had this lump on her thyroid, and she was worried, and the Doctors were worried. I said, come here with me. Do you have five dollars? [It cost five dollars for a candle at the grotto] Yes [she replied], now, here we're going to light a candle-put your five dollars here [a small slot next to the candle area]. She had surgery, and everything came back ok. I said, now come with me again and another five dollars, and give thanks. She said that she couldn't believe that the pain was so bad before she lit the candle, but she never had pain after. And she still talks about it. (Berriagan 2016).

After the narrative was conveyed to me, Lois, who was also interviewed at the time, mentioned, "Most of our miracles are subtle. You don't see wheelchairs left over there or crutches, but you do see an awful lot of faith" (Barriagan 2016). Faith was a word most often mentioned in the context of the grotto, particularly concerning the older generations.

A lot of the stories told to me concerning healing were patchy at best. They consisted of someone who knew someone who received healing at the grotto. Agnes Fowler of Renew's mentions one such case:

Agnes: There were a lot of cures made there [grotto]. Mrs. Ales, she was cured there. She's related to my mother. First cousins—were all tangled up, were all related.

Cynthia: Do you know of any others?

Agnes: Well, there was a friend of my mom's from town [St. John's]. They had a child, or a friend of theirs had a child, and I can't really remember what was wrong with the child, but, anyway, they got holy water from our grotto here, and they used to bless or bath the child with a little drop of water from the grotto and the child got better. I don't know whether it was a rash or what I can't remember, but it was a cure.

These narratives move around the community through interpersonal relationships via families and parish members. Degh notes that simple narratives, or 'friend of a friend' memorates, operate to bolster or "strengthen belief" and tend to follow along the lines of a particular belief system, in

this case, Roman Catholic Christianity (2001, 279). For Agnes, it seems significant enough to relate the story's bare bones. I found this true for others who recounted supernatural happenings regarding the grottos. I realized after hearing them that I had come at the tail end of some of these stories; they survive but fade as time moves on to the next generation. I recognized that stories like that of Eddie's mother become larger-than-life local legends through repeated telling. Others drift into simple memories that are later related only through much prompting. Honko points out that these stories influence vernacular religious behavior (1964, 10). Consequently, I found these snippets as valuable as the more detailed narratives in understanding the grotto's influence on the lives of believers.

7.6 It is all in the Water

“Catholicism is fundamentally a material religion,” anthropologist Jon P. Mitchell remarks (2009, 275). Thus, if materiality augments the spiritual world of Catholicism, then, arguably, one of the most potent physical animators within the Catholic sacramental culture is holy water. Holy water is a conduit for healing for Catholics but none more so than Lourdes water. Orsi recognizes Lourdes water as “...the most powerful of modern Catholic devotional media” (1997, 3). The water from the sacred spring is not blessed by the clergy but through the Madonna herself. By bypassing an earthly intermediary, Mary creates an even more potent substance that travels throughout the Catholic world as mementos and souvenirs from Lourdes.

Water has an extensive spiritual history among various religions and cultures. It has long been believed that water is a supernatural transitional element of nature often used by the gods to bless and punish. Humans recognize water as central to life, but for many who worship the holy, sacred water is the element that most closely resembles God's holy mystery. It is a great purifier, mutable, fluid, yet accessible. It can bestow healing and safety or take away life. According to

John, the Elder, it is the natural element that flows directly from the seat of the Almighty, “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the lamb” (Revelations 22:1 KJV).

Water acts as an interim, or liminal element, in that it descends from the heavens as rain, giving life to the earth below. This connection to the heavens would impart a natural association with the divine. It is transformational, regenerative, and destructive. In the Sumerian Epic of Gilgamesh (2100-1200 BCE), water is used to destroy in the form of a flood, a purging of evil on the earth, not unlike the story of Noah and the ark in Genesis 5:29. In ancient Greece, those who had died would pay the ferryman Chiron to cross over the River Styx, the liminal watery boundary between the mortal world and the underworld. Similarly, Christian baptism with water acts metaphorically as a doorway into a new life with Christ and a community of believers.

Water is a symbol and agent of life and regeneration in the Christian Bible.¹⁰⁴ It is also recognized as an agent of God’s healing, as seen in Second Kings 5: 1-14 (NIV), where the commander of the Syrian army had contracted leprosy and was instructed by the prophet Elisha to immerse himself in the river Jordan seven times, “So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy (5:14). God demonstrated His power to the Syrian general and his army through Jordan's sacred waters, thus demonstrating God’s authority over both humanity and nature.

¹⁰⁴ Healing springs and wells predate Christianity in numerous cultures and were used for sites of healing (Varner 2009, 1; Bradley 2012, 23). These sites were believed to be inhabited by spirits and deities where the water itself acted as a liminal window into sacred worlds.

Holy water is ubiquitous in Catholic worship, from the rite of baptism to holy water fonts (stoups) at the church's door to its use in sacred rites such as Mass, death (anointing of the sick and dying), and deliverance. It is also used frequently for protection, healing, and blessing family and material possessions by the laity. Holy water is considered sacramental in that it encourages devotion, acting as a spiritual aid to those who use it daily (McDannell 1998, 20). Thus, the priest blesses holy water instilling supernatural power, making it an effective tool against unseen supernatural forces, and proffering miraculous possibilities in one's life through its use. Through this blessing, water is no longer a natural element but has become a material part of religious praxis. It becomes so through purpose, intent, and imagination. Human manipulation of naturally occurring non-cultural items, such as water, becomes bound in a cultural context, similar to clay (soil) on a potter's wheel. The water itself does not change form other than to be placed in a bottle or basin; yet, it is altered by perception and a deep state of belief to grant renewal and healing to those who come in contact with it. Simon Bronner observes that humans attach significance to things that can be seen and touched physically (1983, 318). He further states, "When people manipulate or modify forms, they create expressions" (ibid). The manipulation of material forms is a physical act, yet, it operates on a metaphysical level when done with intention. People realize that the holy water from springs or fonts started simply as plain water, but it takes on new qualities through the connection with sacred imagination.

Scientific research has shown water from Lourdes to be just water with no discernible healing qualities, yet, pilgrims regularly partake of this element, knowing that it contains the numinal power of sacred healing (Nottermans and Jansen 2011, 170). Something as familiar and mutable as water is no longer a simple natural element. When blessed, it becomes a tool for the

holy, even when it originates from a tap like that at Renewes or the local spring found at Flatrock.¹⁰⁵

The *Novus ordo* or the Blessing of the Water, spoken over the liquid by the priest, asks that the water “fortify” and renew “the youth of spirit” to those who contact it, thus, recognizing holy water’s power to heal afflictions both bodily and spiritually (Theiler 2016 [1906], 23). However, what if there is no blessing directly from a priest upon the water? Can it still possess the same power to heal?¹⁰⁶

On February 25, 1858, Mary directed Bernadette's vision to “Go, drink at the spring and wash there,” indicating a small patch of dirt and weeds in the back of the grotto (Bradley 2012, 182). Confused at this request, Bernadette did as she was told, uncovering a small spring of muddy water that would later yield 27,000 gallons of fresh water yearly. This miraculous occurrence became the principal initiator of the healing baths at Lourdes. One visitor to Lourdes comments on the proliferation of water imagery at the site “At the grotto, everything speaks of water: the rushing Gave River, the drizzling rain from the cloudy sky, the spring of Massabielle... I want to be purified. I want to be cleansed” (quoted in Gesler 1996, 100).

In his work, *Water: A Spiritual History* (2012), professor of theology Ian Bradley recognizes water as one of the central themes of the story of Lourdes. Early on, the Church tried to emphasize the power of prayer at the site. However, Bradley points out that it was the water

¹⁰⁵ Holy water is the first religious substance that many Catholics and Protestants encounter through baptism in the Christian journey. Babies are washed free of original sin and ushered into a covenant with God before they can walk through the use of sacred water. Early Church father and theologian Tertullian comments that water is the first “seat of the divine Spirit, “giving it preference over all other elements. Water was the first to produce what has life; therefore, all natural water, because of the ancient privilege with which it was honored, gains the power of sanctifying” (As quoted in Chamberlin 2012, 6).

¹⁰⁶ According to John, the Elder, water is the natural element that flows directly from the seat of the Almighty, “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the lamb” (Revelation 22:1 KJV).

that drew the local populace to be healed through drinking and bathing (182). One woman who had been deaf for twenty years injected the water into her ears, and in doing so, she could hear the church bells for the first time. Another woman drank eighteen glasses of water from the spring and was healed of her afflictions (ibid). Stories such as these only fueled the power of Lourdes and its water. Because the site had become so publicized via modern forms of communication, the Lourdes spring soon became the central focus of mass pilgrimage. Like Bradley, I consider Lourdes water one of the primary elements at the grottos in Flatrock and Renew, which gives the sites their efficacy as Marian healing grottos. Without it, the grotto would still be a holy site but not as potentially powerful as that of Lourdes in France.¹⁰⁷

Lourdes water travels worldwide via mail and pilgrimage, legitimizing and energizing reproduced Lourdes grottos. It is one of the prime motivators for pilgrimage to local Lourdes grottos in the hope of being healed by Mary's grace. Because of this, the distance between the Holy Mother at Lourdes in France and the local community is virtually eliminated. As Peter Brown comments, "If relics could travel, then the distance between the believer and the place where the holy could be found ceased to be a fixed, physical distance" (1981, 89). I asked Joe Power of Flatrock if people still to this day came to the grotto for the holy water:

Oh my, gosh, yes, they still come and get the holy water. A lot of them come, and they don't realize the holy waters, right? But once you tell them the well is there, it's literally Lourdes water because Father Sullivan said, "There will always be Lourdes water from that well." Once it mixes in, I guess it's like vinegar...once you put the Lourdes water in there, I don't know how much, so small it will still multiply— that's how you get Lourdes water (Power 2017).

¹⁰⁷ Curative practices were common in the 19th century through the use of water. With formal baths and spas frequently attended by those looking to alleviate ailments that could not be dealt with by early medical practices (McDannell 1995, 147). Lourdes water resonated with this trend. Lourdes water did not rely on the natural curative abilities of mineral water rather the supernaturally imbued grace of the Virgin. McDannell comments that 19th-century attitudes towards the water at Lourdes "resonates with traditional attitudes toward the 'translation' of relics" (1995, 150).

The ancillary Lourdes shrines become as active and influential as the original through blessed water poured directly into the primary water source. McDannell remarks that it was important that “the water *really* came from Lourdes” in order for it to be truly viable as a sacred healing agent (Emphasis mine 1995, 154). This is also the case for the Flatrock and Renew's grottos. Both Fr. Sullivan and Fr. McCarthy brought vials of the blessed water from their pilgrimages to France and placed them in their respective cisterns knowing that it would place each grotto within the central story of Bernadette's visions at Lourdes. The water was then made freely available, thus impacting (directly and tangibly) the spiritual needs of local parishioners. Terry remembers being an altar boy in Renew's during the ritual pouring of the Lourdes water into the reservoir in Renew's:

Of course, there was some Lourdes water each year; brought in and dumped into the reservoir, it came more than once or twice. When I was an altar boy, we'd bring it up. If some water came, it meant we'd dump it into the reservoir up there. It was just a pond. It just didn't come on the mail truck, and the priest took it up there and dumped it in. He had to have an altar boy, candles, and there had to be all the blessings and that sort of stuff. After all, we're talking Lourdes water here—powerful stuff. So there was always a little ceremony that had to go with that, you know (2016).

Lourdes water is healing for those who believe and is also used as a ward against disease and ill fortune. I collected stories and antidotes concerning Lourdes's water from my collaborators. At Renew's and Flatrock, the residents frequently spoke of how their parents or grandparents asked them to collect the water from the grottos and bring it home, where it would be used to bless the family and household items, livestock, boats, and even cars.

Robert Orsi tells an illustrative story concerning the general public's understanding of holy water, especially among non-Catholics, in *Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion* (1997). The Church of St. Lucie in the Bronx hosts a replicated Lourdes shrine where newer

migrants from Jamaica, Porto Rico, Trinidad, and the Dominican Republic frequently come to collect the holy water in various containers, believing it to be blessed by the Virgin:

They drank water there and took water home with them; they made the Sign of the Cross with dripping hands and ladled scoops of water onto their heads for a "blessing," a Puerto Rican woman explained to me. An older woman, obviously in serious physical distress, spent the afternoon sipping glass after glass of holy water, chatting in the meantime with her son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren, who were keeping her company. Bending under the open hoods of cars parked just outside the chain-link fence surrounding the grotto—which gives the site the look of a city playground—men in shorts and t-shirts filled their radiators with Bronx Lourdes water for protection on the road (4).

Orsi remarks that supplicants are more than aware that the water comes from a local city water source (5). However, this did not dissuade them that the water was genuinely blessed and held supernatural powers. When he spoke to his Religious Studies class, the students were shocked at how the holy water was used. Some found it “abusive” and “a load of crap” (ibid). Furthermore, Orsi was surprised by the negative emotions that this practice provoked:

The image of holy water being poured into car engines is especially disturbing to students, an instance of the general blurring of categories they want to keep distinct (sacred/profane; spirit/matter; transcendent/immanent; nature/machine) which occurs at St. Lucy's. What happens at the Bronx grotto is literally inadmissible and intolerable in a religion classroom because it is not "religion" but defilement—the other of the sacred and of religion (5).

This story exemplifies how holy water, specifically Lourdes water, is used in the vernacular. It is seen as a blessing for people and all forms of quotidian objects that hold lives together. It is truly versatile in its use as a sacramental. In many ways, holy water, as an extension of the sacred, is open-ended in its abundant uses. It is a classic example of the sacred being prevalent in the secular. It is here, as Orsi further remarks, “...where humans make something of the worlds they have found themselves thrown into, and, in turn, it is through these subtle, intimate, quotidian actions on the world that meanings are made, known, and verified” (7). The use of holy water makes sacred meaning in a highly secularised world of happenstance.

Several informants humorously mentioned being sprinkled or sprayed by their grandparents while in bed to protect them while they slept. Bernadette Hawko of Flatrock remembers her grandmother's love of the grotto, "There was always holy water in the house. Thunder and lightning, she'd be out there blessing the windows. She always had a miraculous medal. If I had a toothache, she'd cross me. That kind of faith will never return, I don't think" (Hawko 2017). Lois from Renew's remembers having to collect water for her grandmother at the grotto:

We moved in with my grandmother, and my grandmother was very devout. She spoke very highly of the grotto, so the grotto was a big part of our lives. We had to go get the holy water every Saturday because you had the little font near your bedroom doors for the holy water. Sometimes we didn't quite make it to the grotto; we just brought it up from the river. [She laughs]. They [grandparents] would come around and drowned ya in the bed. You're just asleep, and you get this wet. It's amazing how much they carried on so much tradition. You wouldn't find a holy water font in anybody's house right now. Even if they were really old, I think they're all thrown out.

Beth Chidley of Renew's also remarks on using Lourdes water to bless the children before bed, "...we always spent some time in Port Kerwin [a small outport about 18 km from Renew's] with our grandparents. I mean, my grandmother— and I'm not exaggerating, she almost drowned you...it wasn't just a little sprinkle. It was like [*Makes a gesture like moving from a big splash*]. You go to bed at night, and there she'd be with the holy water (Chidley 2016). Helen from Renew's also tells of her early childhood memories:

They [parents] would make sure we had Lourdes water in the house, and that was used for shaking around if there were lightning storms or thunder. And they had they had great belief in that, right? And, when the men would put out the boats in the spring, they would have a little bottle of Lourdes water along with other religious articles like medals and crucifix, a piece of palm, or something like that (Lawler 2016).

Helen's comments remind me of Joe Power's use of holy water in Flatrock. Joe, until this day, still takes a bottle of holy water when he goes out on his fishing boat. Joe's use of holy water to

negate life's harms involves both belief and practice, acting as a ward against the precariousness of human existence. From a functionalist standpoint, this is similar to using a talisman for protection. Malinowski notes, "Both magic and religion arise and function in stations of emotional stress.... (1992 [1948], 87). However, from a lived religious perspective, the associations formed with spiritual objects are intimately tied to intra-personal relationships with the divine with more depth and meaning than earlier academic predecessors perceived. Embodied memories of family, home, and religious affiliation, both communal and personal, are closely tied to using holy water as a protector in times of stress.

Mullen reasons that belief is a cultural practice; however, when dealing with mundane concerns of day-to-day living, believing becomes a personal form of devotional negotiation (Motz 1998, 349; Mullen 2000, 139). Personal spiritual praxis operates as a private mediation with the supernatural, which is understood as real and viable to the individual and is grounded in two thousand years of Catholic practice and thought (Morgan 2010a, 17). The physical association with the supernaturally charged object is about closeness and connection to the power source as much as the representational object itself. Catholics recognize that the material can mediate between the divine and the everyday. Sacramentals, such as Lourdes water, are embedded in the Church institution yet reflect a personal vernacular belief in their use and meaning (McDannell 2008, 19). Mary's presence is on board Joe's boat in the portable material form of holy water; the precarious environment is now under her control. This belief is not irrational in the minds and imaginations of the user; instead, it is "a mode of [ritual] action" that *works* in the supernatural and everyday world (emphasis mine, McGuire 2008, 33).

Local Lourdes water offers healing and protection and is believed to be disease-free. Eddie Chidley tells a story of a local man with cancer of the face who would go to the Renew's

grotto and wash and drink the blessed water. He would use a cup left there for people to drink local Lourdes's water during their visits. Residents knew of this, but many believed that the water, and the cup used, were safe and free of disease-carrying bacteria or viral elements (2016).¹⁰⁸ I heard nothing about people getting sick from drinking the shrine water at Flatrock or Renew. Residents' frequency of internal use of the water for all disorders reflects their faith in the local Lourdes water and its ability to keep people free from diseases. Joe remarks, "When I thought I was unwell, I'd go up and drink the holy water" (2017). This behavior was confirmed by other participants as well. Children were frequently encouraged to use holy water from the grottos to deal with toothaches, headaches, and other common maladies. Something must have been working because Eddie mentions that people from all over the area would come and partake of the water in the hopes of being healed:

Now there's people who got cured up there [grotto]. At that time...there's some words gettin' around about people getting cured over here....But they all come up here to [Lady Day] Mass. No one would go fishin'. That was a special day. They got cured, or they got well helped. Patrick Dunn [not the builder] was married to my sister, he got polio or something, and he got in the face too. He would pray there until the day he died.

Cynthia: It helped him?

Eddie: "Oh yes."

The spring water that Mary blessed is vital to the story of Lourdes. It would stand to reason that the sacred water from the primary shrine in France would be the active ingredient in converting local shrines into active healing spaces. It is only one variable in the makeup of reproduced Lourdes grottos, but it certainly is one of the primary actors outside of Mary.

¹⁰⁸ The act of drinking holy water has never been encouraged by the Church, particularly since the rise of infectious disease medicine in the early twentieth century. However, in vernacular religious practice, people still drink the water at Lourdes's in France because it comes directly from the spring. The water at Flatrock and Renew also comes from naturally occurring springs. Nonetheless, the local community cannot guarantee its purity.

7.7 Miraculous Priests

Many Catholic congregates have viewed priests as having special powers imbued by God and the Church for centuries. I came across this perspective at both grottos concerning Father Sullivan and Father McCarthy. As well as healing the sick, I was surprised to hear that both priests were also thought to have supernatural powers to calm the sea and chase away ghosts. This attitude is not unexpected, considering that the Catholic Church's teaching grants moral, spiritual, and supernatural authority to the priest at the time of ordination into the priesthood (Yocum 2013, 79). With this comes the power of healing, which is an integral part of the sacraments of faith according to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

The Lord Jesus Christ, physician of our souls and bodies, who forgave the sins of the paralytic and restored him to bodily health, has willed that his Church continues, in the power of the Holy Spirit, his work of healing and salvation, even among her own members. This is the purpose of the two sacraments of healing: the sacrament of Penance and the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick (#1421)

Through the divine power granted by the Catholic Church, priests have the exclusive ability to turn bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ (transubstantiation) and forgive sins through the rite of confession. Catholic priests are mediators of the divine (O'Toole 2008, 17; Yocum 2013, 73). A priest's sacred vows to the Church and God allow him to stand apart from others as Christ's representative (Orsi 2016, 216). Orsi takes this even a step further, stating, "By the grace of his ordination, the priest is the *alter Christus*, the other Christ, configured to "Christ ontologically in the words of Pope Benedict XVI" (ibid). This power distinction from the laity places the priest in direct proximity to the holy; therefore, acts of miraculous healing and other supernatural happenings are accepted and expected by those who put their faith in God the Church.

This conviction is reflected in the *Baltimore Catechism*. Used as a teaching tool of the Catholic Church until the 1960s, the book offers up this information concerning priestly power:

The effects of ordination to the priesthood are, first, an increase in sanctifying grace; second, sacramental grace, through which the priest has God's constant help in his sacred ministry; third, a character, lasting forever, which is a special sharing in the priesthood of Christ and which gives the priest special *supernatural powers* (emphasis mine, 90-91).¹⁰⁹

Pre-councillor Church doctrine placed a sharp demarcation between clergy and laypeople so that priests were elevated to an almost demi-deity status within the parish. This perception of priests was not an exaggeration but a reality, particularly in rural and remote areas. Paddy McCarthy remarks, "There was no doubt about it, the priests and nuns were the law around here years ago, and they put the fear of God into everybody" (As quoted in Thorn 2003, 18). After Vatican II, the role of priests changed from post-councillor to a more inclusive acceptance of lay participation; nonetheless, many Catholics still view the clergy as set apart spiritually from other believers.

Even though changes in previous religious and ritual practices by the Church had come about in the 1960s, it was much harder to change the minds of those who had grown up in a world where priests were a source of God's supernatural power. This dynamic was true in rural Newfoundland, where it was often only the priest that came between the people and the insecurities of their physical and spiritual lives. Folklorist Jodi McDavid comments on the powers of the priest over the parish in her Ph.D. thesis on counterclericalism (2012), "Priests have, or

¹⁰⁹The Baltimore Catechism was the dominant teaching aid for Catholics in North America before Vatican 2 (Rocha 2015, 1). Written in 1884 (and published in 1885) at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, the catechism was designed to meet the needs of an ethnically diverse body of believers (ibid). After going through four revisions, the Baltimore Catechism was used until the 1960s and is still being used as a Catholic teaching aid in parts of Canada and the United States today. In 1979, Pope John Paul II produced the *Catechesi Tradendae* as an updated catechism for modern times. In it, terms such as "supernatural powers" are replaced by words such as "teaching" and "evangelization" as priestly duties (Section 2, N.3). The clergy still had the power of celebrating the Eucharist and forgiveness of sins, but a more pragmatic attitude in line with contemporary thinking was the underlying message.

have had, unimaginable power, especially in rural or "insular" Atlantic Canada" (32).¹¹⁰ Similarly, historian Thomas M. Nemeč, in his article on Trepassey, Newfoundland, considers the priest at the top of the hierarchy in Newfoundland village culture, stating, "By virtue of his pivotal role and unique intermediate position between his parishioners and God, he held a social position above that of anyone else...." (1993, 147). This elevated position operated both on political and spiritual levels. Nemeč notes that this position inspired fear and awe, a sentiment conveyed to me by participants concerning Father McCarthy and Father Sullivan (ibid).

In Flatrock, Fr. Sullivan's stories often had elements of social control and supernatural authority in them. The following is a conversation I had with Joe and Jeannie at Flatrock in 2017:

Joe: That's another thing, too, Fr. Sullivan; he had wonderful healing powers.

He healed many people.

Cynthia: How so?

Joe: By crossing them and blessing them. If someone had something wrong with them, they'd go to him, and he'd bless them and pray over them.

Jeanie: But people then had a very strong belief that the priest could heal.

Cynthia: Do you know of any one incident that stands out?

Jeanie: I'd often hear my mother talk about the time this particular family had diphtheria. And, Fr. Sullivan asked her mom [Jeanie's grandmother] to go and look after that family... [Jeanie's mother] she didn't want her mom to get diphtheria. He said [Fr. Sullivan] you go, and there won't be nothing.

¹¹⁰ I will be delving further into the power dynamics between priest and laity in chapter eight.

You'll come back to your family, and she did— and she never contracted it. See, these are things that we considered miracles whether they were or not.

Joe: In my opinion and a lot of other people's opinions, yes. Now I'm not saying he healed everybody— but certain cases, I'm sure he did. I often heard them saying that if you got anything wrong at all, go and get the priest to cross you.

Jeanie: That was a big belief. They take comfort from just having the priest come and bless you with holy water or whatever.

Joe: It was an internal healing and mental healing.

In the interview with Jeannie and Joe, I hear attitudes toward the miraculous from the not-too-distant past. Catholics today walk a fine line between previously acceptable beliefs and beliefs that sound antiquated to the contemporary ear. The dichotomy of Enlightenment thinking and religious belief has always been challenging for those who practice their faith in our post-modern world. During the Reformation, Protestants often called out Catholic priests for being magicians (Nemec 1993, 109). The reformers considered the priests' miracles as nothing more than 'conjurations' or 'enchancements' masquerading as a religion (110). This Protestant sentiment left a deep patina of hesitation over all things supernatural within Catholicism and can still be recognized in many oral narratives concerning the miraculous. Nevertheless, belief in the supernatural power of priests persists with many Catholics despite the caveats we hear in their narratives.

I asked two participants from Flatrock, Bernadette, and Anita, about Fr. Sullivan's abilities to heal:

Cynthia: So, tell me about Fr. Sullivan and his healing ability.

Anita: Well, people believed in him a lot; they had the faith. My mother believed in him a lot. When I was born, I had a birthmark. It's still there, but it was way down to here—[She points to her face and neck]. So when I was born, she took me to Father Sullivan to bless, and he said it wouldn't go away, but it will go back [get smaller], and it did. She really believed he had healing powers, right?

Anita follows on with another story:

My brother got his teeth out one time, and they bled a lot. Couldn't stop the bleeding, right? And he came home, and we had a lady down here, and she had this prayer to stop pain and bleeding, blood. She couldn't stop it, so my mother said, "Take him to Fr. Sullivan" because those times, you couldn't get to the hospital when you wanted to. So, she brought him. Now he [Fr. Sullivan] couldn't stop it, right? Away, he said "when you get home, you're after losing a lot of blood; it's not going to hurt you." It was about an hour after it was stopped. So, she [Anita's mother] really believed that he did this.

Bernadette: Nobody really knows how many miracles were at the grotto.

Anita: My father was out to the ice one time [off the Newfoundland coast seal hunting], and this friend of his now, I think it was [name withheld].

Anyway, he got bitten by the seal; that's a bad bite. They were a couple miles offshore, and my father he knew the prayer to stop blood or pain, right? But he [the man who was bitten] was a non-Catholic. They called Fr. Sullivan. My father said, "I've got a man here that I think can stop the bleeding" [referring to Fr. Sullivan], "but if you don't believe, it's not going to happen." He was really bad, and so he said, "Yes, I believe him. Like I say, it [the blood] didn't stop right away, but the pain started to go away, and he didn't have to go to the hospital. Like my daddy said, if you didn't believe, it's not going to happen (2017).

Similar to Joe Power, Anita's father worked in a hazardous occupation. Belief in otherworldly powers is heightened by the lack of availability of medical resources and the need to rely on other forms of help, such as faith in the ability of the Priest to heal. In his early work with Texas fishermen, folklorist Patrick Mullen argues for a more functional approach to vernacular beliefs for curing and protection. There is no scientific or practical solution to a problem, and many individuals resort to the supernatural (1969, 216). The psychology behind many of these beliefs is "positive control of the environment" and a release from the anxiety of the situation (223). The priest's use of supernatural power reinforces that such beliefs are viable, real, and to some degree, sanctioned by the Church.

I recognize that a certain amount of control over one's environment plays a part in these vernacular beliefs. However, I also identify a deeper connection to past experiences and communal tradition. In her work, *Belief Stories: The Forgotten Genre* (1989), Gillian Benet contends that belief narratives are "...the nodes of the intricate network that interconnects tradition, belief, and experience (302). I see belief as sustained on networks of supernatural,

interpersonal, and material relationships. Experience and social connections are as much factors when dealing with vernacular beliefs as psychology. If you take a bottle of Lourdes water with you on the boat and return each time safely, you have proven to yourself that there is viability to that belief. If someone prays the blood-stopping prayer from Ezekiel and it works, you know you are justified in believing.

Both legends and memorates can have generalized beliefs at their core, such as that God heals through prayer or the ability of particular individuals to stop bleeding through magical means (Mullen 1971, 408). Nevertheless, there is vernacular continuity to the healing practice. I spent some time looking for what could be the prayer the priest and Anita's father had used. What I came across was the usage of the bible verse Ezekiel 16:6:

And when I passed by thee and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live (KJV).

Curious about what I would characterize as a form of Christian magic, I researched and located the prayer on both Catholic and Protestant websites.¹¹¹ The prayer was common among people in Appalachia, where, similar to Newfoundland, isolation and the lack of regular medical availability were commonplace.¹¹² This form of magical religious healing also has a tradition dating from the

¹¹¹ Interestingly, on *Christian Teen Forum*, a young girl wrote a post asking if anyone had ever used the prayer and whether it worked. The cure was orally transmitted from her Grandmother to her mother locating it as vernacular its method and use, "I have just recently discovered this bible verse and I don't know if this bible verse has been brought to attention here or not, but I find it fascinating. My mother told me about it when she was talking about her own grandmother and how she used to use it, apparently it always worked for her. Of course, this made me be ultra-curious so the next time I got a nosebleed (which happens embarrassingly often) I used it. Now the websites I had found it on had told me to say it three times and to truly believe it, so that's what I did. Miraculously, it worked. I was stunned, it was the closest thing I have ever seen to a 'sign' that God exists in my life. Has it worked for any of you? If not, will you use it the next time you're bleeding?" Many of the replies questioned whether she was just trolling the site or whether she was serious, she replied, "not trolling at all! And I completely understand how it seems very untrue! It sounded crazy to me when I first heard it! But it truly worked for me, I'd suggest it!" (Christian Teen Forums, 2013).

¹¹² Short article online concerning the bleeding cure (commonly called the "blood cure") in Appalachia from a generational practitioner. <https://www.appalachianhistory.net/2008/03/blood-verse.html>.

early occupation of Newfoundland by the British, Irish, and French settlers. Historian Owen Davies writes of this cure for bleeding (Ezekiel 16:6) in his discussion on healing charms in England and Wales. It was collected from a woman living in Cudlipton, Devon, circa 1900. Davies notes, “The verse to stop a nose-bleeding is the 6th verse of the 16th chapter of Ezekiel, which must be repeated by one of the opposite sex from the patient” (1996, 21). According to Davies, one Welch charmer would dip his fingers into the blood and make the sign of the cross while reciting the verse (ibid). The historical use of this prayer/charm highlights the veracity of vernacular religious traditions that have made the journey to the shores of Newfoundland.

Anita tells another story concerning Fr. Sullivan that highlights some humility concerning his healing ability:

But the only thing is when my brother Kenneth was born; lord have mercy on him, he had what you call a shunt, a big head. [Encephalitis]. And he wasn't supposed to live, but mommy took him to Fr. Sullivan, and he told her, “I can't do anything for him.” He said, “He's not going to die right away, but he's not going to live a long life.” He [Fr. Sullivan] would tell you if he couldn't do it [heal or help someone].

As for Fr. McCarthy's healing abilities, they extended beyond Renew's. In the Folklore Archives at Memorial University (MUNFLA), I found several other narratives written by undergraduates concerning Fr. McCarthy's ability to heal and even suspend death. Unfortunately, the following story had little context. I estimate this was in the early part of the twentieth century, 1920 to 1940:

A man from Carbonear (157 km from Renew's) was on his deathbed due to cancer, and his son was fishing on the coast of Labrador. He wanted to see his son before he died. “The priest at that time was Msgr. McCarthy. He told the man he would not die until he had seen his son.” About 3:30 or 4:00 on the third day after his heart had stopped, the sailing vessel that his son was on came into the harbor. After the ship had docked, his son got off and went to see him. He died the following day. After he died, the doctor claimed that his heart had been stopped for the last three days and nights that he had lived. The doctor said this was a miracle that Msgr. [Fr.] McCarthy had kept the man alive (Marrigan 1972, MUNFLA, 73-61D)

The ability to keep a man alive without a heartbeat seems extraordinary, even for a priest. Power over death is usually attributed to Christ and the Holy Father, such as the raising of Lazarus in John 11: 1-44. This story correlates with the pre-Vatican II Catholic mindset or what theologian Michael O'Neill considers "devotional Catholicism" found in the 19th and early twentieth century, where "Piety, sacrament, and miraculous intention bound the believer to the supernatural order and thus created distinctive "households of faith" (2015, 117). These households of faith were interrelated with a social network of believers that reinforced behavior and religious conformity in the community. The use of narratives concerning divine intervention, such as the one above, was a form of religious instruction and entertainment, especially in isolated outports, "...in addition to the better-documented forms of entertainment," Bowman remarks, "stories of divine intervention in everyday life were accepted and recounted as a matter of course" (2003, 287). These stories are what Bowman calls "not so grand narratives" by which people in the outports created meaning in their worlds (ibid).

The same student deposited the following story concerning Fr. McCarthy in the archives. The narrative is more in line with other accounts concerning the priest in that the healing takes place over time through prayer. In 1933, his father contracted tuberculosis and was sent to a sanatorium. Three weeks after arriving there, he was told to go home; they could do nothing for him. He was told he had only weeks to live. The following day Monsignor Fr. McCarthy came to visit him:

He told my father that he wasn't going to die despite what the doctors had said and that he would pray for him. For fifty-five days and nights, his condition remained unchanged. His parents stayed with him day and night. On the fiftieth day, his condition improved, and he began to recover from that time on, he began to recover. To this day, he still says and believes that it was Monseigneur McCarthy who cured him" (Marrigan 1972, MUNFLA, 73-61D).

One particular story, told by Agnus Fowler of Cappahayden (Renews), mentions Fr.

McCarthy's ability to still a troubled spirit:

When we used to go up to the priest's house, I was never the first out that door [because it was dark], let me tell you that. I always figured I'd see something [spooky]. There was a lot of weird stuff that happened there too. I remember my mother telling me somebody in our family went down to see Msgr. McCarthy because they were great friends because my great-grandmother came from Ireland, and he came from Ireland. Anyway, a [repeated] knock came at the door, and the Monsignor went out [and found nobody there], and he came back and got his stole, and when he came back in, he said, "That poor soul will never bother anybody again" That's the exact words he said. That's why I was never the first out that [rectory] door (2016).

The implications that Fr. McCarthy had spiritual authority over life and death is part of a larger vernacular legendry concerning the supernatural power of saints and holy persons. It speaks to the belief in God's ability to work, via the priest, in both the supernatural and material worlds. What greater power can a person have than to banish frightening spirits and stave off death, even for only three days? Added are the stories about both priests' ability to calm the waters during a storm. It was mentioned to me that during a particularly bad storm, when the men were out to sea, Father McCarthy went to the shore and prayed for the seas to be calm. Within an hour, the storm had passed, and the men came home safely. Is it any wonder that a priest with this kind of reputation would have been held in reverence and fear by the people?

7.8 The Catholic Connection to Miracles

Since its foundation two thousand years ago, Christianity has had a rich history of saints and miraculous legends, which I have addressed in chapter two. This belief was encouraged by early Church writers, as evidenced in a theological treatise on miracles, mysticism, and revelation by Pope Benedict XIV (1740-1758). He begins his treatise by stating, "The Church began with miracles and divine gifts, and being one, she continues the same" (O'Neill 2015, 9).¹¹³ These legends are intimately tied to the corpus of saint narratives still consumed by today's Catholics. I

¹¹³ The quote is derived from the preface to *Heroic Virtue: A Portion of the Treatise of Benedict XIV on the Beatification and Canonization of the Servants of God*, Vol 1.

would argue that Catholics, just by the nature of their religious instruction through the Church, are intimately connected to the belief in the miraculous; therefore, a story of a man whose heart had stopped for three days but remained alive is not unbelievable, rather something to be told over and over again as part of the conviction that priests are the conduits of the God's desire to work miracles in the world.

In sum, miracles at the two grottos reflect a long Catholic history of God's active power in the material world. Stories abound in the New Testament concerning Christ's ability to heal the sick, raise the dead, and feed the multitudes. As I see it, miracles are prayers made material in the world. They offer tangible reasons to believe, as Jesus remarks in John 4:48, "Except you see signs and wonders, ye will not believe (KJV). Old and new narratives concerning Mary's miraculous appearances to ordinary people spread like wildfire through Catholic communities to this day. These stories are what people bring with them to Mary's sacred sites in the hope of being the next to experience a miracle through God's grace.

In the last chapter of this thesis, I reflect on Mary's place in the modern Church and her ability to intercede in difficult times, focusing on a dark chapter in Newfoundland's history, that of clerical abuse. During this time, the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes in Renews took on a new dimension as a sanctuary, reflecting the resourcefulness and spiritual creativity of those who seek Mary's grace in times of trouble.

Chapter Eight

Mary's Grotto, Ever-Changing

“In trial or difficulty, I have recourse to Mother Mary, whose glance alone is enough to dissipate every fear.”

Saint Therese of Lisieux

8.1 Mary in the Modern Church

On May 1, 2020, bishops in the United States and Canada consecrated each nation to the "Blessed Virgin Mary" (B.C. Catholic 2020, para. 1-2). The dedication was in response to the Covid 19 pandemic raging worldwide for over a year. The last time the Church in Canada dedicated the nation to Mary was in 2017. This show of Catholic solidarity acknowledged Mary as the "Mother of the Church" and sought her protection over the world as the pandemic continued to increase in all parts of the globe. Archbishop Gomez, the president of the U.S. Catholics Bishops conference, commented, "Every year, the Church seeks the special intercession of the Mother of God during May. This year, we seek the assistance of Our Lady all the more earnestly as we face together the effects of the global pandemic" (ibid).

At the time of this writing, the pandemic has taken over six million lives worldwide, over a million in the U.S. and 60,000+ in Canada, and is still ongoing. The Diocese of Rome canceled all public Masses in March 2020 due to the spread of the disease. More extensive religious tourist sites, such as the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem,

closed their doors due to the virus (Mroz 2021, 626).¹¹⁴ Pope Francis addressed the social effects of the pandemic, which he termed "the storm:"

For weeks now, it has been evening. Thick darkness has gathered over our squares, our streets, and our cities; it has taken over our lives, filling everything with a deafening silence and a distressing void that stops everything as it passes by; we feel it in the air, we notice in people's gestures, their glances give them away. We find ourselves afraid and lost. Like the disciples in the Gospel, we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time, important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other (Pope Francis 2020).

The Church is no stranger to social 'storms.' In previous decades, Catholicism has been shaped by the internal and external forces that reflect our post-modern age. The effects of the Coronavirus are only one of many issues facing the Catholic Church. Other modern (external) concerns are the rise of secularization, authoritarianism, nationalism, mass migration, extremism, unfiltered global media, and mental health, to name but a few. However, Mary is the arbitrator and answer for such social dysfunction for many Catholics. Despite the contestation of Mary's standing from the laity, the Church remains steadfast in its Christological proclamations of Mary's place in the modern Church and ambiguous on how much power to accord to her supremacy in devotion (Cunneen 1996, 9-10). For the laity; however, she stands for justice and peace, a living presence who gives spiritual agency to those who trust her advocacy (Hermkens et al., 2009, 4).

The lockdown of the Catholic Church during a time of Covid meant the loss of jobs for laypeople, a lack of spiritual and emotional support for congregations who could no longer meet in person, and the loss of income to the parishes. All this came about when the Church was

¹¹⁴ Marian shrines today have seen a decrease in pilgrimages due to Covid-19 (Mroz 2021, 625). The pandemic has restricted movement globally, which arguably is at the heart of any pilgrimage. It has especially been hard on the elderly and the sick and infirm who make up a greater number of pilgrims to these sites (ibid). Prior to the virus, the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes in France annually saw up to five million or more pilgrims a year. This came to an abrupt halt in March of 2020, when the site was temporarily shut down due to Covid.

embroiled in mass lawsuits over child abuse by clergy. Recently, they have uncovered unmarked mass graves of Indigenous children at Catholic residential schools in Canada. For the laity, these social cataclysms require Church guidance to help them through the fray: however, this is not always enough to reassure people.

8.2 Changing Roles of Mary

Mary's position in the Catholic Church is still as potent as ever among her devoted. This commitment is reflected in the rise in Marian apparitions worldwide over the last fifty years (Orsi 2005, 58). A document compiled by Sara Gault and Daniel Gabriel demonstrated that from 1975 to 2000, there were ever-increasing reports of Marian apparitions (Matter 2001, 125). In the last half of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, visions of the Holy Mother have created a quandary for the Catholic Church. Seen as an anachronism to modern thinkers, the question remains, why do these visions persist? Why is the Virgin presenting herself to those who will listen, especially in our post-modern age?



Figure 42. Gisella Cardia witnessing a vision of the Virgin.

The general explanations for the uptick in visions involve fear around globalization, secular destabilization, social anxiety, and what is seen as a belief in the resurgence of supernatural activity surrounding the "last days" (Budwey 2014, 222; Zimdars-Swartz 1991, 246).

As an example, in 2019, an Italian woman by the name of Gisella Cardia claims that Mary appeared to her and told her that there would be a new disease that would come

from China and infect the world, "Pray for China because new diseases will come from there, all ready to infect the air by unknown bacteria," she proclaimed (Duncan 2020, para. 1). Her message

concerning what she now believes to be the Coronavirus was posted on September 28, 2019, two months before the virus was thought to have originated in China. Cardia is said to receive these messages from the Virgin on the third day of every month since 2016. Mary speaks to her mainly about the "end times," predicting wars and disease for humankind (2020 para.4). These messages are posted on the *Association of Our Lady of Trevignano Romano* website. Cardia's husband runs the website and is a firm believer in her visitations of the Virgin.



Figure 43. Cardia purchased a statue of Mary before the onset of the visions. It started to cry tears of blood after the apparitions began.

Cardia's vision is one of many that have been reported recently. The passionate belief in Mary's visitations reflects the continuing devotion to the supernatural interventions of the Virgin in everyday affairs. The Catholic Church is very conservative regarding religious apparitions. Nonetheless, this has not stopped people from coming to hear what the Virgin has to say. Zimdars-Swartz notes that these visions reflect a pattern of divine activity concerning the "last days" (1991, 246). They often mirror secular events where history, for devoted followers, is

part of an "all-encompassing divine plan in which the Virgin appearing on earth in the last days, has been assigned a very specific role" (Ibid).

On the other hand, the Church's hierarchy remains skeptical, exhibiting a paternal attitude toward those who follow such visionaries (Dubish 2009, 234).¹¹⁵ These revelations are from the ground-up and reflective of the actual state of Mary's place in the people's hearts. By this, I am referring to a vernacular Catholic behavior. Hermkens et al. recognize that Mary often appears to

¹¹⁵ See, Modern Marian apparition statistics, 1980- 2011. Compiled by the University of Dayton Center for Mariology. https://udayton.edu/imri/mary/_resources/img/a/apparitions-statistics-modern-08.PNG

the less fortunate and the less powerful, revealing the necessity for laypeople to have a powerful supernatural advocate beyond the bounds of the Church and that present personally in their lives (2009 4). These contemporary visions of Mary only underscore the continuity of earlier visitation, such as Lourdes and Fatima, as genuine supernatural experiences of ordinary people.



Figure 44. Modern, 1994 apparition of the Virgin in Clearwater, Florida. Note the silhouette of the Virgin in the window on the right.

8.3 Modern Issues in Marian Devotion

Marian devotions, Orsi states, have maintained the social fabric of working-class and rural Catholics (2005, 52). This position remains among many ordinary Catholics, particularly among those whose ethnic affiliations come from devoutly Catholic countries in South America and parts of the Mediterranean (Carroll 1986, 10). Nevertheless, since the Second Vatican Council, tensions within the Church in the United States and Canada have created factions and polarized congregations around Mary's place in the Church (Hermkins et al., 2009, 4).

Theologian Stephanie A. Budwey, in her work on Marian theology and devotion (2014), remarks that the vote on the Council's document concerning Mary's place in the Church, the encyclical *Lumen Gentium* was one of the closest votes in the Council (202). The Council's task was to integrate Mary into the doctrine of Christian salvation rather than her standing with Christ as a coredematrix. The bishop of Cuernavaca (Mexico) comments on this doctrinal demotion:

It was desirable to demarcate the boundaries of Marian devotion to correct certain tendencies in popular devotion and in order to explain the matter better to

non-Catholics who sometimes had wrong notions about the Church because of these excesses. Devotion to Mary and the saints, especially in our countries, at times, obscures devotion to Christ (As quoted in Budwey 2014, 206).

Vatican II heralded a new era of Marian devotion and created a vacuum that the Catholic Church anticipated would be filled by more modern text-based worship (Spretnak 2004, 3). The Council sought to limit the devotional cult of Mary, which many liberal or progressive Catholics have perceived as taking the place of devotion to Christ (ibid). The Church concluded that "Mary, by her unique relationship with Christ, possesses a superiority relative to other Christians. Nevertheless, her place is in the mystery of the Church, and not above it" (Lamb and Levering 2008, 47). Pope John XXIII declared during the Second Vatican Council that "The Madonna is not happy when she is placed before her son" (quoted in Cunneen 1996, 9). Through this declaration, it was hoped that there would be a restraining effect on the more exuberant followers of the Virgin (Orsi 2005, 52). Feminist religious scholar Sally Cunneen notes, "Vatican II was probably the major religious event of the twentieth century . . . , it created a sea change in the lives and behaviors of Catholics, including their attitude to Mary" (1996, 9). However, this also left many Catholics dismayed and confused.

The liturgy became the central focus of modern Catholic worship, "Pious exercises should be consistent with the liturgical season, should be derived from the liturgy, and should lead to the liturgy, which by its nature, exceeds popular devotion" (Rosary since Vatican II 1995, para. 5).

Nonetheless, by the late 1960s, Catholics began questioning the lessening of Marian devotionalism in the Church:

Resistance to further reform hardened in some quarters with the publication of the new liturgical calendar (1969). The elimination of a few popular Marian feasts and the reduction of others to optional commemorations confirmed the suspicion of some that both the Council and the post-conciliar liturgical reforms were profoundly anti-Marian (1995 para. 6).

The shift in the status of the Virgin Mary in the Church created a backlash in the form of a resurgence of Marian devotion and a revival of Marian apparitions among her believers—leading to collective movements that supported her restoration in Church theology (Spretnak 2004). Hermkens et al. have located these devotions in the most conservative forces of the Catholic Church, which progressive Catholics consider "anti-Modern" (2009, 2; Orsi 2009, 217). They maintain that these devotions are a modern resistance to oppression and mass secularization created by power inequalities between class, gender, and social turmoil, allowing people to resist modernizing forces that make them feel powerless (Hermkens et al. 2009, 2). Equally, Turner and Turner note that these shifts in devotion began to take a turn as early as the nineteenth century due to the rise of industrialized mass society (1978, 203).

Mary's visitations to ordinary people, such as Bernadette and, more recently, in *Trevignano Romano*, Italy, have also kept her place solidly in the people's hearts.¹¹⁶ Mary is being felt, seen, and heard on the world stage. In Marian devotion, we see the contestation of vernacular devotion and religious vs. spiritual practices being played out. Believers would like the approval of the Church for their chosen visionary site, but it is not necessary for continuing belief. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the apparition site of Medjugorje offers an excellent example of Mary thriving even though the Church has not given its full approval. Only recently, due to Covid, has the vision site lost many of its pilgrims. This loss is not due to a change of attitudes but rather fear of being in public due to the virus. Since the first visitation by Mary to three young children in 1981, over 40 million visitors worldwide have been to the site (Medjugorje Web 2022).

¹¹⁶ Religious scholar E. Ann Matter notes that over the last two centuries the messages from the apparitions of the Virgin have changed. In the early nineteenth century, the message was one of self-reflection and inner-change i.e., "repentance and the healing of a broken world" (2001, 128). In the twentieth century the message looked outward to the social and political focusing on the fear of communism and nuclear war and recently, the end-times (ibid).

Mary is both an external symbol and an internal mirror in that she reflects the state of worship in the Catholic Church and within the individual believer. Despite her censure by the Church, Mary continues to be many things to many people—and not always within the doctrinal guidelines of the Catholic Church. Mary is compelling as a religious figure; her mutable nature, fluidity, and flexibility are part of her appeal. In countless ways, she is reflective of vernacular belief in Catholic doctrine. Despite her lofty titles, such as Queen of Heaven, Star of the Sea, and Mother of God, she is also the mourning mother and sister to the oppressed. The lofty labels do little to echo her everyday appeal to humanity.

One area where Mary has been viewed more negatively is in feminist theology. In western society, sex, gender, and body image is premised on Christianity teachings. As such, feminists have argued that the Virgin has been used as a tool of the patriarchy. As a paradigm of virtue, Mary's character has been a source of what many women perceive as an unattainable ideal of womanhood and servility. Influenced by Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), Mary Daly, in her 1968 work *The Church and the Second Sex*, argues that the enslavement of women was advanced by the "cult of the Virgin, Mother of God" (61). Daly maintains that through Mary, women were encouraged to take passive roles, much like the Virgin did concerning her son Jesus:

For the first time in human history, the mother kneels before her son; she freely accepts her inferiority. This is the supreme masculine victory, consummated in the cult of the Virgin—it is the rehabilitation of a woman through the accomplishment of her defeat (69).

Coming at the beginning of the second wave of the women's movement (1960-1980), Daly's arguments ignited debates within feminism, social science, and theology about whether Mary was a valuable tool of Male dominance. Later feminist theologians would argue for a more nuanced approach to Marian devotion locating Mary in the feminine face of the Church. Rosemary Radford Ruther (1977) looks at Mary from several vantage points; ancient Goddess as a living

person (New Testament), medieval servant to humankind, and finally, the contemporary concept of womanhood (89-90). Her analysis places Mary in contentious arguments concerning whether she can be utilized and reinterpreted in new constructive perspectives or blanket rejection by women of all Mary stands for in the Church. Feminist and religious scholar Christina Grenholm recognizes Mary as straddling the intersection of female stereotypes and Christian dogma (2010, 102). I would point out that this argument does not go far enough in recognizing the third branch of intersection: personal friend and mentor. Theologian Elina Vuola (2019) identifies these feminist critiques as valid; however, she also calls attention to how, in many feminist arguments, little attention is paid to how women *experience and use* their relationship with Mary in their everyday lives. In other words, how Mary is perceived by women vernacularly (55).

8.4 Benevolent Face of Mary

In an article entitled "Marian Devotion for the New Millennium" (2000), Scholar of Mariology Johann G. Roten establishes that Mary's reassessment in the last part of the twentieth century reflects a more "down-to-earth" deity who is seen as a "disciple, sister, and believer.... Mary is not the only actor in the event and process of salvation history, she is also the recipient of salvation, and thus a redeemed creature" (65). Similarly, Sister Elizabeth Johnson, in her work *Truly Our Sister* (2003), offers a new theological perspective of Mary wherein theologians can find the true face of Mary in the context of her time. She argues that, doctrinally, Mary took on an elevated position in the Church due to Church fathers uplifting her beyond her station with such titles as "Our Lady" and "Queen" (161). These honorific titles reflect male imagination and the desire to patronize a high-status woman rather than a simple Galilean woman of little means. She maintains that the study and veneration of Mary must be grounded in her concrete place in history rather than flights of religious fancy (101). After the Reformation and the ascendancy of

Protestantism, there was a call for Mary to be de-mythologized (Spretnak 2019, 540). The people should view her life and status in the sacred hierarchy in more "concrete" and "rational" terms. This attitude is later reflected in Vatican II's progressive approach to her status in the Church (ibid).

This "down-to-earth" modern approach is echoed in my interview with Sister Elizabeth Davis, the Congregational Leader of the Sisters of Mercy in St. John's, Newfoundland. Through our discussion, I understood how some Catholics had re-envisioned Mary since Vatican II, especially the post-councillor generations. Sister Davis commented, "Ironically, it was Pope Paul the VI who was Pope when the council ended in the 1960s who called Mary for the first time 'our sister in faith.' A Mother of God is an Image hard to see myself in, but a sister in faith is someone I can identify with" (2016). Sister Davis further notes that "... she [Mary] was a Jewish peasant, a young mother, a refugee, a woman who saw her son unjustly convicted and hanged and crucified, in later years she was a widow. So, in all these manifestations, she is like every other woman. I'm sure, like every other woman, she struggled" (ibid). As we see in Sister Davis's comments, an intimate familial relationship with Mary goes beyond Church and Clergy for many Catholics. Hermkens et al. recognize this, commenting on Mary's power to connect to her personally devotes:

They seek her out as an all-powerful mother who protects them in periods of grief, pain, and desolate states of poverty. As their confidante, Mary is imbued with transformative and healing powers. Moreover, they are touched by Mary's gaze, feel moved by her concern, cry for her, dote on her, crown and dress her, but in times of misfortune, they also express feelings of anger, despair, and disappointment when they are face to face with her. In short, people talk with her and involve her in all kinds of private sorrows in everyday life (2009, 6).

The perception that the Virgin is capable of a range of human emotions and suffering did not begin with Vatican II; it has always been there among the devoted. These expressions of kinship

and relational connection to Mary are evident as far back as the first centuries of Christianity, particularly among devotees. Cunneen notes, "They imagined her [Mary's] life to be almost angelic, but at the same time, they made her humanly accessible...." (1996, 69). Referencing Vatican II, Orsi recognizes, "Mary's presence had been most real and pervasive before the period of devotional reform.... (2005, 51). Whether it is a demotion to be called a "sister"—as some would see it— or conversely, the mother of God, Mary's status in the Church and her eminence among the laity is bound in relational values and personal concepts of human intimacy. These familial and relational connections with Mary have been part of the Marian milieu since her inception into early Christian doctrine as *Theotokos*, the mother of God. The intimacy attributed to Mary comes directly from the people, especially women, who recognized the need for a deity that could comprehend the capriciousness of human existence.

Sister Elisabeth Davis's comments align Mary in the sphere of vernacular piety, where she works interpersonally with her followers as Virgin, mother, and sister. I believe the Council gave voice to what devotees had long recognized in their dedication to Mary. For two millennia, Mary has been accepted as sister, mother, and friend in the quiet prayers of her devoted— that is her appeal. She fits comfortably within the needs and perceptions of the people outside of doctrinal and Church constraints.

Yet, for many Catholics, particularly the older generations, this modern Mary also remains the Virgin on the dais despite the humanizing effects of the Council, as Roten reflects:

This tendency toward a biblically and liturgically nondescript reinterpretation of Mary....found opposition and triggered a reaction during the last decades of the twentieth century. The reaction we are talking about seems to signal a return to a more classical schema of Marian devotion (2000, 63).

Through my research, I have been made aware of a division between two factions of the Church; those who see Mary through a new doctrinal prism and play down her popularity and those who have creatively incorporated her into their lives as divinity and the intimate and sanctified embodiment of the human condition; thus, bridging the gap between the personal and the doctrinal. This is not to say there is an absolute duality between the two. There are nuances or variations of these sentiments within each devotee. I also recognize the distinctions in ethnic perceptions of Mary and her importance in the lives of working-class Catholics, many of whom immigrated to North America in the early 20th century and remained steadfastly devoted to the Mary of an earlier age. They brought variations in Marian devotion more in accord with old-world vernacular traditions despite the declarations of devotional reform by the Church in the 1960s. I would argue that these old-world devotions are evident at many Catholic shrines and grottos around the U.S. and Canada (Hermkens et al. 2009; Orsi 1985; Pena 2011; Sciorra 2015; Tweed 1997).

Mary's visitations to the material world have had social and political overtones, reflecting what many Catholic devotees see as threats to the stability of humankind (Turner and Turner 1978, 209; Zimdars-Swartz 1991, 246-247). From Lourdes, where issues of rapid change from a pre-to post-industrialized society threatened the status quo, to Fatima, where the Virgin warned of coming war and famine, and Medjugorje, where fear of Russia and Communism gripped a nervous world, these visions extolled humanity to turn away from sin and rededicate themselves to God or face certain ruin (Zimdars-Swartz 1991, 248-250). The very premise of these visions is Mary's intercession and intervention in times of turmoil (1991, 247).

In the following section, I would like to address one of the most potent attributes concerning the Renew's grotto; the use of the grotto as a sanctuary. In times of social and personal

distress, Marian grottos and shrines can act as spiritual safe spaces for those troubled by events that affect their lives, especially when the alternative is no longer feasible.

8.5 Clerical Abuse in the Newfoundland

Times of uncertainty do not always involve world calamities or plagues but can be more centralized locally in the here and now. In the last forty-plus years, the Catholic Church has been embroiled in a scandal concerning clerical abuse of children and adolescents. This malevolent behavior has created a schism between the hierarchy and many in the Church. The Catholic laity has borne the brunt of the painful experiences and has fought a wealthy, well-established, patriarchal organization for the truth. The Catholic Church's inadequate handling of the abuse accusations has created a gulf in many people's devotion to Catholicism, spirituality, and their need for justice. Orsi recognizes clerical abuse as an "abundant evil" (2016, 216). I can think of no better term for this malevolence; it is evil and abundant, reaching into parishes all over the Catholic world, including Newfoundland.

I came into contact with the issue of clerical abuse in the province when I began my interviews in *Renews*. Like many non-Catholics, I had been made aware of the continuing problem in the Catholic Church through news reports of abuses in the United States. The Boston Globe report's revelations shed light on a Church cover-up that had been going on for years. The Globe's work would later be done into a film, *Spotlight: Break the Story, Break the Silence* (2015), which would air the Church's dirty laundry worldwide and earn two Oscars.

It began in 2002 when *The Boston Globe* reported on a case concerning Rev. John Geoghan. Fr. Geoghan had been placed on sick leave in 1980 by the Church after a woman had complained to the local officials that he had been molesting her sons. The Globe found this was

not an isolated incident but a pattern of abuse for some years. After returning to his duties, Fr. Geoghan would molest children in two other parishes (Boston Globe. 2015, 3). Boston Globe reporters would eventually investigate abuse cases in the area, unleashing a maelstrom of repercussions that enveloped the Catholic world.

Clerical abuse of children is not only a problem in the United States. After living in Newfoundland for some time, I heard from several people about the Mount Cashel orphanage and boy's school in St. John's. Mount Cashel opened in 1876 as an orphanage and was operated by the Irish Christian Brothers, a lay order of the Catholic Church. In 1950, after confederation, the province began sending wards of the state to be educated there (Harris 1990, 28). This influx of extra cash from the government offered a regular source of income for the Brothers as an alternative to reliance on the patronage of parishioners and concerned citizens to the orphanage. Here, children as young as six and adolescent boys endured cruel physical, sexual, and verbal abuse at the hands of the Christian Brothers and others.¹¹⁷



Figure 45. Mt. Cashel Boys School and orphanage, 1989.

¹¹⁷ As a lay order The Christian brothers were founded in 1802, in Waterford, Ireland. Their purposes was to educate the young boys who were poor. They were founded by Edmund Ignatius Rice, a local businessman who had devoted his life to teaching the poor.

After interviewing individuals in Renew's, I realized that the abuse went beyond Mount Cashel and into Newfoundland communities. Clerical exploitation of minors had had far-reaching implications, especially for those in the outports. Research made me aware that Newfoundland had experienced one of Canada's most egregious clergy abuse cases before the Boston Globe report. The repercussions of this abuse are still seething under the surface, unfinished and unhealed.

8.6 My Interviews in Renew's

In the summer of 2016, I had set up my first interview in Renew's for the morning, where we were to meet at the grotto. I decided to stay at a B&B in Ferryland to start early the next day and arrive on time. One of the oldest settlements in Newfoundland, Ferryland, is approximately 19km (12 miles) northeast of Renew's. The B&B is on the main road and looks out on the North Atlantic. This area is the site where Lord Baltimore first settled in Newfoundland in 1621. The view is dotted with several small Islands and is possibly one of the province's most beautiful areas. The B&B was an attractive older building with another attached building housing guest rooms. Here, I had a conversation with an individual that set me on the path to realizing there was more to the story concerning Renew's and its grotto than I had initially thought.

When I checked in, I was asked about my interest in the grotto in general conversation. I mentioned my thesis and how I would interview individuals about stories and experiences concerning the site. The conversation took on a different tone when we discussed the Catholic Church in the area. It was then that the individual I was talking to brought up the topic of clerical

abuse.¹¹⁸ The individual expressed the pain that the communities around the Avalon had experienced concerning this subject. There had been several bad experiences among the Catholic population. The foremost perpetrators of abuse had been two priests in the 1980s, one in Ferryland, Fr. James Hickey, and in Renews, Fr. Gordon Walsh. I could tell from the conversation that there was as considerable anger and criticism toward the Church as there was toward the individual priests who perpetrated these crimes.

Eventually, the conversation eased, and we spoke of the grotto and how it was indeed a peoples place; in other words, it was a place that was seen only nominally as part of the Catholic Church, "You can go to the grotto because it's not the priests, the grotto is ours," they commented. The consensus of the conversation was that the grotto was untouched by the politics and events in the Church. The individual expressed something that I would hear over and over again from other informants, "The Church is associated with the priest, but if you want to say a prayer, you know that in your own heart and soul, if you go to that grotto, there's not going to be a priest there." It was suggested that the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes was built from a personal (Fr. McCarthy) and collective community vision, not by Church initiative; this comment was powerful and eye-opening. Later, other informants commented that they, too, felt the grotto was a vernacular structure built by the people and for the people and only ostensibly part of the Catholic Church. This perspective is something I had considered during my initial research before I came to Renews, but I was surprised to hear it articulated so animatedly. During our conversation, I was disturbed to hear the overwhelming sadness and anger expressed concerning clerical abuse and the ensuing cover-up by the Church—this was only the first of many conversations like this.

¹¹⁸ I will not be naming the individual even though I did record some portion of the discussion. I am not comfortable getting into the details due to privacy concerns. It was an intense conversation around the subject of the Church and clerical abuse, which left me unsure how to confront the topic in my work, or if I even should.

This first exchange concerning clerical abuse in the Southern Shore communities foreshadowed what was to come in further discussions in *Renews*. What was striking about these interviews was that many brought up the topic unprompted. Their mentions of the clerical abuses were not only personal but also how it had affected many in the community and challenged their faith in the Catholic Church.

In an article by Paul M. Kline, Robert McMackin, and Edna Lezotte (2008), the authors discussed this topic with a focus group in Boston in 2003. They offered four critical issues found in communities affected by clerical abuse—first, deep hurt in response to perceived betrayal by Church leaders. Second, a reawakening of pain connected to past injuries by clergy. Third, an effort to cope by separating a relationship with God from a relationship with the Church, and finally, a concern for the spiritual well-being of other family members (2008, 290). The authors recognized the participants' urgent and decisive need to express their anger and their “very strong feelings” concerning the Church's role in the sordid affair (293). This need for expression was reflected in my interviews as well. It seemed as though I could not talk about the Catholic Church in the context of the grotto without having the abuse scandal mentioned.

As I thought about the crisis, I became troubled that this evil could be perpetrated on the people of *Renews*. They had been faithful followers of the Roman Catholic Church since the community's inception some four hundred years ago. However, I confess that I was not confident dealing with such a delicate topic in our time of heightened cultural sensitivities. Nonetheless, I realized that this issue was part of the grotto's story and could not be overlooked or set aside. It should be noted here that I did not run into the issue of clerical abuse in Flatrock. When I brought it up in interviews, I noticed people were uncomfortable talking about it. I did not push my

informants because it is such a complex and painful topic, and not every outport had experienced the abuse. A few commented that it never happened in their community, so I let the topic lie.

That following morning, I left the B&B. I felt a sense of unease and sadness over the night's conversation, realizing that my naivety and lack of knowledge concerning recent history in Newfoundland informed my emotions. Bowman (2016) acknowledges there have been "ripples" left in the wake of the abuse, thus, revealing a "long-term story that has not been fully dealt with, where there are even broader impacts and issues of betrayed trust, loss of faith, and the questioning of religion itself which, in turn, have far-reaching social ramifications" (142).

In 1987, the abuse was revealed through reporting in the *Sunday Express*, a weekly newspaper in St. John's. The Catholic Church acted quickly to cover up the problem. As early as 1975, the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary was aware of the problems in Mount Cashel boy's school. However, it was not until 1989 that they re-opened the investigation into child abuse claims. Subsequently, Archbishop Alphonsus Penny established the Winter Commission in 1989 to facilitate a more open policy and examine the crises. The Commission was headed by Gordon Winter, then Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador and an Anglican.

The Commission was asked to address two questions in their report. First, what factors contributed to the sexual abuse of children by the clergy, and second, why it took so long for the Church to become aware of and address this behavior? (1990, 2) Allegations that the Church covered up the abuse and failed to support the victims were rife. The Winter Commission found that "The Archdiocesan leadership did have knowledge of deviant or sexually inappropriate behavior among some Roman Catholic clergy" (1990, 2, 9). One of the most damning allegations is that the Church knowingly moved the predatory priests to different parishes around the province to mitigate further charges against them (1990, vii). This denial on the Church's part was

a common theme in abuse cases in North America. The shuffling of an aberrant priest from place to place had been ongoing for years in the U.S. and Canada, thus, "keeping the crimes secret" (Orsi 2016, 232; Doyle 2006, 191). Unfortunately, this was to be the fate of Renew's when Fr. Gordon Walsh, a known predator within the Church, was sent as the new parish priest in September of 1986.¹¹⁹ After the abuse was exposed, the grotto took on new meaning for those in Renew's.

8.7 Community Consensus

Bowman points out that in small communities where the abuse occurred, the effects were profound and ongoing, especially when "...religion was woven into virtually every aspect of political, educational and cultural life" (2016, 142). Clerical abuse in smaller communities is particularly destructive because of the integration of Catholicism into all things personal and civic and the proximity of the perpetrator to the victims. "We got hit hard here, paid a heavy price. Probably there was a lot more damage done than we are aware of—we will probably never know," Loyola Herne revealed in our interview (2016).¹²⁰ With the heavy price came a feeling of anger and guilt in communities for not detecting the abuse or doing something to stop it at the time, as Bowman reflects:

While much outrage and anger were directed towards the Church and its failure to act on information concerning abusive priests, parents also reflected on their naivety in their lack of questioning priestly authority. They felt desperate that they had failed to protect their children" (2016, 152).

¹¹⁹ Due to the sensitivity of the topic, I will not be going into detail about abuse. Rather, I will be focusing on the community responses to the crisis.

¹²⁰ Pre-conciliar attitudes towards Church and priests were apparent in Renew's during the scandal. The populace had witnessed the material changes of Vatican II through the drastic removal of icons in their Church and changes in the Mass; however, those who had grown up in the Catholic Church before the Council still held unlimited trust in Church and its priests, despite the exterior changes.

The crime, in many respects, was done right on their doorstep by a trusted individual who was intimately involved in their lives (Bowman 2016, 150; Kline et al. 2008, 293). Because of Catholicism's tight hold on the outports, and the trust and faith placed in the clergy, Renewals and other communities paid a heavy price that is still evidenced today. As Rev. Thomas Doyle, a well-respected author on clerical abuse, points out, "Catholicism is a spiritual force, a way of life, and a religious movement.... It has the power to touch the spiritual, moral, emotional, psychic, and economic lives of members" (2006, 189). These spiritual, psychological, and social foundations were shattered in Renewals, particularly for the older generations whose lives had revolved around the Church.

Newfoundland outport communities still retained the qualities of rural communal life in the late twentieth century. These qualities are what Dorothy Noyes refers to as a "dense multiplex network" (1995, 458) where the bonds of deeply shared group identity, e.g., ethnic Irish Catholic, fishing economy, generational familial ties, and rural living, tied young and old into the community. Losing just one of these distinctive markers or indicators can create havoc on a community's identity and cohesion. These indicators are foundational to Renewals, meaning they are the bedrock of how the community views, conducts and presents itself to others. Renewals was hit with a double crisis; first, in 1987, when clerical abuse was exposed, and second, in the 1990s, when the cod moratorium hit the province, devastating the fishing trade.

After the scandal was exposed, many individuals in Renewals were forced to reinterpret and reinvent their relationship with the Church and their spirituality. They believed that the Church had let them down. Daily and weekly personal prayer at the grotto became a dynamic alternative to attending Mass. Participants have stated that they did not necessarily lose their faith in God but rather their faith in the Church. The alternative that was readily at hand was the grotto. The

wreckage that the abuse scandal wrought on Renew's families who were not directly involved is apparent in my conversation with local Terry Hynes. While asking him about the change in attitudes towards the Church in later years in Renew's, the question of the scandal came up:

It [religion] faded away because there was less and less interest in religion worldwide. So it was gradually eroding anyway. Then, of course, the Mount Cashel thing hit the waves, and that was it. What was on a slow side [religious participation] just slid right off the map after that. Fr. Hickey [perpetrator in Ferryland] and Fr. Walsh that left a lot of resentment.

Terry mentions the effect on his mother:

My mother, for example, who was a Church goer all her life, was a friend of Fr. Jim Hickey's [committed abuse in Ferryland and Renew's] and went to Ireland with him twice. He came to our house and played cards on Saturday nights.... [When she learned of the abuse], she never went to Church after. The end of it for her was Fr. Hickey and the scandals in the Church. It was a personal betrayal for her because she knew Jim Hickey, and he came to our house and played cards with her. So, she didn't see it just as a Church betrayal; she saw it as a gross crime against children....it was a personal insult to her that a friend of hers would do that (Hynes 2016).

This attitude was not uncommon. Friberg et al. identifies that those who knew the offender and the victim were "hit the hardest by the offense" (1995, 55).

While conducting interviews within various parishes, The Winter Commission noted the "devastating impact of the lay community members" (1990, 124). After learning about the exploitation, many spoke about their anger and betrayal. As noted already, those who were particularly hard hit were the ones who had personal connections to the victims, or the abuser, as in the case of Terry's mother. However, as Terry remarks, the scandal affected his father in a somewhat different way by reconciling the difference between his beliefs in God with his devotion to the Catholic Church:

He was angry, yes, but not as much as Mom. Dad was quiet and soft-spoken and internalized a lot. It just wasn't his nature to turn against the Church. He was intelligent enough to be angry at what was happening, but Dad wouldn't be the

kind to misplace his anger. Dad would probably come to the conclusion that there are bad apples in every barrel (Hynes 2016).

Others have echoed Terry's father's rationale. Loyola expresses the same perspective, recognizing and separating the Church from the perpetrators, "But it was after the fact that we found out...I find it hard to rationalize the fact that I don't go to church...because the priest abused somebody. God didn't abuse you." He continues, "If you asked has your faith changed due to all this, I can probably say no, but have I got the same respect for the clergy...the answer to that is no. But, I differentiate that entirely from my own faith" (2016). Negotiating the crisis can, and did, take many forms. For some, their response was similar to Terry's mother, never returning to the Church. Those returning came with a different perspective on spiritual authority and what constitutes religious belief and practice, separating their spirituality from Catholic religiosity.

For Terry's father, who went back to Mass eventually, distinguishing the separation between the power of spirituality and the fallibility of the institutional Church helped him deal with the distress; for others, it was not as simple. Some no longer attended Mass but remained spiritually in the Catholic fold. For others, it meant a complete break with the Catholic Church. Like Kline et al.'s research group in Boston, those individuals felt a deep betrayal had been perpetrated on them. In turn, this challenged the broader spiritual and social well-being of the community, making the individuals who reside there secondary victims of the abuse. Doyle addresses this, noting, "In most cases, several 'secondary victims' (e.g., parents, siblings, spouse, and children) are affected by the clerical sexual abuse of each 'primary victim,' and substantial damage is frequently done to them by the ripple effects of the abuse" (2009, 2).¹²¹

¹²¹ These reactions are a far cry from Fr. McCarthy's original intentions to unite both clergy and parishioner in a joint celebration of the Holy Mother at the Grotto de Lourdes. Instead the grotto became of site of safety where vernacular practice sustains personal and collective devotion at a crucial time in the history of the Catholic Church. In many ways, this was as much about necessity as it was choice.

The abuse and deception by the Catholic hierarchy created a vacuum in many people's lives where the Church had stood, thus, requiring those who saw the Church as omnipresent in their world to renegotiate their commitments and relationships with priests and the Catholic Church. These reactions differ from Fr. McCarthy's original intentions to unite clergy and parishioners in a joint celebration of the Holy Mother at the Grotto de Lourdes. Instead, the grotto became a site of safety, where vernacular practice sustained personal and collective devotion at a crucial time in the history of the Catholic Church. This adaptation was as much about necessity as it was a choice. One parishioner commented, "[Since the abuse scandal] People are ambivalent to the church here, and to a great extent the Church in general, but you'd be hard-pressed to drive by the grotto and not see someone up there kneeling." I asked Lois if the abuse scandal had affected the whole community of Renew, "It really did," she said. "We thought he [Fr. Gordon Walsh] was the bee's knees. Like he was this young priest that had the house open, and everybody could go to his house. Because you didn't want to believe it about the priests because the priests were God, right?" (2016). This idea that priests were up there next to God was not a fallacy of religious interpretation on the part of the laity but something that the Church had supported and encouraged for two thousand years (Doyle 2006, 199). Lois, too, commented that her mother stopped going to Mass because of the pain and confusion created by the scandal.

8.8 Clerical Power

The Archdiocese of St. John's contains forty-four parishes, of which twenty-one are found in the rural outport areas of the island (Winter 1990, 70). The Church is a powerful institution in these communities, beginning at the top with the parish priests and moving down to the laity (Bowman 2016, 146-147). Social interactions, denominational education, and communal and family cohesiveness are wrapped up in the Catholic Church. "Life was built around the Church,"

one individual exclaims (ibid). I heard this sentiment in many of my interviews in *Renews* and *Flatrock*. Allegiance to the Church created what I perceived as little fiefdoms in the outposts, where the priest was sovereign and the arbitrator of all that is mundane and holy.

In his 1990 book on the Mount Cashel affair in St. John's, Michael Harris recounts the priests and the brothers perpetrated abuses against the children entrusted to them. One woman exclaimed priests were "As close to God as you could get without playing a harp" (19). Obedience to the priest was part and parcel of Catholicism in the early to mid-twentieth century (Orsi, 2016, 218). Priests were seen as part of the elite in the Church. As Keenan comments, "... [Priests] are superior to the laity because of their ordained status and their celibate commitment" (2011, 42). To the average Catholic, the clergy was recognized as closer to God due to their ability as sacramental ministers, which gave them almost supernatural status in the eyes of the people (Doyle 2003, 190; Keenan 2011, 42). My interviews made me aware of the priests' authoritarian power in the community. "We thought they were next to God," Lois expressed. Many in the community, particularly the younger generations, felt the priest could be "very heavy-handed" with moral denunciations. As an illustration, Lois tells a story concerning Fr. McCarthy and a young woman in the community:

There was a young girl up here (Mom tells me this story) that got pregnant. She was only fifteen. She got pregnant from a Protestant. And, my Aunt went to town with her—which was a big deal then—it was a day trip to get out there to see a doctor, and he [McCarthy] got up [in front of the congregation] and said how we should hang our head in shame—always about shame, right? —because of [the Aunt] helping her when she had sinned (2016).

Priests "...ruled within an iron fist," according to Paddy McCarthy in his 2003 memoir of growing up in *Renews* (14). Several stories people told me focused on priests' concerns about morality. Holding hands or standing too close to someone of the opposite sex was frowned upon; the priests called out anything that displayed a semblance of pre-marital touching. It was

expressed to me that the young people of Renewals were watched like hawks by clergy and nuns alike. This heavy-handed control of everyday life resonates with the moral theology that Irish Catholicism had historically placed on the laity. Divorce was frowned on, and dating a Protestant was tantamount to heresy. This religious morality drama was played out in small towns around Newfoundland while the Church concealed the reports of clerical abuses in the communities.

Because many outposts, including Renewals, remained relatively isolated until the mid-20th century— when paved roads were finally built, isolation, and extreme deference by the laity, offered priests "power, prestige, and lack of accountability at the parish level....," according to the Winter report (1990, 92). This submissiveness of the laity can be located in Newfoundland's deep historical and cultural roots, where the Catholic Church had an exaggerated sense of power and a religious paternalism over the laity (92-93). Psychologist Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea recognizes it as a form of "clerical narcissism that.... justifies rigidly hierarchical power arrangements by declaring that, by virtue of his [priest] papal or ecclesiastical cast, the individual is entitled to the power he wields and the deference he demands" (2007 151). Lois remembers that the parish priest was highly revered, especially by the older generations, in Renewals:

I can remember my grandmother telling me stories about Monsignor (Fr.) McCarthy walking through the community, and if you were walking down the road and were holding hands because that's all they did, you had to drop hands and separate because the priest was coming, even though you were probably getting married in a week. So it was crazy the way they revered the priest and the whole Church system (Berriagan 2016).

Doyle directly places a portion of the blame on clericalism, which fostered complete dependence on the Church (2006, 190). He recognized the effects on those closest to the victims, who often refused to believe, or even consider, that the local priest was violating their children, which he attributed to attitudes about the priesthood and the bishop's authority (191). Correspondingly, the Winter Commission identified the Archdiocese clinging to clericalism as an "outmoded style of

Church thinking and authority" (1990, 158). This outmoded rationale flew directly in the face of Vatican II's decree concerning the power and place of the laity in the Church. In other words, the Archdiocese and the clergy held fast to pre-councillor attitudes towards the laity long after they should have. Children and adolescents suffered the most from this hegemonic display of religious power. They were at the bottom of this structure, thus, allowing their vulnerability and trust to be preyed upon by deviant priests. Orsi notes that adults and religious figures often permit themselves to "invade a children's boundaries...." (2005, 17). This intrusion was frequently done under the guise of religious instruction.

I came in contact with the further consequences of the scandal with each interview in Renewals. Some informants mentioned clerical abuse as an aside, and others, such as Lois, were more circumspect. When I asked her if she was still active in the Church, she replied:

Somewhat, I don't always attend. I still have strong religious beliefs. Two of the priests that were here, one in Ferryland and one here, were charged [with abuse], and it took the goodness right out of this place. You couldn't... like my mother would never miss Mass [after] — and you had to go to Mass. If you were out to a club till two in the morning and Mass was at nine, you had to go to Mass; you had no other choice.

Lois relates a powerful story concerning her sister and the rank hypocrisy of the perpetrators.

The priest here was really nasty to my sister, who had gone to have an annulment because she was going to get married. Her first husband left her, and she met this other guy who is also from the harbor, so she went down to see him [Fr. Gordon Walsh]. He basically told her that she was no better than Mary Magdalene because she was living in sin and she should hang her head in shame. About a month later, he was arrested for molesting young boys. That took the good right out of my Mom (2016).

Perpetrators of these crimes worked under the umbrella of secrecy, subterfuge, and a hefty dose of hypocrisy. This sentiment was echoed by Ann Marie Hagen from Aquaforte, a small community

not far from Renewals.¹²² Ann Marie's family were regulars at the church and grotto in Renewals, especially her mother, Rita, who frequently went to the grotto to pray. Ann Marie points to the rhetoric that the priests used to keep the spotlight from themselves:

They [priests] were so smart in hindsight. They were always creating scapegoats. Think about the Sunday morning sermon. There was never talked about inclusiveness and getting along...OK? It was like if someone didn't go to mass, they were terrible, and if somebody drank, they were terrible. Someone who lived common law they were terrible. So, if you drank, we didn't like you, and if that person didn't go to Mass, you didn't like them— no one was looking at them [priests] with a critical eye. [This kept people from asking] Why do you need a big house? Why do you need a housekeeper? Why do you go on fancy vacations? Why do you need such a big car? Why is he always going around with a carload of teenage boys? The arrogance they got on with! (2016).

Doyle notes that when these incidents were brought to the Church's attention, the reaction was to minimize, deflect, and dismiss the claims and silence the victims (2003, 190-191). When these attempts at silence failed, the next step was to minimize the incident and argue that it was only an aberration that rarely happened (191).¹²³ This blanket dismissiveness was poor judgment on the part of the Church, but then again, this institution had had two thousand years of unaccountability and secrecy. Add to this a worldwide organization steeped in clericalism and hieratical power that believed they were *Ordinatus a Deo*, ordained by God, and you have the potential for tragedy.

8.9 Forgiveness?

Friburg et al. recognize that there are several variables within a community where the abuse was perpetrated that should be considered (1995, 55). First is the nature of the congregants' relationship with the Church. Second, the relationship with the perpetrator, and lastly, the level of

¹²² Hagen, Ann Marie, interview by author, October 2016, Aquaforte, Newfoundland. Interview # R009-102016. Transcripts held by author.

¹²³ After the Vatican Council, clergy and laity alike hoped that the power of clericalism would diminish. However studies have shown that the present generation of priest still see themselves as “essentially different from the laity and as men set apart by God” (Doyle 2006,190)

trust placed in the perpetrator (ibid). All these variables were operative in Renewals, reflecting the community's almost total obedience to the priest. Therefore, if we gauge clerical deference by the laity on a scale from one to ten, then, generally speaking, the outposts of Newfoundland would be at the high end due to the demographics and historical and religious intra-personal bonds with the clergy.

Because the Archdiocese had been aware of the abuse for some time; and, in the eyes of the laity, equally culpable in the misconduct, I was particularly interested in how the Archdiocese had dealt with the aftermath of the scandal. I asked Terry and his wife Ronnie if there was any healing offered to the communities who were affected:

Terry: No, there was some effort here to talk to the people. The bishop [Penny] did come up and mention it a few times, like during the eulogy or Mass. They weren't very good at public relations at the time, and they did more harm than good.

Ronnie: He [Archbishop Penny] came here to talk about forgiveness for the priests. What the people saw when the bishop came here, you know, here's this person talking down to people in the pews, this person who sent this other priest [Fr. Walsh] to our parish to abuse our children. Did the same thing in Ferryland, sent that other priest [Fr. Hickey] up to Ferryland, and he abused the children, and now you're up here trying to talk us into forgiveness?

"Shock and disillusionment" were the words the Commission used to refer to communities that had suffered under the crisis (128). The Winter Commission recognized that an "acute level of support and understanding" was needed for all involved (1990, 127-128). The assault on traditional values, religious and moral, had left communities reeling in the aftermath. "The

ultimate goal of intervention must be the affirmation of the faith community within the wider context of a cohesive social system," the Commission reasoned (130). They noted that clergy and laity needed to develop "strategies" (ibid). After speaking to community members, I recognized these strategies had not been implemented in any manner; as Terry stated, "They [the Archdiocese] got it wrong from a public relations perspective. Of course, they have been a few centuries getting away with that, you know. I mean, they had been getting away with not explaining themselves to the public ever" (2016). Even after the Winter Commission had admonished the Archdiocese to invest in services to help communities, very little was done by the clergy other than sermonizing from the pulpit (1990, viii). Particularly devastating was the Church's ambiguity on the crimes, which is reflected in a statement from the archbishop's office dated February 17, 1989:

The archbishop and the Catholic people, like the rest of the community, deeply share the grief and hurt of the complainant and his family. We are ready to support them and enable them to be healed. From the knowledge obtained in the Church's investigation, it was not, *and is not currently clear, that the assailant was a priest.* (italics mine 1990, 108).

This hedging by leadership was detrimental to those who needed direction from the top. It left a taint over the Church's ability to truly meet the needs of the victims and those close to the crimes.

This lack of accountability was reflected in further conversations with Terry and Ronnie:

Terry: Any effort that was made, especially Bishop Penny before he left, was miss-planned and miss-placed; it's the worst piece of public relations I ever saw. [Terry had previously worked in public relations]. They knew Hickey had already done it in Grand Falls, and they sent them here. It was always about clearing the air. It was never about healing—it was about damage control.

Ronnie: It was never ever about the victims. It was never about these little seven and eight-year-old boys who were abused. Their names were never ever mentioned. It was never you were supposed to pray for the victims. It was all about praying for the priests.....

The community knew that the Church had sent the two priests, Fr. Walsh and Fr. Hickey, to the area knowing full well that they had been abusing children in other parishes. This severed the trust between the community and the Catholic Church:

Terry: It depended on trust. The Church made the mistake of believing it depended on blind trust. At the end of the day, they found out that we didn't blindly trust. It took a while, but we didn't blindly trust; they thought we did....once that shifted, there was no bringing that back. It's hard to get trust back once it slips. And that's what happened here, but it happened here at ten times the volume.

I had heard the same grievance by others that the Church encouraged forgiveness of the priests, but they never truly addressed the problem, nor did they give any satisfactory answers as to why it happened. Identifying Church inaction, Doyle argues, "The shocking response of the official Church has become the catalyst for much of the angry reaction by victims, supporters, and laity in general" (2006, 208). The Archdiocese never spoke of those abused or offered solid answers to heal from the calamity. Many expressed disgust at the poor attempts by the Church to repair the spiritual rift between priest and laity. These were priests whom communities had entrusted their children for pastoral guidance and care. Even if their child had not been caught up in the fray, local families would have been aware that it could have easily been them locked in a battle for justice with the Church.

Nothing was ever resolved, and today, there is still a strong sense of disregard and abandonment by the Church among community members. Some have returned to the Church but, as I mentioned before, with a reserve and a new light on personal spirituality. Internally, blows to the Church's reputation over Clerical abuse added to the tensions between congregants and the Church hierarchy. Questions of moral authority and Church cover-ups created many Catholics' crises of belief and choice. So, where does this sea-change in religious attitudes leave Mary and the sacred sites she spiritually inhabits? Moreover, how have these demographic changes affected the grottos at Flatrock and Renew's?

8.9 Sanctuary

Catholic religious spaces, particularly churches, have historically been recognized as places of sanctuary. They have offered safety for two millennia to those seeking asylum from persecution (Marfleet 2011, 441). Nonetheless, what if the Church is no longer a place of safety for its parishioners, or if there is a breach so wide between laity and priest that one can no longer bring themselves to attend Mass administered by the clergy? Where does one go to meet spiritual needs and speak to the holy? This issue arose in my interviews with the people of Renew's.

On my first day of interviews in Renew's, I met by chance an individual who would later become a friend, Bill Guiney. Bill approached the grotto while I was waiting for an interviewee to meet me there. Standing around, I felt slightly uncomfortable because he had come to pray and found me looking a little lost and confused. Bill was friendly enough, and we began talking about the grotto. I asked him why he had come, and he mentioned that this is where he comes to pray when he requires spiritual comfort. I do not remember how we got on the topic of the Church and the abuse scandal, but he said this was the only place he felt comfortable coming to after the adverse events of the last several decades—this was an ah-ha moment for me. My conversation

with Bill made me aware that the grotto had become significant in many people's eyes. It had become a place of safety, and anticlerical resistance against the abuse of power and influence that the clergy held. Bill recognized he could either break with the Church or augment his needs for spiritual guidance through alternative means. For those who could no longer bring themselves to go to church, the grotto became a sanctuary, a safe space in a time of religious and spiritual disorder for the community.

By 2012, the rate of Newfoundland Catholics regularly going to Mass had dropped by 60% (Bowman 2016, 157). These numbers reflect the modern conundrum for established religion in general and the after-effects of clerical abuse on the Catholic population of Newfoundland overall. Behind these numbers are people whose resentment against the Church and clergy necessitated a renegotiation of their spirituality. For many, the pedestal that priests in the community stood upon had toppled, and those affected found it challenging, to say the least, to return to Church. Left with few alternatives, they became creative in their choices.

The grotto as an alternative sacred space (one Renew's resident called it "clean") was later affirmed in my interview with Terry and Ronnie. Ronnie mentions that she, too, quit going to Mass after the scandal. I asked her what she did instead of going to church, and she replied that she went up to the grotto, "It's not a sterile environment, and nobody is judging me." (Hynes 2016). Similarly, Terry recognized the grotto as "...a place of comfort for people having trouble with the Church" He continues:

The people are ambivalent to the Church right now and to the Church's teachings, but you'd be hard-pressed to walk by that church [Holy Apostles] on any given day and not see someone up at the grotto, and they're not just there taking pictures, I mean there kneeling and pouring a little piece of their soul and their hearts out—it's a place for intercession (Hynes 2016).

That people prayed at the grotto day and night was a common assertion I heard from almost all informants. Loyola mentions the desirability of the grotto as a neutral place for people to pray:

It's far enough removed from Church authority to be not looked upon in a negative in relation to the abuse, but still there, as a place we pray to our Lady, that hasn't changed. I'm dealing here directly with the blessed Virgin (Hearn 2016).

When asked about the grotto's appeal, Lois points to the issue more directly, "I think the grotto is so important now because it doesn't involve the clergy." She mentions noticing "a lot more people are going to the grotto than are going to church" (Berriagan 2016). Catholics in Renewals recognize the grotto as an alternative to the highly structured and rigidly clericalist Catholic Church. They articulate this in their approach to the holy through the Marian grotto, recognizing it as "clean" from the abuse and the scandal's taint. These statements are powerful because they indicate the creative use of sacred space as vernacular resistance and a renegotiation of the community's spiritual needs.

Because religious devotion does not exist in a vacuum, shrines often absorb and mirror the socio-political issues affecting people. Spretnak reflects that in every era, the "...history of Christianity and human engagement with the divine is reflected in culture, and the contours of the zeitgeist," or spirit of the age (2019, 540). The historical and socio-cultural underpinning of contemporary religious expression exists within society's macro and micro levels. The prayers and needs brought to these sites are based on personal desires and fears; because they "reflect layers of use and meaning," shrines offer flexibility for those who turn to them in times of hardship (Reinburg 2019, 7). The spiritual power of Catholic shrines rests in their adaptability to the winds of change. So what are the qualities of the Renewals grotto that creates this amenability? I offer up seven areas of consideration as to why the grotto may take precedence in people's lives in a time of spiritual confusion.

First, as I have mentioned before, it needs no priestly intercessor. The grotto is a direct contact point with Mary. It allows devotional spontaneity day or night, emphasizing a highly personalized relational connection to the Holy Mother. Secondly, it is viewed as a historical edifice resistant to cultural and religious hegemony. Long before the grotto was built, the site of the Mass rock stood for religious expression under duress. The community recognizes it as a historically situated place of shared safety and sanctity. Metaphorically, it is the rock on which the community's religious and cultural identity stands. This leads me to my third point. It is a site of anti-clericalism. It has become a modern expression of resistance against the abuse of clerical power, thus, allowing the laity to transcend behavioral parameters established by the Church. By this, I am referencing private religious expression through choice, choice of when and how to pray, and what personal ritual actions to employ. This area is particularly relevant to vernacular religious behavior as Primiano reasons, "Individual belief does not need to be founded in or based on ideas and practices emanating from a group-oriented and structured religious institution" (1995, 50). Therefore, because it is removed from the strict doctrinal parameters of the Church, people can express themselves unreservedly and without artifice at the grotto site.

Fourth, the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes is flexible enough to meet the laity's spiritual needs, whether it be healing, intercession, or gratitude, thus liberating the devotee to express themselves entirely without fear of judgment. Fifth, it is a place of familiarity and community comfort. Before the abuse crisis, locals had developed a love for the grotto. As an object or edifice, the grotto acts as a "perpetual source of recollection" of shared communal memory (McDannell 1999, 39). Thus, it is a direct link to the real or imagined past of the community. Orsi recognizes that telling stories about the past "can be a medium for reimagining the holy" (2005, 152). Many stories I heard concerning the grotto were couched in fond nostalgia. Whereas the

Holy Apostles' church in Renewals reflects a past associated with clerical control, the grotto reflects a happier time of communal and individual religious expressions, such as Lady Day.

Finally, the site is steeped in non-threatening feminine attributes in its presentation and religious expressions of Mary as Holy Mother. Pope John Paul II expresses this very sentiment in his homily on *Mary's Maternal Love*, "Mary's motherhood, in our regard, is manifested in a particular way in the places where she meets us: her dwelling places; places in which a special presence of the Mother is felt" (1982 para. 6). Thus, for those seeking succor and reprieve from the overtly male authority of the Catholic Church, the grotto is a place of safety. I will be discussing this critical feminine attribute in the following sections.

8.10 A New Sacred Feminine?

In 1974, Historian Barbara Welter wrote a provocative article, "The Feminization of American Religion: 1800-1860" (1974), arguing that "...the Christianization of the West, indeed the domesticating of the West, was probably the most important religious, cultural, and political event of the nineteenth century" (143). Religion, she points out, had become "more domesticated, in other words, "feminine" (137). Welter points to this feminization as beginning in the nineteenth and continuing into the twentieth century. Pivotal to this perception were essentialist attributes attached to women in the nineteenth century (Mínguez-Blasco 2021, 96). Women were perceived as more caring, empathetic, and open to a personalized relationship with a supernatural, all-loving God. This "feminization" was as much about changing roles for women in the Church as it was about Mary's position as the feminine face of God (Welter 1974, 139). Women attended church more often than men during this period and took on extra-layital jobs such as raising money for the Church and visiting the sick.

Historian Patrick Pasture locates this "feminization" in an alteration of religious piety in the Christian west:

"... Christianity became characterized by a change in piety, which became typified by emotion and sentimentality, and in popular theology, which represented God less as a god of fear and wrath, and more as loving and caring, more 'cozy,' but also a god of humility and sacrifice – associated with women and contrasted to men and the subject of pious adoration (2012, 10).

In Catholicism, Mary became central to religious devotional activities or, as historian Raul Mínguez-Blasco (2021) points out, she was "capital" in this process of feminization of devotion (96). Furthermore, Pasture emphasizes that Mary embodied the essential female values of the nineteenth century, thus, becoming "...the center of devotion after her metamorphosis from 'Heavenly Mother' to the pious Virgin-Mother, perfect wife and mother, and an example for all women" (2012, 10). Mínguez-Blasco locates this feminine piousness in the popularization of Marian devotions, such as the Sacred Heart of Mary, praying the Rosary, and the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 (2020, 96). Notably, he stresses, "...the most stunning evidence of this devotion to the Virgin was the high number of Marian apparitions documented during the nineteenth century in Catholic Europe"(ibid).

Radford-Ruther notes that in the early years of Christianity, Marian devotion was dualistic, split between a nonsexual feminine Mother of God, sanctioned by the Church, and the pre-Christian remnants of earth mother whom she identifies as "Mary of the people" (1977, 58). Through my research, I have recognized that throughout history, there has always been a mix of both aspects, a syncretic melding of Mary's versatile nature in the minds of women who venerate her, especially in vernacular belief and practice.

The concept of 'feminization' illustrates the role of women in the Catholic Church, as well as one of this thesis's assertions that Our Lady of Lourdes grotto is overtly indicative of the sacred

feminine and, therefore, acts as a devotional alternative to patriarchy that is dominant within the Catholic Church. This assertion can be partially attributed to the era (19th century) that it was established and to the timeless archetypal female imagery of the site itself.

8.11 Lourdes, the Feminine Place of Mary

Due to their power over the human imagination and diverse symbolism, grottos, natural and sacred, are rich in their archetypal associations. The most notable one is its gendered association with the maternal feminine. From the moist cave-like niche and the spring of sacred water to the primary actors, Mary and Bernadette, all are part of a larger sacred feminine drama at Lourdes.

Women and young girls were central to the story of Lourdes (Harris 1999, 358). Recognizing this association with the feminine, Harris situates the physicality of the grotto at Lourdes in intimate terms, commenting, "[It is]...womb-like, a place of entry and protection" (1999, 86). Additionally, the village women were the primary participants of Bernadette's visions and were responsible for the early improvised chapel and altars that sprang up around the grotto. Harris remarks that when decorating the makeshift chapel, they "subversively" ignored the civil and clerical authority by creatively doing what they wanted with candles, flowers, and gifts to the Virgin (ibid). This subversive behavior is reminiscent of women building personal altars in the home where "women draw sacred images into the realm of the social and cultural..." (Turner 1990, 173). McDannell suggests that women were often left out of public rituals and devotional leadership. Consequentially, they developed their personal and private devotions to Mary, often reflected in home altars (1999, 38; Turner 1999, 12-13). At the grotto of Our Lady Lourdes, this aspect of women's devotional life broke its private bonds, allowing them to establish their

makeshift altar.¹²⁴ Later in 1858, the Church commandeered the site of Lourdes, and the grotto space was built to reflect more ecclesiastical 'male' sensibilities. However, women were physically and spiritually in control as religious leaders of the newly founded Lourdes shrine, if only for a few months.

The early physical intimacy that the women of Lourdes had with the grotto reflects an awareness of their soundings and underscores the importance of the natural setting. Harris remarks that the natural makeup of the grotto's niche had shapes, contours, and cavities that displayed a quality of "femininity" (1999, 86). These features suggested a dark place where cavities held a supernatural feminine mystery. In the vernacular imagination, the grotto was now, more than ever, a place of "magical interaction and spiritual potential" (Harris 1999, 84). Positioned between civilization and the wild forests, the fertile landscape of rock, water, and earth is part of the site's success, Harris asserts (*ibid*).

Along with the primary actors of Mary and Bernadette, women and young girls were at the forefront as witnesses and recipients of miraculous healings (Harris 1999, 18). In the years following the apparition, women became the central workers at the Lourdes pilgrimage site, acting as caretakers of both pilgrims and the grotto (306). The Mary of Lourdes holds considerable influence on the Catholic vernacular imagination, where the mysteries of the Mother of God are made more poignant through the material and *maternal* aspects of the grotto; it is at her sites that sanctity and safety coalesce.

¹²⁴ Home altars can provide a glimpse into the sphere of private spiritual belief that women have learned to conceal in the light of hegemonic religious institutions. Altars are a way for women to display personal observances to the sacred. They draw on elite religious traditions and vernacular rituals and objects to produce a multivariate arrangement that reflects their personal spiritual character.

As the foundation of all replicated Lourdes grottos, the site at Massabielle has carried its feminine Marian imagery to remote parts of the Catholic world. Simulated reproduced Lourdes grottos are fashioned with the same care to include the female-centered expressions present at the grotto in France. Furthermore, like the primary grotto at Lourdes, these replications reach the vernacular imagination, drawing on the sacred mythos of water, stone, soil, darkness, and rebirth (McDannell 1995, Turner 1999, 32). Tangibly, this places the environment of Lourdes grottos' in a sacralized myth-scape of religious memory, harkening back to a time when stone and water evoked a cosmology of hidden realms where divinity was manifested.

Conclusion

Repeats of the Past

“Faith is not clinging to a shrine but an endless pilgrimage of the heart.”

Abraham Joshua Heschel (1976, 174).

Recently, the Archdioceses of St. John’s have been ordered to pay millions in compensation to the victims of clerical sexual abuse at Mount Cashel orphanage and boy's school. According to the proposed tender sale package, this would include a "...inventory of church, parish hall, rectory, vacant land and other real estate holdings situated within the St. John's region"—graveyards are excluded (District of Newfoundland and Labrador 2022, Sect. 12). In a CBC article dated June 20, 2022, journalist Patrick Butler writes, “Dozens of Newfoundland churches will be sold to compensate survivors of sexual abuse at Mount Cashel.¹²⁵ Catholics are scrambling to buy buildings they thought they already owned” (para. 1).

I point out this matter because clerical abuse's tragic generational effects are ongoing. This is not to say that victims should not receive compensation—they certainly should—many of them are in their 80s and 90s. Nonetheless, my focus in the last chapter has been on the broader communities’ needs and responses to the crisis that have been forgotten or pushed aside. Regrettably, for the laity, the Church has had to sell many of its properties that were thought to have been owned by the local parishes.¹²⁶ “I don't understand,” said one parishioner from Portugal

¹²⁵ The Churches bill, according to Butler, could top 50 million (2022, para. 2).

¹²⁶ Recompense is more than necessary in the wake of the scandal. In a 2020 Bloomberg article entitled “Catholic Church Shields \$2 Billion in Assets to Limit Abuse Payouts,” journalist Josh Saul comments, “Victims of childhood sexual abuse face increased mental and physical health problems and lower lifetime earnings. The cost to a victim can

Cove, not far from Flatrock, "This house, this church, the church hall, was built by the parishioners in this parish, and the Archdiocese of St. John's can just come in here and take it and sell it? I don't understand it at all" (Ibid). Another individual writing into *Saltwire Network* wrote, "...it is not the Church and the senior levels (Vatican) paying retribution for these acts but rather the very same parishioners, or relatives of, that were victimized so long ago" (Le Drew 2022, para. 5).

This thesis has demonstrated that the power of proprietorship of the two grottos plays heavily into the community's emotional and spiritual connections to these religious sites. Historic architect Thomas Coomans reasons that the loss of sacred edifices has profound consequences for the people and the site (2012, 222). Nevertheless, the sell-off of sacred Church properties is nothing new. According to historic architects Luc Noppen and Lucie Morriset (2012):

Churches face numerous legal actions related to sexual abuse by members of the clergy; several dioceses have been forced to sell off all of their real estate holdings in order to settle these legal proceedings.... *In Newfoundland*, in order to cover the compensation paid following the misconduct of only one priest, the St George Diocese (since renamed Corner Brook and Labrador Diocese) was forced to declare bankruptcy in 2005, and its 150 properties (churches, presbyteries, and missions) were put up for sale. Recently, the diocese of London (Ontario) has put up the bishop's house for sale in order to cover the legal fees incurred in a similar lawsuit (italics mine 244).

The "ripples" or effects of the abuse scandal that Bowman pointed out earlier continue today (2016, 142). This was, and still is, a painful time in Newfoundland's religious history. Not only have the laity been forced to endure years of painful knowledge that the abuse was happening under their noses, but in many ways, they continue to pay for the Catholic Church's sins through the loss of what they thought to be established sacred places of worship. I had heard snippets of

be more than \$280,000 over a lifetime, according to a 2018 study by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health" (2022, para.20).

what was transpiring in the abuse court cases and that some Church properties would have to be sold to cover costs. However, my heart sank when I heard they were selling the 167-year-old St. John the Baptist Basilica.¹²⁷ If they could sell something so iconic to St. John's, they could easily sell the lands that the grottos of Renew and Flatrock rest on and their affiliated churches—what then?

As with so many other churches and shrines in Newfoundland, Renew and Flatrock built their sacred edifices with their sweat and toil, with the reasonable expectation that the shrines belonged to the community as much as the Church. These sites of sacrality were, and are, the bedrock of outport communities such as Renew and Flatrock. Both grottos stand out as essential pieces of Newfoundland religious history; fortunately, the community of Renew bought their church and land in 2017; however, other outports along the southern shore have not been so lucky. Many, if not most, of the small community churches' are being sold to accommodate the archdiocese's bill that has come due.

In a recent article dated May 9, 2022, in an online Catholic website, *The Pillar*, laity in St. Philipps-Portugal Cove sought to keep their parish church open as a sacred space, but "...a group of business leaders in their small seaside community aims to purchase and redevelop the property as a community space, with a focus on "heritage, arts and culture, health, wellness, and mindfulness..." (para. 6). This is genuinely where the sacred runs headlong into the (commercial) profane. Coomans's work on sacred sites points out the power and complexity of these locations:

Because faith is a decisive factor in the identity of nations, people, social groups, and communities, more than any other building type, *religious*

¹²⁷ The Basilica recently sold for three million dollars. Three Catholic groups — the Basilica Heritage Foundation, St. Bonaventure's College and the St. Bon's Forum had the winning bid. The desire to save the cathedral led them to band together and come up with the finances. Their fear was that the basilica would have been sold to developers and turned into retail establishments or, worse, condos. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/archdiocese-bidding-basilica-1.6487828> (accessed July 7, 2022)

buildings crystallize a complex range of symbolic, psychological, and ideological values, including power and authority, tradition and modernity, emotion and devotion, ethic and aesthetic, theology and liturgy, individual and group, divine, and human, etc. The balance between all these values evolves as a result of changing historical contexts, successive generations, and new perceptions (italics mine 2012, 222).

Sacred places are often "lodged in evolving circumstances" (Coomans et al. 2012, 7). With this comes a certain fragility to these sites, which rely on the social and political environments of the time to maintain their physical, religious, and cultural status. The thoughts of losing the grottos to disuse, modernity, and change are not new to those who love and care for the two Marian shrines. As previously mentioned, Joe and Jeanie are apprehensive about the fate of their beloved Lourdes grotto in Flatrock. However, to lose it because of the culpability of those in the Church only resurrects the trauma, pain, and anger of the past. Fr. Lundrigan, the parish priest for Torbay and Flatrock, recently spoke to *The Catholic Register*, noting, "I wanted to acknowledge that we have gone through a real tragedy because of bad choices made years ago for decades. We are now suffering the consequences many years later" (2022, para. 3). Noteworthy is the fact that the grotto at Flatrock sits on land Jeanie Kehoe's family donated to the church to build the shrine. Also, the Flatrock grotto is registered with Newfoundland Heritage as a historical site and is covered by strict limitations on what alterations can be made to the site; this may be its saving grace. Relevantly, in what is possibly a prayer just answered, an article posted on CBC news online, dated July 18, 2022, confirms that Flatrock is buying St. Michaels church and the Lourdes grotto (Gillis 2022, para. 8).

Overall, as with the issue of clerical abuse in the outport communities, I am once again struck by the negligence of the Catholic Church to the collective communities' pain of watching what they once believed sacred sold. Likewise, this sell-off has parallels the confusion and pain for congregants' around the removal of sacred objects from the churches after Vatican II;

however, it is the whole religious edifice now. To add more distress to an already painful experience of losing their churches, the Archdioceses have also appropriated parish funds. One parishioner states, "...news delivered to parishes by the archdiocese of funds being taken over was like a Canadian Revenue investigator informing someone they owe money for taxes. A very cold, calculated manner [the way] it has been handled here" (Sweet 2022, para.15).

What is going on now in the Catholic Church in Newfoundland is not new or unusual. In an article in the *Washington Post*, journalist Duke Kwon comments that "Historic church buildings are becoming an endangered species. Sacred spaces are disappearing from our civic landscape" (2018, para. 4). This is certainly nothing new to have churches that no longer have congregations, or have been de-sanctified due to structural issues, or lack of use, sold and turned into art or yoga centers. One reporter fed up writing about the loss of churches in St. John's commented, "Times are changing, with many faith congregations seeming to be decreasing rapidly. Maybe the days of physical church buildings are coming to an end" (Wiffen 2022, para. 30). Sadly, in the articles and comments I have read concerning the sell-off, I sensed particular anger and dejected acceptance towards the powers that be.

Community churches in Newfoundland are central to the laities' sense of collective worship.¹²⁸ Eliade recognizes that sacred spaces such as churches act as "fixed points" (1957, 22). As one parishioner points out, "It's [the church] the heart and soul, really, of a small community in Newfoundland" (Gillis 2022b para. 3). For many Catholics, the physical parish church was, and is, central to their lives in the broadest sense of the word, in that it functions as *axis regionalis* to

¹²⁸ As in my discussion on the Renew's grotto, proprietorship of sacred places forms a special bond to the numinous, the transcendent. No longer is the sacred ephemeral and transitory, it is now rooted in place. As in Exodus 25:8, when God speaks to Moses concerning the children of Israel, "Let them make me a sanctuary, so I may dwell among them" (KJV), the sacred "dwells" in the materially "made" edifice. It is here in that the laity go to encounter, and for lack of a better word, consume the holy.

communities of faith (see Lane 1988, 20-25). Countless parishioners were baptized, married, and buried in the same parish church—not to mention the substantial amount of physical labor the laity put into the building and upkeep of these structures. Sociologist Liliane Voyé recognizes this, commenting:

A particular church evokes the history of a family because it is the place where the parents got married and where the funerals of the grandparents took place. This building contributes to the knowledge of the family and of the organizing principles of familial affectivity. At the individual level, it may evoke the memory of one's solemn communion, with its family gathering and the gifts received, some of which indicated that this ceremony marked a passage in life...." (2012, 77).

Stories are told, memories are made, and sorrow and joy are laid at the foot of the altar; therefore, the sheer emotional connection to these sacred places cannot be counted in dollars.¹²⁹

Locality plays no small part in how the grottos are understood and used. With its pre and post-Vatican character, Renew's remains a powerful physical and spiritual center to the community despite other religious edifices being torn down over the years. The site has an organic quality, corresponding to the natural environment. For the community of Renew's, the past and the present are linked by communal memory and the physicality of the grotto. For the Flatrock grotto, relevancy remains to a small few in the community, but its principal influence lies in the people it attracts through use and tourism—this, too, is a product of place. Because of distance, Renew's did not have the tourist draw in the early years of the grotto when roads were rough and, often, impassable. However, because of its proximity and size, Flatrock's grotto is uniquely positioned to draw in travelers of all kinds. Each of the grottos in my research reflects different junctures in the history of the Catholic Church, suggesting the time and place in which they were constructed.

¹²⁹ As one lawyer for the abused remarks, the bankruptcy and sell off of properties by the Church offers a "clean slate," but for whom? (Saul 2020, para.5).

Nevertheless, the fact that both grottos still have relevancy today reflects the power and continuity of local Marian devotional sites.

Sacred places are made not only of materials but of people, time (history), and narrative. I would argue that time is the most precarious of the three. Change and modernity have taken their toll on many sacred places in Newfoundland. The social and religious landscape has changed in Newfoundland over the years due to modernity and the decrease of the Catholic Church's dominance. One would be blind not to notice the closure of parish churches, lack of incoming priests, and general indifference to an established religion, thus, reflecting the adage that nothing is permanent. Catholic spaces, such as the two grottos in this thesis, are increasingly becoming contested sites of social interest and tourism. Nevertheless, to the devout, they remain focal points for encounters with the holy. The reproduced Lourdes grottos at Flatrock and Renews will endure as long as some find joy, solace, and memory within their sacred boundaries—their story is ongoing.

Further Research

Early on, I felt a need to direct the flow of information and questioning in this research, but I have found that the investigation and the people directed me. I did not expect to find such a profound and timely issue of clerical abuse connected to the grotto in Renews. It made me appreciate the power of these small holy sites that still hold precedence in our modern world. This study has led me to recognize that more research is warranted into replicated Lourdes grottos in Catholic communities. Due to their power to influence and support local community life, they often become places of spiritual and psychological safety for those who feel marginalized due to circumstances not within their control. Research into these edifices can uncover compelling

evidence that these grottos do much more than act as aesthetic ritual sites. Instead, they can offer a place of spiritual safety to pray and reflect.

I would also call for further intervention and mediation into damage left behind in the community by the Catholic Church's mishandling of the clerical abuse crisis, which seems to be an ongoing issue. I recognize that the Archdiocese made some effort early on, but it was minimal, as noted in Terry and Ronnie's interviews. Many communities in Newfoundland and Labrador still carry the scars left by a malignant time in the Church's history. Because it is buried just under the surface, outport communities like Renew's feel it has been swept aside with little thought to the continuing sadness and anger among the laity. All it takes is another scandal or, as noted above, the recent selling off of local churches to resurrect the resentment and pain.

The grottos at Flatrock and Renew's reveal a quality often found in many Marian apparitions; simple people, simple places. It is this straightforwardness, I have argued, as to why many who hold great devotion for Our Lady of Lourdes feel they have unspoken permission to reconstruct replicas of the primary grotto in France in their backyards, where Mary's presence is physically and spiritually part of the day to day lives of ordinary people. By doing so, they ostensibly re-enact Bernadette's legend each time they reach out to Mary at her special place. These two grottos reflect the power of sacred places to hold the religious imaginations of believers. Yet, most of all, they offer alternate places of worship and prayer in times of spiritual turmoil. This attribute is one of the more powerful things the research has revealed.

Finally, I end this thesis where it began, with Bernadette and her encounter with the Virgin. The February day in 1858, when Bernadette first viewed the apparition, changed Marian devotion and the concept of the sacred feminine for many generations (I have often wondered if the apparition appeared in a Church or a room before a crucifix during prayer, would it have had

the same worldwide impact?). As a result of the visions, Mary was recognized as accessible to all, no matter how poor or destitute their lives were. I have come to believe that Mary has always been seen as approachable by the common populace—the story of Bernadette only reinforces this perception. The power of the Lourdes narrative establishes that even the humblest of God's creatures could hear the voice of Mary even in the most unsuspecting places. In the case of Bernadette's vision, the holy did not discriminate; instead, it sought out that which was open and unassuming to reveal itself—not too dissimilar to Mary's own story at the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38). Bernadette's vision of the Virgin was a divine hierophany, yet, she would come to be seen and conflated with simple everyday folk.

This thesis has underscored the dynamic aspects of the replicated Lourdes grottos at Flatrock and Renew. Both sites actively function as a nexus for local history, community, Catholic identity, and vernacular spirituality, thus, bearing witness to a strong Catholic Christian tradition that has utilized sacred shrines since its inception two thousand years ago. Of all the material traditions of Catholicism, the veneration of Mary and her holy shrines is one of the most enduring. The two Marian grottos find their antecedents in the past yet still function in today's world wholly *Sui generis* in their sacred purpose.¹³⁰ They are fully functioning centers of belief, acting as a spiritual "cosmos' in miniature" wherein all aspects of spiritual belief and practice are actuated. (Miller 1982, 10). Mary's voice is still heard (although quieter) among the natural elements that reflect these sacred spaces' uniqueness. Catholic places, such as cathedrals, churches, and shrines, facilitate the divine through materiality. It is at (a) 'place' that God

¹³⁰ *Sui generis*: Unique; stands on its own

communes with the devoted and where the holy's intangible presence is materially framed in the physicality of human-made space.

I come away from this work appreciating the complexity of what the sacredness of a place truly represents. The intersections of the numinous and the material which converge at holy structures are in constant flux. Grottos, like other sacred edifices, are multifaceted and complex in their meaning. When you think you just might grasp a place's essential significance, you realize it is not knowledge but the enigmatic that is the spiritual foundation of these sites.

Bibliography

- Abrahams, Rodger D. 1969/2007. Foreword. In *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Victor Turner. v-xii. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books
- Adler, Gary J., Tricia Colleen Bruce, and Brian Starks. 2020. *American Parishes: Remaking Local Catholicism*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Amundson, Quinton. 2022. "Newfoundland Catholics Bid Farewell to Parishes." *The Catholic Register*. <https://www.catholicregister.org/item/34824-newfoundland-catholics-bid-farewell-to-parishes>
- Aitken, James K. 2000. "Jewish Tradition and Culture." In *The Early Christian World*. Vol 1, edited by Philip F. Esler. 80-110. New York: Routledge.
- Akenson, Donald H. 1987. *Small Differences: Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, 1815-1922: an International Perspective*. Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Allen, Barbra. 1979. "The Personal Point of View in Orally Communicated History." *Western Folklore* 38 (2):110-118.
- _____. 1989. "Personal Experience Narratives: Using Meaning and Interaction." In *Folk Groups and Folklore Genres: A Reader*, edited by Elliott Oring. 237-43. Logan: Utah State Press.
- Ammerman, Nancy T. 2007. *Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Anderson, Kathryn and Dana C. Jack. 1991. "Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses." In *Women's World: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, edited by Shera Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai. 11-26. London: Routledge.
- Andrews, Molly. 2014. *Narrative Imagination and Everyday life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Anttonen, Veikko. 2003. "Sacred Sites as Markers of Difference: Exploring Cognitive Foundations of Territoriality." In *Dynamics of Tradition: Perspectives on Oral Poetry and Folk Belief*, edited by Lotte Tarkka. 291-305. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society.
- Apolito, Paolo. 2005. *The Internet and the Madonna: Religious Visionary Experience on the Web*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Archdiocese of St. John's Archives and Research. N/D. Typed page of general information, 400/27/5. St. Johns, Newfoundland.

- Armstrong, Robert Plant. 1971. *The Affecting Presence; an Essay in Humanistic Anthropology*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Arweck, Elisabeth, and William J. F. Keenan. 2006. *Materializing Religion: Expression, Performance, and Ritual*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Asad, Talal. 1993. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Ashe, Geoffrey. 1976. *The Virgin*. London: Routledge.
- Audi, Robert. 2008. "Belief, Faith and Acceptance." *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 62 (1): 87-201.
- Badone, Ellen. 1990. "Introduction." In *Religious Orthodoxy and Popular Faith in European Society*, edited by Ellen Badone, 1-23. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Bamberg, Michael G.W., ed. 1997. "Oral Versions of Personal Experience: Three Decades of Narrative Analysis." *The Journal of Narrative and Life History* 7 (1): 1-4.
- Bard, Marjorie. 1986. "Memories, Memorabilia, and Personal Narratives: Life Events in Introspect and Retrospect." *Folklore and Mythology Studies* 10 (1): 42-51.
- Baring, Sabine Gould. 1907. *A Book of the Pyrenees*. London: Methuen & Co.
- Barns, Timothy D. 2010. *Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History*. Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck.
- Baert, Barbara, and Lee Preedy. 2004. *A Heritage of Holy Wood: the Legend of the True Cross in Text and Image*. Ann Arbor: Brill.
- Barlet, Robert. 2013. *Why Can Dead do Shuch Great Things?: Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation*. Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Bauman, Richard. 1975. "Verbal Art as Performance." *American Anthropologist* 77 (2): 290-311.
- Bascom, William. 1965. "The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narrative" *The Journal of American Folklore* 78 (307):3-20.
- Basó, Keith Hamilton. 2010. *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- Bauman, Richard. 1971. "Differential Identity and the Social Base of Folklore." *The Journal of American Folklore* 84 (331): 31-41.
- Bayes, Jane H., and Nayyirah Tawhīdī. 2001. *Globalization, Gender, and Religion: The Politics of Women's Rights in Catholic and Muslim Contexts*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave.
- B.C. Catholic. 2020. Canada and U.S. to be Consecrated to Mary in Response to Pandemic. April 23, 2020. bccatholic.ca/news/catholic-van/canada-and-u-s-to-be-consecrated-to-mary-in-response-to-pandemic (Accessed January 25, 2022).

- Behar, Ruth. 1990. "The Struggle for the Church: Popular Anticlericalism and Religiosity in Post-Franco Spain." In, *Religious Orthodoxy and Popular Faith in European Society*, edited by Ellen Badone, 76-112. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Bell, Catherine. 1992. *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2009. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ben Amos, Dan. 1971. "Toward a Definition of Folklore in Context." *Journal of American Folklore* 84 (331): 3-15.
- Ben-Amos, Dan and Kenneth Goldstein. 1975. *Folklore: Performance and Communication*. Mouton: The Hague.
- Bender, Barbara. 2002. "Time and Landscape." *Current Anthropology* 43 (4): 103-112.
- Bennett, Gillian, and Paul Smith. 2007. *Urban Legends: A Collection of International Tall Tales and Terrors*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Bennett, Gillian. 1987 *Traditions of Belief: Women and the Supernatural*. London: Penguin.
- _____. 1989. "Belief Stories: The Forgotten Genre." *Western Folklore* 48 (4): 289-311.
- _____. 1999. *Alas, Poor Ghost!: Traditions of Belief in Story and Discourse*. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- Bendix Regina. 1997. *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Benson, Bob. 1999. "Grotto Recalls Days of Secret Prayer." *The Telegram*, August 15: 1999.
- Berger, Arthur Asa. 2009. *What Objects Mean: An Introduction to Material Culture*. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press.
- Berger, Peter. 1967. *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. New York: Doubleday.
- Beyer, Peter F. 1994. *Theory, Culture, and Society: Religion and Globalization*. London: Sage.
- Bielo, James S. 2015. "Replicating the Holy Land in the U.S. 'A Materializing the Bible' Road Trip." Web blog post. *Material Religions*. 30 December. (Accessed April 14, 2018).
- Bishop, Hilary J. 2016. "Classifications of Sacred Space: A New Understanding of Mass rock Sites in Ireland". *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*. 20 (4): 828-872.
- _____. 2014. "Spatial Distribution and Location of Catholic Mass rock Sites in the Diocese of Cork." *Geographies of Religions and Belief Systems* 4 (1): 40-78.
- Blasco, Raul Minguez. 2021. "Between Virgins and Priests: Feminisation of Catholicism and Priestly Masculinity in Nineteenth-Century Spain." *Gender and History* 33 (1):94-110.

- Boehm, Deborah A. 2002. "Our Lady of Resistance: "The Virgin of Guadalupe and Contested Constructions of Community in Santa Fe, New Mexico." *Journal of the Southwest* 44 (1): 95-104.
- Boff, Leonardo. 1987. *The Maternal Face of God : the Feminine and Its Religious Expressions*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Boston Globe. 2015. *Betrayal: The Crisis in the Catholic Church*. Boston: Back Bay Books.
- Bovin, Nicole. 2009. "Grasping the Elusive and Unknowable: Material Culture in Ritual Practice." *Material Religion* 5 (3): 268-287.
- Bowman, Marian, and Ülo Valk, eds. 2012. "Introduction: Vernacular Religion, Generic Expressions and the Dynamics of Belief." In *Vernacular Religion in Everyday Life: Expressions of Belief*. 1-19. Sheffield: Equinox.
- Bowman, Marian. 1985. Devotion to St. Gerard Majella in Newfoundland: The Saint System in Operation and Transition. Master's Thesis. Memorial University. St. Johns, Newfoundland.
- _____. 2003. "Vernacular Religion and Nature: The 'Bible of the Folk' Tradition in Newfoundland." *Folklore* 114 (3): 285-295.
- _____. 2004. "Phenomenology, Fieldwork and Folk Religion." In *Religion: Empirical Studies*, edited by Steven J. Sutcliffe. 3-18. London: Ashgate.
- _____. 2016. "Crisis, Change and 'the Continuous Art of Individual Interpretation and Negotiation': The Aftermath of Clerical Sexual Abuse in Newfoundland." *Journal of the Irish Society for the Academic Study of Religions* 3:140-167.
- Boyer, Marie-France. 2002. *The Cult of the Virgin: Offerings, Ornaments, and Festivals*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Bradley, Ian C. 2012. *Water: A Spiritual History*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Brazil, Noreen and Helen Lawler. 2008. *Keeping the Bond Alive...Sharing our Memories; Renews – Cappahayden Come Home Year 2008*. Renews: Self-published.
- Brie, Steve, Jenny Dagers, and David Torevell, eds. 2009. *Sacred Space: Interdisciplinary Perspectives within Contemporary Contexts*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Brockman, Norbert. 2000. "Marian Pilgrimage and Shrines." *Marian Studies* 51 (8):96-111.
- Bronner, Simon. 1983. "Visible Proofs: Material Culture Study in American Folkloristics." *American Quarterly*, 35 (3): 316-338.
- _____. 1986. "Folk Objects." In *Folk Groups and Folklore Genres: An Introduction*, edited by Elliott Oring, 199-224. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- _____. 1998. *Following Tradition: Folklore in the Discourse of American Culture*. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press.

- _____. 2000. "The American Concept of Tradition: Folklore in the Discourse of Traditional Values." *Western Folklore* 59 (2):143-170.
- Brown, Frank Burch. 2000. *Good Taste, Bad Taste, and Christian Taste: Aesthetics in Religious Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____, ed. 2014. "Introduction." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and the Arts*, 1-24. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, Peter. 1981. *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Budwey, Stephanie. 2014. *Sing of Mary: Giving Voice to Marian Theology and Devotion*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press.
- Bovin, Nicole. 2009. "Grasping the Elusive and Unknowable: Material Culture in Ritual Practice." *Material Religion*, 5 (3): 268-287.
- Brenner Nancy Frey. 1992. "The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Southern Italy and Spain." *Ethos*, 20 (1): 66-95.
- Brie, Steve, Jenny Dagers, and David Torevell eds. 2009. *Sacred Space: Interdisciplinary Perspectives within Contemporary Contexts*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Bronner, Simon. 1986. *Grasping Things: Folk Material Culture and Mass Society in America*. Bowling Green: University Kentucky Press.
- Broussard, Karlo. 2016. "What Constitutes a Miracle?" Catholic Answers: To Explain and Defend the Catholic Faith. <https://www.catholic.com/magazine/online-edition/what-constitutes-a-miracle> (Accessed March 1, 2021).
- Brunett, Alexander J. and Peter F. Carnley. 2004. Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ: The Seattle Statement. Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC). *Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity*. (Accessed March 20, 2020). http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/angl-comm-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20050516_mary-grace-hope-christ_en.htm
- Brunvand, Jan. 1998. *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction*. New York: Norton and Co.
- Budwey, Stephanie A. 2014. *Sing of Mary: Giving Voice to Marian Theology and Devotion*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press.
- Buitelaar, Marjo, Hetty Zock and Gustavo Benavides, eds. 2013. *Religion and Society: Religious Voices in Self-Narratives: Making Sense of Life in Times of Transition*. New York: De Gruyter.
- Bullivant, Stephen, Sebastian. 2020. *Mass Exodus: Catholic Disaffiliation in Britain and America since Vatican II*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Butler, Gary. 1990. "Saying Isn't Believing: Conversations, Narrative and the Discourse of Belief in a French-Newfoundland Community." St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research.
- Butler Patrick. 2022. Selling Churches to Pay for Sins. CBC Radio Canada. June 1, 2022. <https://www.cbc.ca/newsinteractives/features/selling-churches-to-pay-for-sins> (accessed June 23, 2022).
- Bynum, Caroline Walker. 2011. *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe*. New York: Zone Books.
- Byrne, Cyril J. et al. 1984. *Gentlemen-Bishops and Faction Fighters: The Letters of Bishops O' Donel, Lambert, Scallan, and Other Irish Missionaries: Catholicism's Formative Years in Newfoundland, 1784-1829*. St. John's: Jespersen Press.
- Cadigan, Sean T. 2009. *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History*. Toronto: University of Toronto.
- Cameron, Averil. 2006. "Constantine and the 'Peace of the Church.'" In *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, edited by Margaret M. Mitchell and Frances M. Young, 1:538–51. Cambridge History of Christianity. Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Cameron, Euan. 2010. *Enchanted Europe: Superstition Reason and Religion, 1250-1750*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Canada's Historic Places. 2005. "Blessing of the Fleet and Homily Site." Historic Places.ca. <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=4438> (Accessed February 11, 2021).
- Cannell, Fenella. 2006. *The Anthropology of Christianity*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Cappadona, Diane Apostolos. 2014. "Visual Arts as Ways of Being Religious." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and the Arts*, edited by Frank Burch Brown, 220-234. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Carroll, Michael P. 1983. "Visions of the Virgin Mary: The Effect of Family Structures on Marian Apparitions." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 22 (3): 205-221.
- _____. 1985. "The Virgin Mary at LaSalette and Lourdes: Whom Did the Children See?" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 24 (1): 56-74.
- _____. 1986. *The Cult of the Virgin Mary: Psychological Origins*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Carmichael, David L., Jane Hubert, Brian Peeves, and Audhild Schanche, eds. 1994. *Sacred Sites. Sacred Places*. London: Routledge.
- Carnes, Natalie. 2017. "How Love for the Image Cast out Fear of it in Early Christianity." *Religions* 8 (2):1-15.
- Carp, Richard M. "Teaching Religion and Material Culture." *Teaching Theology and Religion* 10 (1): 1-12.

- Cartlidge, David R., and J. K. Elliott. 2001. *Art and the Christian Apocrypha*. London: Routledge.
- Cartwright, Christine A. 1982. "To the Saints Which Are at Ephesus...": A case Study in the Analysis of Religious Memorates." *New York Folklore* 8 (3): 57-70.
- Catholic News Service. 2021. The 70th Miracle: Lourdes Healing Officially Declared Supernatural. <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/its-a-miracle-lourdes-healing-officially-declared-supernatural-84194> (Accessed March 3, 2021).
- Cashman, Ray, Tom Mould, and Pravina Shukla. 2011. *The Individual and Tradition: Folkloristic Perspectives*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Cashman, Ray. 2006. "Critical Nostalgia and Material Culture in Northern Ireland." *Journal of American Folklore* 119, (472):137-160.
- Catholic Church. 2011. *The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests in the United States, 1950-2010*. Washington: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. <<http://new.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/upload/The-Causes-and-Context-of-Sexual-Abuse-of-Minors-by-Catholic-Priests-in-the-United-States-1950-2010.pdf>>.
- Catholics & Cultures. 2022. Shrines & Pilgrimage. <https://www.catholicsandcultures.org/practices-values/shrines-pilgrimage> (Accessed January 27, 2022).
- Chamberlain, Gary. 2012. "From Holy water to Holy waters" *Water Resources IMPACT*, 14 (2):6-9.
- Chidester, D. and Linenthal, E.T.1995. "Introduction." In *American Sacred Space*, edited by David Chidester and E.T. Linenthal. 1-42. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Chidley, Beth. 2016 Interview by Author. August 2016, Renew, Newfoundland.
- Chidley, Eddie. 2016. Interview by Author. August 2016, Renew, Newfoundland.
- Chidley, Linda. 1998. Stories of the Renew Grotto: How It came To Be and how it has Survived for Seventy Years. Unpublished Undergraduate Essay. St John's, MUNFLA 97-058.
- Christian Teen Forums. 2013. Bible Verse that Stops Bleeding; Ezekiel 16:6. <http://www.christianteenforums.com/index.php?/topic/70814-bible-verse-that-stops-bleeding-ezekiel-166/> (Accessed August 1, 2021).
- Chinnici, Joseph P. 2004. "The Catholic Community at Prayer: 1926-1976." In *Habits of Devotion: Catholic Religious Practice in Twentieth-Century America*, edited by Jams M. O'Toole. 9-87. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Clarke, Steve. 1999. "Hume's Definition of Miracles Revised." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 36 (1): 49-57.

- Clifford, James. 1986. "Introduction: Partial Truths." In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, edited by Clifford, James, and George E. Marcus. A School of American Research Advanced Seminar. Berkeley: University of California Press
- Coco, Angela. 2014. *Catholics, Conflicts and Choices: An Exploration of Power Relations in the Catholic Church*. London: Routledge.
- Colgan, Andrew. 2020. *Pocket Guide to Post-Modernism*. Kingwood: Atlas Society.
- Collins, Peter. n/d. "Researching Objects and Space" Research Methods for the Study of Religion. University of Kent, United Kingdom. <https://www.kent.ac.uk/religionmethods/topics/objects-and-space.html> (accessed May 11, 2020).
- Coleman, Simon, and John Elsner. 1998. *Pilgrimage: Past and Present in the World Religions*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Coleman, Simon, and John Eade. 2004. *Reframing Pilgrimage: Cultures in Motion*. London: Routledge.
- Coleman, Simon. 2019. Mary in a Mobile World: the Anthropology of a Moving Symbol. In *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, edited by Chris Maunder. 608-620. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Conan, Neil. 2010. Do You Believe In Miracles? Most Americans Do. National Public Radio (NPR) <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=124007551> (Accessed March 16, 2021).
- Condon, Eileen, M. 1992. "Confirmation: A Folklore Ethnography of Roman Catholic Parish Practice in Newfoundland." Master's Thesis. Memorial University.
- Confino, Alon. 1997. "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method". *The American Historical Review: 1386-1403*.
- Coomans, Thomas. et.al, 2012a. "Introduction." In *Loci Sacri: Understanding Sacred Places*, edited by Thomas Coomans, Rajesh Heynickx, Herman De Dijin, Jan De, Myre and Bart Verschaffel. Leuven University Pres.
- _____. 2012b. "Reuse of Sacred Places: perspectives for a Long Tradition." In *Loci Sacri: Understanding Sacred Places*. 221-242. T. Coomans, H. De Dijn J. De Maeyer, R. Heynickx and B. Verschaffel, eds. Leuven: Leuven University Press.
- Corner Mark. 2005. *Signs of God : Miracles and Their Interpretation*. Aldershot: Routledge.
- Corson, Dorothy V. 2006. *A Cave of Candles: The Story Behind Notre Dame's Grotto*. Nappanee: Evangel Publishing House.
- Courtens, Ien. 2009. "Mary, Mother of All: Finding Faith at the Sacred Source of Sendangsono, Indonesia." In *Moved by Mary: The Power of Pilgrimage in the Modern World*, edited by Anna-Karina Hermkins, Willie Jansen, and Catrien Notermans. 101-115. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Couchman, Judith. 2012. *The Art of Faith: A Guide to Understanding Christian Images*. Brewster: Paraclete Press.

- Courtwright, Paul B. 1987. "Shrines," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Volume 13, edited by Mircea Eliade. 299-302, New York: Macmillan.
- Colwell-Chanthaphonh, C, and M.de Salle-Essoo. 2014. "Saints and Evil and the Wayside Shrines of Mauritius." *Journal of Material Culture* 19 (3): 253-277.
- Cranston, Ruth.1955. *The Miracle of Lourdes*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Crawford, Kerry. 2008. *Lourdes Today: A Pilgrimage to Mary's Grotto*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press.
- Crawford O'Brien, Suzanne J. 2008a. "Talking Place: Ritual and Reciprocity at Holy Wells and Mass Stones in the Republic of Ireland." *Journal of Ritual Studies*. 22 (1): 1-20.
- _____. 2008b. "Well, Water, Rock: Holy Wells, Mass rocks and Reconciling Identity in the Republic of Ireland." *Material Religion* 4 (3): 326-348.
- Crummey, Michael. 2007. "A Penitential Place: The Irish Presence in Newfoundland Literature: Adapted from a Presentation to the 23rd IASIL Japan Conference". *Journal of Irish Studies* 22: 74-83.
- Cunneen, Sally.1996. *In Search of Mary: The Woman and the Symbol*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Curran, Charles E. 2008. *Catholic Moral Theology in the United States: A History*. Georgetown: Georgetown University Press.
- Cruz, Joan Carroll. 2015. *Relics: What they Are and Why They Matter*. Charlotte: TAN Books.
- Cruz, Deirdre de la. 2015. *Marian Apparitions and the Making of a Filipino Universal*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- D'Agostino, Fred, Gerald Gaus, and John Thrasher (2021). "Contemporary Approaches to the Social Contract," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2021/entries/contractarianism-contemporary/>>.
- Daily, Mary. 1968. *The Church and the Second Sex*. New York: Harper Row.
- Danielson, Larry. 1996. "The Folklorist, the oral Historian and Local history." In *Oral History: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, edited by David K. Dunaway and Willa K. Bam. 187-198. Walnut Creek: Altamira.
- Davis, Caroline Franks. 1989. *The Evidential Force of Religious Experience*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Davis, David J. 2017. *From Icons to Idols: Documents on the Image Debate in the Reformation England*. London: James Clarke Company Ltd.
- Davis, Caroline Franks.1989. *The Evidential Force of Religious Experience*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Davies, Jody Shapiro. 1995. *Women in the Presence: Constructing Community and Seeking Spirituality in Mainline Protestantism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

- Davis, Robbie Floyd, and Rachel R. Chapman. 2009. "Ritual." In *Encyclopedia of Women's Folklore and Folklife*, edited by Liz Lock, Theresa A Vaughan, and Pauline Greenhill. 603-61. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Davies, Jody Shapiro. 1995. *Women in the Presence: Constructing Community and Seeking Spirituality in Mainline Protestantism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Davies, Owen. 1996. "Healing Charms in Use in England and Wales: 1700-1950." *Folklore* 107: 19-32.
- Dawe, David. 2011. *Riots and Religion in Newfoundland: The Clash between Protestants and Catholics in the Early History of Newfoundland*. St. John's: Flanker Press.
- Degh Linda. 1972. "Folk Narrative." In *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*, edited by Richard Dorson, 53-84. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- _____. 1994a. "The Approach to Worldview in Folk Narrative Study." *Western Folklore* 53 (1): 243-252.
- _____. 1994b. *American Folklore and Mass Media*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- _____. 1996. "What Is A Belief Legend?" *Folklore* 107: 33-46.
- _____. 2001. *Legend and Belief: Dialectics of a Folklore Genre*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Dégh, Linda, and Andrew Vázsonyi. 1983. "Does the Word "Dog" Bite? Ostensive Action: A Means of Legend-Telling". *Journal of Folklore Research*. 20 (1): 5-34.
- De Haardt, Maaïke. 2011. "The Marian Paradox: Marian Practices as a Road to a New Mariology?" *Feminist Theology* 19 (2): 168-181.
- Delehaye, Hippolyte, and V. M. Crawford. 2007 (1907). *The Legends of the Saints: An Introduction to Hagiography*. Whitefish: Kessinger Pub.
- Després, Sébastien Adrien. 2009. "The Bodies of the Faithful: A Corporeal Ethnography of Canadians on a Roman Catholic Marian Pilgrimage to Medjugorje, Bosnia." Master's Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland.
- Devlin, Johanne Trew. 2005. "The Forgotten Irish? Contested Sites and Narratives of Nation in Newfoundland." *Ethnologies* 27 (2):43-77.
- Devlin, Judith. 1989. *The Superstitious Mind: French Peasants and the Supernatural in the Nineteenth Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- DeVos, Gail. 2012. *What Happens Next?: Contemporary Urban Legends and Popular Culture*. Oxford: Libraries Unlimited.
- Dinges, William D. 1987. "Ritual Conflict as Social Conflict: Liturgical Reform in the Roman Catholic Church." *Sociological Analysis* 48 (2):138-157.
- District of Newfoundland and Labrador Division. In the Matter of the Notice of Intention to Make a Proposal of Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation, 2022. Third Report of

- Trustee.
<https://documentcentre.ey.com/api/Document/download?docId=35114&language=EN>
 (accessed July 8, 2022).
- Dohey, Larry. 2016. Why are Catholics Hiding in the Hills? Archival Moments: April 13, 1829. <http://archivalmoments.ca/tag/mass-rock/> (Accessed July 13, 2020).
- Dolan, Jay P. 2003. *In Search of an American Catholicism: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dorson, Richard M. 1972. "The Debate over the Trustworthiness of Oral Traditional History," in *Folklore: Selected Essays*. 199-224. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- _____. 2013. *Folklore and Fakelore: Essays toward a Discipline of Folk Studies*. Ebook. <https://doi-org.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/10.4159/harvard.9780674330207> (Accessed July 16, 2020).
- Dowd, Marian. 2015. *Archaeology of Caves in Ireland*. Havertown: Oxbow.
- Doyle, Thomas P. 2003. "Roman Catholic Clericalism, Religious Duress, and Clergy Sexual Abuse." *Pastoral Psychology* 51 (3): 189-231.
- _____. 2006. "Clericalism: Enabler of Clergy Sexual Abuse." *Pastoral Psychology* 54 (3): 189-231.
- _____. 2009. Second Abuse and Secondary Victims. Retrieved from https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/fcdc/inquiries/57th/Child_Abuse_Inquiry/Submissions/James_Boyle_Appendices.pdf (February 18, 2021).
- Doyle, Thomas P., A. W. Richard Sipe, and Patrick J. Wall. 2006. *Sex, Priests, and Secret Codes: The Catholic Church's 2000-Year Paper Trail of Sexual Abuse*. Los Angeles: Volt Press.
- Dues, Greg. 1992. *Catholic Customs & Traditions: A Popular Guide*. Mystic: Twenty-Third Publications.
- Dupré, Louis. 2000. *Symbols of the Sacred*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Dougherty, Michael Brendan. 2021. Pope Francis Is Tearing the Catholic Church Apart. New York Times August 12, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/12/opinion/pope-francis-latin-mass.html> (Accessed December 1, 2021).
- Duncan, Robert. 2020. Mary Foretold COVID-19 Pandemic, Alleged Visionary Claims. Catholic News Service, Catholic Philly.com <https://catholicphilly.com/2020/08/news/world-news/mary-foretold-covid-19-pandemic-alleged-visionary-claims/> (Accessed February 1, 2022).
- Dulles, Avery. 1998. "Mary at the Dawn of the New Millennium". *America*. 178 (3): 8-19.
- Dundes, Alan. 1999. *Holy Writ as Oral Lit: The Bible as Folklore*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

- Dunn, James D. G. 2013. *The Oral Gospel Tradition*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Dupré, Louis. 2000. *Symbols of the Sacred*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Durkheim, Émile. 2008/1912. Translated by Carol Cosman, and Mark Sydney Cladis. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eade, John, and Michael J. Sallnow. 2000. *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*. London: Routledge.
- Eade, John. 1992. "Pilgrimage and Tourism at Lourdes, France." *Annals of Tourism Research* 19 (1):18-32.
- _____. 2000. "Order and Power at Lourdes" In *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*, edited by John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow. 51-76. London: Routledge.
- _____. 2015. "Pilgrimage Studies an Expanding Field." *Material Religion* 11 (1): 127-129.
- Eck, Diana L. 2007. *Darśan: Seeing the Divine Image in India*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Eliade, Mircea. 1958. *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. Translated by Rosemary Sheed. New York: Seed and Ward.
- _____. 1959. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. New York: Harcourt, Brace.
- Elliott, Marianne. 2009. *When God Took Sides: Religion and Identity in Ireland: Unfinished History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, Bill. 1989. "Death by Folklore: Ostension, Contemporary Legend, and Murder." *Western Folklore* 48 (3):201-220.
- _____. 1996. "Legend Trip." *American Folklore: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jan Harold Brunvand (1996): 439-40.
- _____. 2003. *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults: Legends We Live*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Engelke, Matthew. 2012. "Material Religion." In *Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies*, edited by Robert Orsi. 209-229. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- English, Leo. F. 1929. "Renews and its Shrine." *Newfoundland Quarterly* 28 (4):15-16.
- Everett, Holly J. 2002. *Roadside Crosses in Contemporary Memorial Culture*. Denton: University of North Texas Press.
- Fanning, Brian. 2014, "A Catholic Vision of Ireland." In *Are the Irish Different?* Editor, Tom Inglis. 44-53. Manchester. Manchester University Press.
- Feintuch, Burt. 2003. *Eight Words for the Study of Expressive Culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

- Feld, Steven, and Keith H. Basso. 1996. *Senses of Place*. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Fine, Gary Allen. 1991. "Redemption Rumors and the Power of Ostension." *The Journal of American Folklore* 104 (412): 179-181.
- FitzGerald, J. E. 1997. *Conflict and Culture in Irish-Newfoundland Roman Catholicism, 1829-1850*. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304406116?accountid=12378>. (Accessed September 29, 2015).
- Flatrock Pilgrimage in Newfoundland, Canada, 2010. Fishersofmenvideo. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rnyrAvAp-lQ> (Accessed March 12 2022).
- Fleming, James M. 2006. *Chronological History of the Irish Catholic Church in Newfoundland and Labrador: The Important Church Events of the Parishes, Bishops, Priests, and Religious on the Island*. Bothell: J. Fleming.
- Foley, Kathleen Garces. 2019. "Parishes as Homes and Hubs." In *American Parishes: Remaking Local Catholicism*, edited by Gary J., Jr. Adler, et al. New York: Fordham University.
- France, David. 2005. *Our Fathers: The Secret Life of the Catholic Church in an Age of Scandal*. New York: Broadway Books.
- Freedberg, David. 1989. *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Freedman, Charles. 2011. *Holy Bones and Holy Dust: How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Frend, W. H. C. 2006. "Persecutions: Genesis and Legacy." Chapter. In *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, edited by Margaret M. Mitchell and Frances M. Young, 1:501–23. Cambridge History of Christianity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Friburg, Nils, Nancy Myer Hopkins and Mark R. Laaser. 1995. *Restoring the Soul of the Church: Healing Congregations Wounded by Clergy Sexual Misconduct*. New York: Liturgical Press.
- Fuller, Louise. 2011. "Critical Voices in Irish Catholicism: Reading the Signs of the Times." *Irish Quarterly Review*, 100 (400):477-488.
- Gobineau, Arthur Comte De, Michael Wilkshire, and Chris Jackson. 1966 [1860]. *Gentleman in the Outposts: Gobineau and Newfoundland*. Translated by Michael Wilkshire, and Chris Jackson. Montreal: MQUP.
- Gerould, Gordon Hall. 1969 (1916). *Saints' Legends*. Folcroft: Folcroft Press Inc.
- Gell, Alfred. 1998. *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1976. "Art as a Cultural System" *MLN* 91 (6): 1473-1499.
- Gesler, Will. 1996. "Lourdes: Healing in a Place of Pilgrimage." *Health and Place* 2 (2): 95-105.
- Gillis, Heather. 2022. Court Approves sale of 42 Catholic Church Properties to Settle abuse Claims. CBC News online, Newfoundland and Labrador.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/court-approves-catholic-churchsales1.6523788#:~:text=The%20Supreme%20Court%20of%20Newfoundland%20and%20Labrador%20has%20approved%20the,sales%20loom%20across%20eastern%20Newfoundland> (accessed July 18, 2022).

_____.2022b. From Shaken to Secured: New Owners of N.L. Catholic Church Properties Divided. CBC News online, Newfoundland and Labrador. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/flatrock-anc-react-catholic-church-property-sales-1.6526074> (accessed July 21, 2022).

Glassie, Henry.1995. "Tradition." *Journal of American Folklore* 108 (430): 395-412.

_____.1999. *Material Culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Glassie Henry, and Pravina Shukul. 2018. *Sacred Art: Catholic Saints and Candomblé: Gods in Modern Brazil*. Bloomington: Indiana Press.

Goldstein, Diane E. The Grotto of our Lady of Lourdes at Flatrock: A Descriptive Essay. Term paper for FL 4240. MUNFLA 78-301. Memorial University, St John's.

_____.1983. "The Language of Religious Experience and Its Implications for Fieldwork." *Western Folklore* 42 (2):105-113.

_____. 1995. "The Secularization of Religious Ethnography and Narrative Competence in a Discourse of Faith." *Western Folklore* 54 (1): 23-36.

Gordon, Beverly. 1997. "Intimacy and Objects: A Proxemics Analysis of Gender-Based Response to the Material World." In *The Material Culture of Gender, the Gender of Material Culture*, edited by Katharine Martinez and Kenneth L. Amesed. 227-252. Winterthur: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.

Gottheil, Elisa A. and Gary Groth-Marnat. 2011. "A Grounded Theory Study of Spirituality: Using Personal Narratives Suggested by Spiritual Images." *Journal of Religion and Health*, 43 (4): 452-463.

Grady. Wayne.1997. "Coming Home." *Canadian Geographic* 117 (4):102.

Graef, Hilda C. 1963. *The Devotion to Our Lady*. New York: Hawthorn Books.

Gray, Madeleine. 2011. "Sacred Space and the Natural World: The Holy Well and Shrine of the Virgin Mary at Penrhys." *European Review of History* 18 (2):243–260.

Graziano, Frank. 2016. *Miraculous Images and Votive Offerings in Mexico*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Greeley, Andrew M. 1977. *The Mary Myth: on the Feminity of God*. New York: Seabury Press.

_____.1990. *The Catholic Myth: The Behavior and Beliefs of American Catholics*. New York: Scribner.

_____.2001. *The Catholic Imagination*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

_____.2005. *The Catholic Revolution: New Wine, Old Wineskins, and the Second Vatican Council*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Griffith, James S. 1982. "The Magdalena Holy Picture: Religious Folk Art in Two Cultures." *New York Folklore* 8 (3-4): 71-82.
- _____. 1992. *Beliefs and Holy Places: A Spiritual Geography of the Pimería Alta*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Grimes, Ronald L. 1992. "Sacred Objects in Museum Spaces." *Studies in Religion* 21: 419-430.
- Grenholm, Christina. 2010. "'Mother Mary Comes to Me:.'" An Essay in constructive Feminist Theology," in *Perspectives on Women's Everyday Religion*, edited by Marja-Liisa Keinanen. 95-115. Stockholm: University of Stockholm.
- Guerin, Sheila. 1971. *History of Renewals*. St. John's: Maritime History Group.
- Haardt, M. de. 2011. "The Marian Paradox: Marian Practices as a Road to a New Mariology?" *Feminist Theology*, 19 (2), 168–181.
- Habgood, John. 1995. "The Sacramentality of the Natural World." In *The Sense of the Sacramental: Movement and Measure in Art and Music, Place and Time*, edited by David Brown and Ann Loades. 19-30. London: SPCK.
- Harding, Les. 1998. *Exploring the Avalon*. Jespersen Publishing.
- Harris, Michael. 1990. *Unholy Orders: Tragedy at Mount Cashel*. Ontario: Viking Press.
- Hall, David D. 1997. *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Halsall, Paul. 1996. "John of Damascus: In Defense of Icons, c. 730." *Medieval Sourcebook*: Fordham University. <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/johndam-icons.asp> (Accessed August 8, 2019).
- Hamilton, Sarah, and Andrew Spicer. 2005. *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. Aldershot: Ashgate Pub.
- Hanrahan, Maura. 1993. *Through a Mirror Dimly: Essays on Newfoundland Society and Culture*. St. John's: Breakwater.
- Harris, Michael. 1990. *Unholy Orders: Tragedy at Mount Cashel*. New York: Viking Press.
- Harris, Ruth. 1999. *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age*. New York: Viking Press.
- Hermkens, Anna-Karina, Willy Jansen, and Catrien Notermans, eds. 2009. *Moved by Mary: The Power of Pilgrimage in the Modern World*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Heschel, Abraham Joshua, 1976. *Man is not Alone: A Philosophy of Religion*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Hicks, Dan, and Mary Carolyn Beaudry, eds. 2010. *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Higgins, Jenny. 2007a. "Events Leading up to the Great Depression." Heritage Newfoundland and Labrador. <https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/politics/depression-origin.php> (Accessed March 29, 2019).

- _____. 2007b "The Truck System." Heritage Newfoundland and Labrador. <https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/economy/truck-system.php> (Accessed May 28, 2020).
- _____. 2017. "Rural Depopulation." Heritage Newfoundland and Labrador. <https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/society/depopulation.php> (Accessed July 21, 2018).
- Hinnells, John R, ed. 2010. *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*. London: Routledge.
- Hoffmann, John P. 2011. *Understanding Religious Ritual: Theoretical Approaches and Innovations*. New York: Routledge.
- Hogan, Mary Patricia. 1957. "The Role of Mary in the History of the Church in Newfoundland." Master's Thesis, University of Ottawa. <https://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/22168>
- _____. 1980. "Marian History of Newfoundland." *The Monitor* 48 (8):23.
- Hole, Christina. 1966. *Saints in Folklore*. London: Bell.
- Holly, Donald H., and Casey E. Cordy. 2007. "What's In a Coin? Reading the Material Culture of Legend Tripping and Other Activities." *Journal of American Folklore* 120 (3): 335-354.
- Honko, Lauri. 1964. "Memorates and the Study of Folk Beliefs." *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 1 (1): 5-19.
- _____. 1979. "Theories Concerning the Ritual Process: An Orientation." In *Science of Religion. Studies in Methodology: Proceedings of the Study Conference of the International Association for the History of Religions*, edited by Lauri Honko. 370-389. The Hague: De Gruyter,
- Hopkins, Peter, Lily Kong, and Elizabeth Olson. 2003. *Religion and Place Landscape, Politics and Piety*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Horsfall, Sara. 2000. "The Experience of Marian Apparitions and the Mary Cult." *Social Science Journal* 37 (3): 375-384.
- Houtman, Dick, and Birgit Meyer. 2010. *Things: Religions and the Question of Materiality*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Hoskins, Janet. 2007. "Afterword-Gendering Religious Objects: Placing them as Agents in Matrices of Power." *Material Religion* 3 (1): 110-119.
- Howes, Graham. 2006. *Art of the Sacred: An Introduction to the Aesthetics of Art and Belief*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- _____. 2014. "Christianity and Visual Art." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and the Arts*, edited by Frank Burch Brown, 295-301. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Howley, M. F. 1979 [1888]. *Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland*. Boston: Doyle and Whittle.
- Hubert, Jane. 1994. "Sacred Beliefs and Beliefs of Sacredness." In *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*, edited by David L Carmichael, Jane Hubert, Brian Peeves, and Audhild Schanche. 9-19. London: Routledge.

- Hubbard, Phil, and Rob Kitchin. 2011. *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*. London: Sage Publications.
- Hufford, David. 1982. *The Terror That Comes in the Night: An Experience-Centered Study of Supernatural Assault Traditions*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- _____. 1983. "The Supernatural and the Sociology of Knowledge: Explaining Academic Belief." *New York Folklore Quarterly* (9):47-56.
- _____. 1985a. "Reason, Rhetoric and Religion: Academic Ideology Verses Folk Belief." *New York Folklore* 11 (1): 177-194.
- _____. 1985b. "Ste. Anne de Beaupre: Roman Catholic Pilgrimage and Healing." *Western Folklore* 44 (3): 194-207.
- _____. 1995a. "The Scholarly Voice and the Personal Voice: Reflexivity in Belief Studies: Reflexivity and the Study of Belief." *Western Folklore* 54 (1): 57-76.
- _____. 1995b. "Beings without Bodies: An Experienced-Centered Theory of the Belief in Spirits." In *Out of the Ordinary: Folklore and the Supernatural*, edited by Barbra Walker, 11-45. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- Hume, David. 2007. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding and other Writings*, edited by Stephen Buckle. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hume, L. 1998: "Creating Sacred Space: Outer Expressions of Inner Worlds in Modern Wicca." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 13, 309–19.
- Hunt, E. D. 1984. *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, a.d. 312-460*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Huston, Cecil J. and William J. Smyth. 1990. *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links and Letters*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Hymes, D.H. 1975. "Breakthrough into Performance." In *Folklore: Performance and Communication*, edited by D. Ben-Amos and K. Goldstein. 11–74. The Hague: Mouton.
- Ice, Joyce. 1997. "Feminist Readings of Folk Material Culture Studies." In *The Material Culture of Gender, the Gender of Material Culture*, edited by Katharine Martinez and Kenneth L. Ames. 217-236. Winterthur: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.
- Inge, John. 2002. *A Christian Theology of Place*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Inglis, Tom. 2007. "Catholic Identity in Contemporary Ireland: Belief and Belonging to Tradition." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 22 (2): 205-220.
- _____. 2014. "The Irish Body." In *Are the Irish Different?* Editor, Tom Inglis. Manchester: Manchester University Press: 88-98.
- Ingold, T. 1993. "The Temporality of Landscape." *World Archaeology* 25: 152–74.
- Insoll, Timothy ed. 2011. "Introduction: Ritual and Religion in Archaeological Perspective." *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Ritual and Religion*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

- Jackson, Hazelle. 2001. *Shell Houses and Grottoes*. Buckinghamshire: Shire Press.
- Jackson, Richard H. and Roger Henrie. 1983. "Perception of Sacred Space". *Journal of Cultural Geography* 3 (2): 94-107.
- James, William C. 1998. *Locations of the Sacred Essays on Religion, Literature, and Canadian Culture*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Japhet, S. 1998: "Some Biblical Concepts of Sacred Place." In *Sacred Space: Shrine, City, Land*, edited by B.Z. Kedar and R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, 55–72. New York: New York University Press.
- Jasper, David. 2014. "Narrative Ways of Being Religious." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and the Arts*, edited by Frank Burch Brown, 130-145. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Johnson, Elizabeth. 1989. "Mary and the Female Face of God". *Theological Studies*. 520-526.
- Jolles, André. 2017 (1929). *Simple Forms*. Translated by Peter J. Schwartz. London: Verso.
- Jones, Serene. 2000. *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology: Cartographies of Grace*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Joyner, Charles. 1975. "A Model for the Analysis of Folklore Performance in Historical Context." *The Journal of American Folklore*. 88 (349):254-2665.
- Kane, Paula M. 1999. American Catholic Culture in the Twentieth Century. In *Perspectives on American Religion and Culture*, edited by Peter W. Williams. 390-404. Oxford: Blackwell.
- _____. 2004. "Marian Devotion since 1940: Continuity or Casualty?" In *Habits of Devotion: Catholic Religious Practice in Twentieth-Century America*, edited by James O'Toole, 89-129. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Kapalo, James A. 2013. Folk Religion in Discourse and Practice." *Journal of Ethnography and Folkloristics* 7 (1): 3-18.
- Katz, Melissa R and Robert Orsi. 2001. *Divine Mirrors: The Virgin Mary in the Visual Arts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kaufman, Suzanne K. 2005. *Consuming Visions: Mass Culture and the Lourdes Shrine*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Kedar, Benjamin Z. and R. J. Zwi Werblowsky eds. 1998. *Sacred Space: Shrine, City, Land*. New York: New York University Press.
- Keenan, Marie. 2012. *Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church: Gender, Power, and Organizational Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2014 "Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church." In *Are the Irish Different?* Editor, Tom Inglis. 99-109. Manchester. Manchester University Press.
- Kelly, J. 2021. "Apologist." Encyclopedia Britannica <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Apologist>. (Accessed June 23, 2022).

- Kennedy, Eugene. 1988. *Tomorrows Catholics, Yesterdays Church: The Two Cultures of American Catholicism*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Kennedy, J. P. 1954. "Marian Devotion in Newfoundland." *CCHA*, Report 21:77-85.
- Keough, Willeen. 2005. "Ethnicity as Intercultural Dialogue: Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland." *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, 31 (1): 18-28.
- _____. 2008a. "Creating the 'Irish Loop': Cultural Renaissance or Commodification of Ethnic Identity in an Imagined Tourist Landscape." *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, 34 (2): 12-22.
- _____. 2008b. *The Slender Thread: Irish Women on the Southern Avalon, 1750-1860*. New York: Colombia University Press.
- _____. 2018. "'Long Looked For, Come at Last:': Discourses of Whiteboyism and Ribbonism in Eighteenth-and Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland." *Irish Studies Review* 26 (1):5-23.
- Kiigemagi, Cynthia Egan. 2015. "Heritage and the Holy: Defining the Sacred and the Secular at All Hallows-By the-Tower, London." Unpublished term paper. Memorial University of Newfoundland.
- Kilde, Jeanne Halgren. 2008. *Sacred Power, Sacred Space: An Introduction to Christian Architecture and Worship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Klingshirn, William E., and Safran, Linda, eds. 2007. *The Early Christian Book*. Washington: Catholic University of America Press.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. 1989. "Objects of Memory: Material Culture as Life Review." In *Folk Group and Folklore Genres: A Reader*, edited by Elliott Oring. 329-338. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- Knott, Kim. 2000. "Community and Locality in the Study of Religions." In *Secular Theories on Religion*, edited by Tim Jensen and Mikael Rothstein, 87-105. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum.
- _____. 2005. *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis*. London: Equinox.
- _____. 2009. "From Locality to Location and Back Again: A Spatial Journey in the Study of Religion." *Religion* 39 (2):154-160.
- _____. 2010. "Religion, Space and Place: The Spatial Turn in Research on Religion". *Religion and Society* (1): 29-43.
- Kohmescher, Matthew F. 1999. *Catholicism Today: A Survey of Catholic Belief and Practice*. New York: Paulist Press.
- Kong, Lily. 2001. "Mapping 'New' Geographies of Religion: Politics and Poetics in Modernity." *Progress in Human Geography* 25 (2): 211-233.
- Kwon, Duke. 2018. The Tragedy to Communities when Church Buildings are Demolished to make Condos. Washington Post. Acts of Faith.

- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2018/03/28/the-tragedy-to-communities-when-church-buildings-are-demolished-to-make-condos/>
- Krebs, Jill. 2017. "The Body of Mary: Embodiment and Identity in Modern Apparitions." *Religion and Gender* 7 (2): 224-239.
- Kline, Paul M., Robert McMackin and Edna Lezott, 2008. "The Impact of the Clergy Abuse. Scandal on Parish Communities." *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 17(3-4): 290- 300.
- Konieczny, Mary Ellen. 2009. "Sacred Places, Domestic Spaces: Material Culture, Church, and Home at Our Lady of the Assumption and St. Brigitta." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 48 (3): 419-442.
- Kselman, Thomas A and Steven Avella. 1986. "Our Lady of Necedah: Marian Piety and the Cold War." *The Catholic Historical Review* 72 (3): 403-424.
- Kwo-Tan, Chang. 2002. "Syncretic Objects: Material Culture of Syncretic Objects among the Piwan Catholics of Taiwan." *Material Culture* 7 (2): 167-187.
- Lamb, Matthew L., and Matthew Levering. 2008. *Vatican II Renewal within Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lambert, Carolyn. 2010. *Far from the Homes of Their Fathers: Irish Catholics in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1840-86*. Ph. D. Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland.
- Lane, Belden C. 2002. *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Laurence, Bertrand Severe. 1958. "061 Lourdes Documents of Bishop Laurence." Marian Reprints. Paper 55.http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_reprints/55.
- Laurentin, René. 2000. *Bernadette Speaks: A Life of Saint Bernadette Soubirous in Her Own Words*. Boston: Pauline Books & Media.
- Lawler, Michael G., et al. 2014. *The Church in the Modern World: Gaudium et Spes Then and Now*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press.
- Lawless, Elaine J. 1991. "Women's Life Stories and Reciprocal Ethnography as Feminist and Emergent." *Journal of Folklore Research* 28 (1):35-60.
- _____. 1993. *Holy Women, Wholly Women: Sharing Ministries of Wholeness through Life Stories and Reciprocal Ethnography*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- _____. 2000. "'Reciprocal' Ethnography: No One Said It Was Easy." *Journal of Folklore Research* 37 (2): 197-205.
- Lawlor, Tammy. 1999. "Secret Masses at Midnight: The Legend of the Grotto in Renewal, Newfoundland." *Transmission* 3 (2/3):6-10.
- Lay Witness 2004. "The Church's Teaching on Miracles." Catholic Education Resource Center. <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/> Accessed February 18, 2021.

- Le Beau, Bryan F. and Menachem Mor eds. 1996. *Pilgrims & Travelers to the Holy Land*. Studies in Jewish civilizations vol. 7. Omaha: Creighton University Press.
- Le Drew Lorne. 2022. Saltwire. Open letter: Who is being punished in the sale of N.L. Catholic churches? <https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/opinion/letter-who-is-being-punished-in-the-sale-of-nl-catholic-churches-100738957/> (Accessed July 1, 2022).
- Leeuw, Gerardus Van der, Ninian Smart, John Evan Turner. 2014. *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Levine, Amy-Jill. 2005. Introduction. In *A Feminist Companion to Mariology*, edited by Amy-Jill Levine and Maria Mayo Robbins. 1-14. New York T&T Clark.
- Lightfoot, J. B. 2018. The Letter of the Smyrnaeans or the Martyrdom of Polycarp. Internet History Sourcebooks Project. Translated by. J.B. Lightfoot. <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/martyrdom-polycarp-lightfoot.asp> (accessed June 21, 2019).
- Limberis, Vasiliki. 1994. *Divine Heiress: The Virgin Mary and the Making of Christian Constantinople*. London: Routledge.
- Lindahl, Carl, John McNamara, and John Lindow, eds. 2000. *Medieval Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Myths, Legends, Tales, Beliefs, and Customs*. New York: ABC-CEO.
- Lindahl, Carl. 2005. "Ostensive Healing: Pilgrimage to the San Antonio Ghost Tracks." *The Journal of American Folklore* 118, (468):164-185.
- Linn, Denise. 1999. *Altars: Bringing Sacred Shrines into Everyday Life*. New York: Ballantine.
- Llywelyn, Dorian. 2016. Mary and Mariology. Oxford Handbooks Online. www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935420.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935420-e-62 (accessed September 9, 2019).
- Lummis, Trevor. 1988. *Listening to History: The Authenticity of Oral Evidence*. Totowa: Barnes and Noble.
- Luria, Keith P. 2012. *Sacred Boundaries: Religious Coexistence and Conflict in Early-Modern France*. Washington: Catholic University of America Press.
- Lynch, Gordon 2010. "Object Theory: Toward an Intersubjective, Mediated, and Dynamic Theory of Religion." In *Religion and Material Culture: A Matter of Belief*, edited by David Morgan. 40-54. London: Routledge.
- Macdonald, Mary N. 2003. *Experiences of Place*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Magliocco, Sabina. 2005. "Indigenouness and Politics of Spirituality." *Anthropology News* 46 (4): 9–15.
- _____. 2006. *The Two Madonnas: The Politics of Festival in a Sardinian Community*. Long Grove: Waveland Press.
- _____. 2011. *Witching Culture: Folklore and Neo-Paganism in America*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

- _____. 2012. "Religious Practice." In *Companion to Folklore*, edited by Regina F. Bendix and Galit Hasan-Rokem, 136-153. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell.
- _____. 2012b. "Beyond Belief: Context, Rationality and Participatory Consciousness." *Western Folklore* 71(1): 5-24.
- Major, Kevin. 2001. *As Near to Heaven by Sea: A History of Newfoundland and Labrador*. Middlesex: Penguin.
- Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1954. *Magic, Science and Religion*. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books.
- Mannion, John J. 1974. *Irish Settlements in Eastern Canada: A Study of Cultural Transfer and Adaptation*: Published for the University of Toronto Dept. of Geography: University of Toronto Press.
- _____. 1977. "Introduction." In *The Peopling o Newfoundland: Essays in Historical Geography*, edited by John Mannion. 1-13. St John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research.
- _____.2004. *Tracing the Irish: A Geographical Guide*. St. John's, N.L.: Memorial University of Newfoundland. <http://nlirishconnections.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/TRACING-THE-IRISH.pdf> (Accessed June 3, 2019).
- Mannion, Patrick. 2013. "The Irish Diaspora in Comparative Perspective: St. John's, Newfoundland, Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Portland, Maine, 1880-1923." Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto.
- Margry, P. J. 2008. *Shrines and Pilgrimage in the Modern World: New Itineraries into the Sacred*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Marfleet, Philip. 2011. "Understanding 'Sanctuary': Faith and Traditions of Asylum." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24 (3): 440-455.
- Marrigan, Frank. 1972. Some Unusual Experiences Concerning Early Priests in the Carbonear, Conception Bay Area. Memorial University Folklore Archives, 73-61D.
- Martin, Melanie. 2007. Resettlement. Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Web Site. <ps://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/politics/resettlement.php> (Accessed August 06, 2020).
- Marton, F. 1981. "Phenomenography: Describing Conceptions of the World Around Us." *Instructional Science* 10 (2): 177-200.
- _____.1986. "Phenomenography: A Research Approach to Investigating Different Understandings of Reality." *Journal of Thought* 21(3): 28-49.
- Mary and Vatican II. 2020. Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. IV 66 (23). (Accessed March 12, 2020) <https://www.marian.org/mary/vatican.php>
- Masani, Rustom, Pestonji. 1974. *Folklore of Wells: Being a Study of Water-Worship in East and West*. Norwood: Norwood Editions.

- Massey, Doreen. 1993. "Power-Geometry and a Progressive Sense of Place." In *Mapping the Futures: Local Cultures, Global Change*, edited by Jon Bird. 59–69. London: Routledge.
- Matter, Ann E. 2001. "Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in the Late Twentieth Century: Apocalyptic, Representation, Politics." *Religion* 31: 125-153.
- Mazumdar, Shampa and Sanjoy Mazumdar. 2004. "Religion and Place Attachment: A Study of Sacred Places." *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 24 (3):385-397.
- Mazur, Eric Michael, and Kate McCarthy. 2011. *God in the Details: American Religion in Popular Culture*. London: Routledge.
- McCarthy, Mike. 1999. *The Irish in Newfoundland: 1600-1900*. St. John's: Creative Publishers.
- McCaffrey, Lawrence J. 1992. "Irish Textures in American Catholicism". *The Catholic Historical Review*. 78 (1): 1-18.
- McClory, Robert. 2014. Whatever happened to the supernatural? National Catholic Reporter. NCR Today. <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/whatever-happened-supernatural> (Accessed July 15, 2021).
- McDannell, Colleen. 1995. *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- _____. 2007. "Religious History and Visual Culture." *The Journal of American History* 94 (1): 112-121.
- McDavid, S. Jodi. 2012. Counterclericalism: Vernacular Commentary on the Power of the Catholic Priest in Atlantic Canada. Ph.D. thesis. Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- McDermott, Terry. 2014. "Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto in Flatrock, Newfoundland." *The Free Library*. Accessed January 09, 2016. [http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto in Flatrock, Newfoundland.-a0359333726](http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Our+Lady+of+Lourdes+Grotto+in+Flatrock,+Newfoundland.-a0359333726)
- McGowan, Mark G. 2013. "'Pregnant with Perils': Canadian Catholicism and Its Relation to the Catholic Churches of Newfoundland, 1840-1949." *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*, 28 (2): 193-217.
- McGrath, Jacqueline L. 2009. "Folk Belief." In *Encyclopedia of Women's Folklore and Folklife*, edited by Liz Locke, Theresa A Vaughan, and Pauline Greenhill. 203-206. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- McGuire, Henry. 1995. *Byzantine Magic*. Washington: Harvard University Press.
- McGuire, Meredith B. 2008. *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2007. "Embodied Practices: Negotiation and Resistance." In *Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives*, edited by Nancy Ammerman, 186-200. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- McIntyre, John. 2005. "Faith, Theology and the Imagination." In *Theological Aesthetics: A Reader*, edited by Gesa Thiessen. 290-295. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- McNally, Terry. 2009. *What Every Catholic Should Know About Mary: Dogmas, Doctrines, and Devotions*. Bloomington: Xlibris Corp.
- Meades, Sue, and Chris Mousseau. 1984. *The Way to the Grotto: A Guide to the Communities of the Marine Drive*. Flatrock: Goodwiddy Graphics.
- Meagher, Niall. 1962. "Irish Outdoor Shrines." *The Furrow*. 13 (11): 21-26.
- Meagher, Timothy J. 2001. *Inventing Irish America: Generation, Class, and Ethnic Identity in a New England City, 1880-1928*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Merton, Thomas. 2008. "From Pilgrimage to Crusade." *Cithara* 48 (1): 5-21.
- Meyer, Birgit, and Marleen de Witte. 2013. "Heritage and the Sacred." *Material Religion* 9 (3): 274-280.
- Midnight Hill and Grotto de Lourdes on Mass rock Municipal Heritage Site. 2005. *Canada's Historic Places*. <http://www.historicplaces.ca/fr/rep-reg/place.lieu.aspx?id=4683> Accessed March 7, 2015.
- Miller, Daniel, ed. 1998. "Introduction." In *Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter*. 3-21. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Miller, Naomi. 1982. *Heavenly Caves: Reflections on the Garden Grotto*. New York: G. Braziller.
- Mills, Margret. 2014. "Gender, Imagery, and Religious Imagination." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and the Arts*, edited by Frank Burch Brown, 469-479. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mínguez-Blasco, Raul. 2021. "Between Virgins and Priests: The Feminisation of Catholicism and Priestly Masculinity in Nineteenth-Century Spain." *Gender and History* 33 (1): 94-110.
- Miravalle, Mark. 1993. *Introduction to Mary: The Heart of Marian Doctrine and Devotion*. Santa Barbara: Queenship.
- Mitchell, Jon P. 2009. Performing Statues. In *Religion and Material Culture: The Matter of Belief*, edited by David Morgan. London: Routledge, pp. 262-76.
- Mitchell, Nathan. 2009. *The Mystery of the Rosary: Marian Devotion and the Reinvention of Catholicism*. New York: New York University Press.
- Morgan, David, and Sally M. Promey. 2001. *The Visual Culture of American Religions*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Morgan, David and William Dyrness. 2009. Visual Religion: The Cultural Work of Seeing and Believing. YouTube video, USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts, Sciences. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EA63wTjlsnI> (Accessed February 3, 2015).

- Morgan, David. 1998. *Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- _____. 2005. *The Sacred Gaze: Religious Visual Culture in Theory and Practice*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- _____. 2008. *Key Words in Religion, Media and Culture*. Hoboken: Taylor & Francis.
- _____. 2009. "Aura and the Inversion of Marian Pilgrimage: Fatima and her Statues," in *Moved by Mary: The Power of Pilgrimage in the Modern World*. Edited by Anna-Karina Hermkens, Will Jansen and Catrien Notermans. 49-65. Burlington: Ashgate.
- _____. 2010. "Introduction." In *Religion and Material Culture: The Matter of Belief*, edited by David Morgan, 1-18. London: Routledge.
- _____. 2012. *The Embodied Eye: Religious Visual Culture and the Social Life of Feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- _____. 2014. "Art, Material Culture and Lived Religion." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and the Arts*, edited by Frank Burch Brown, 480-497. New York: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2017. "The Practicality of Votive Culture." *Material Religion* 13 (1):110–112.
- _____. 2018. *Images at Work: The Material Culture of Enchantment*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2019. "The Material Culture of Lived Religions: Visuality and Embodiment." *The Jugaad Project*. thejugaadproject.pub/home/the-material-culture-of-lived-religions-visuality-and-embodiment (Accessed July 7 2021).
- Morrill, Bruce T., Rodgers, Susan, and Ziegler, Joanna E., eds. 2006. *Practicing Catholic: Ritual, Body, and Contestation in Catholic Faith*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Motz, Marilyn. 1998. "The Practice of Belief." *Journal of American Folklore* 111 (441): 339-355.
- Moyes, Holley. 2013. *Sacred Darkness: A Global Perspective on the Ritual Use of Caves*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado.
- Morz Franciszek. 2021. "The Impact of COVID-19 on Pilgrimages and Religious Tourism in Europe during the First Six Months of the Pandemic." *Journal of Religion and Health* 60: 625-645.
- Mulcahy, Mary. 1985. "The Catholic Church in Newfoundland: The Pre-Emancipation Years." *Historical Studies* 52: 5-34.
- Mullen, Patrick B. 2000a. "Collaborative Research Reconsidered." *Journal of Folklore Research* 37 (2/3):207-214.
- _____. 2000b. "Belief and the American Folk." *Journal of American Folklore* 113 (448): 119-143.

- Mullen, Peter. 1998. *Shrines of Our Lady: A Guide to Fifty of the World's Most Famous Marian Shrines*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Mullen, Robert Bruce. 1996. *Miracles and the Modern Religious Imagination*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Murphy Michael D. and J. Carlos González Faraco. 2011. "Identifying the Virgin Mary: Disarming Skepticism in European Vision Narratives." *Anthropos* 106: 511-527.
- Murphy, Terrence and Cyril J. Byrne, eds. 1987. *Religion and Identity: The Experience of Irish and Scottish Catholics in Atlantic Canada*. St. John's: Jespersen Press.
- Meyer, Birgit, David Morgan, Crispin Pain and S. Brent Plate. 2011. "Introduction: Key Words in Material Religion." *Material Religion* 7 (1):5-8.
- Narayan, Kirin. 1997. *Mondays on the Dark Night of the Moon: Himalayan Foothill Folktales*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Narayan, Kirin, Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, and Anton Tjekhov. 2012. *Alive in the Writing: Crafting Ethnography in the Company of Chekhov*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Neary, Peter. 1997. *White Tie and Decorations: Sir John and Lady Hope Simpson in Newfoundland, 1934-1936*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Nelson, Louis P. 2006. *American Sanctuary: Understanding Sacred Spaces*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Nemec, Thomas F. 1993. Trepassey, 1840-1900: an Ethno-historical Reconstruction of Anglo-Irish outpost society. In *Through a Mirror Dimly: Essays on Newfoundland Society and Culture*, ed. Maura Hanrahan, 145-162. St. John's: Breakwater.
- Nixey, Catherine. 2017. *The Darkening Age: The Christian Destruction of the Classical World*. London: MacMillan.
- Nolan, Mary Lee. 1983. "Irish Pilgrimage: The Different Tradition." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 73 (3):421-438.
- Noll, Mark A. 2019. *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*. Second edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Noppen, Luc and Lucie K. Morriset. 2012. "'Heritagization' of Church Buildings: Quebec and North American Perspectives." In *Loci Sacri: Understanding Sacred Places*, edited by Thomas Coomans et.al. 243-255. Belgium: Leven University Press.
- Notermans, Catrien. 2008. "Local and Global Icons of Mary: An Ethnographic Study of a Powerful Symbol." *Anthropos* 103 (2): 471-481.
- _____. 2009. "Connecting the Living and the Dead: Re-remembering the Family through Marian Devotion." In *Moved by Mary: The Power of Pilgrimage in the Modern World*, eds. Anna-Karina Hermkins, Willie Jansen and Catrien Notermans. 136-147. Farnham: Ashgate.

- Notermans, Catrien and Willy Jansen. 2011. "Ex-vetoes in Lourdes: Contested Materiality of Miraculous Healings." *Material Religion*, 7 (2):168-192.
- Noyes, Dorothy.1995. "Group." *Journal of American Folklore* 108 (430):449-478.
- Nugent, Tony. 2013. *Were You at the Rock?: The History of Mass rocks in Ireland*. Dublin: Liffey Press.
- O'Collins, Gerald.2014. *The Second Vatican Council: Message and Meaning*, Liturgical Press. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/lib/mun/detail.action?docID=4546353> (Accessed June 19, 2020).
- O' Brien, Catherine. 2019. Symbol, Vision, Mother: Mary in Film. In *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, edited by Chris Maunder. 546-558. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- O'Brien, Crawford, Susan. 2008. "Well, Water, Rock: Holy Wells, Mass rocks and Reconciling Identity in the Republic of Ireland." *Material Religion* 4 (3): 326-348.
- Odell, Catherine M. 2010. *Those Who Saw Her: Apparitions of Mary*. Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing.
- O'Donel, James Louis, Patrick Lambert, Thomas Scallan, and Cyril J. Byrne. 1984. *Gentlemen-Bishops and Faction Fighters: The Letters of Bishops O'Donel, Lambert, Scallan, and Other Irish Missionaries*. St. John's: Jesperson Press.
- Olson, Carl. 2011. *Religious Studies: The Key Concepts*. Abingdon: New York.
- Olson, Elizabeth.2013. "Myth, Miramiento, and the Making of Religious Landscapes." In *Religion and Place Landscape, Politics and Piety*, eds. Peter Hopkins, Lily Kong, and Elizabeth Olson, 75-94. New York: Springer.
- O'Neill, Paul. 1984. *Upon This Rock: The Story of the Roman Catholic Church in Newfoundland and Labrador*. St. John's: Breakwater.
- O'Neill, Michael. 2018. "Unapproved Apparitions since 1900." The Miracle Hunter website. http://www.miraclehunter.com/marian_apparitions/unapproved_apparitions/index.html (Accessed January 30, 2019).
- O'Flaherty, Patrick. 1975. "Looking Backwards: the Milieu of the Old Newfoundland Outports." *Journal of Canadian Studies*. 10 (1):3-9.
- Oring, Elliott. 1986, "Folk Narrative." In *Folk Groups and Folklore Genres: An Introduction*, edited by Elliot Oring. 121-145. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press.
- _____. 1994. "The Arts, Artifacts, and Artifices of Identity." *Journal of American Folklore* 107 (424): 211-233.
- _____. 2012. *Just Folklore: Analysis, Interpretation Critique*. Los Angeles: Cantilever
- Orsi, Robert A. 1985. *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- _____. 1991. "The Out There, In Here, and Everywhere Else: The Nature of Pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Jude." *The Journal of Social History* 25 (2): 213-232.

- _____. 1996. *Thank You St. Jude: Women's Devotion to the Patron St. of Hopeless Causes*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- _____. 1997. "Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion." In *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice*, edited by David D. Hall. 3-21. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- _____. 2003. "Is the Study of Lived Religion Irrelevant to the World We Live In?" *Society for the Scientific Study of Religion* 42 (2):169-174.
- _____. 2005. *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- _____. 2009. "Abundant History: Marian Apparitions as Alternative Memory Garden Modernity." In *Moved by Mary: The Power of Pilgrimage in the Modern World*, edited by Anna-Karina Hermkins, Willie Jansen, and Catrien Notermans. 215-225. Farnham: Ashgate.
- _____. 2011. "Belief." *Material Religion* 7 (1): 4-9.
- _____. 2012a "Afterword: Everyday Religion and the Contemporary World." In *Ordinary Lives and Grand Schemes: An Anthropology of Everyday Religion*, edited by Samuli Schielke and Liza Debevec, 146-161. New York: Berghahn Books.
- _____. 2012b. "The Problem of the Holy." In *The Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies*, edited by Robert Orsi. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 2016. *History and Presence*. Cambridge. Belknap Press.
- O'Neill, Michael. 2015. *Exploring the Miraculous*. Huntingdon: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing.
- O'Sullivan, M., and Downey, L. 2014. "Mass rocks and Related Sites." *Archaeology Ireland* 28 (1): 26-29.
- O'Toole, James M, ed. 2004. *Habits of Devotion: Catholic Religious Practice in Twentieth-Century America*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- _____. 2008. *The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Otto, R. 1958. *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- "Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, Flatrock, Newfoundland and Labrador." 2005. *Canadas Historic Places*. (Accessed March 1, 2016). <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=4502>.
- Overton, James. 1984. "Nostalgia and Tourism in Newfoundland." *Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region* 14 (1): 84-97.
- Paget, James, Carlton. 2001. "Miracles in Early Christianity." In *The Cambridge Companion to Miracles*, edited by Graham Twelftree. 131-148. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Pagliarini, Marie. 2007. "'And the Word Was Made Flesh': Divining the Female Body in Nineteenth-Century American and Catholic Culture." *Religion and American Culture* 17 (2): 213–45.
- Paine, Crispin. 2004. *Sacred Places*. London: National Trust.
- _____. 2013. *Religious Objects in Museums: Private Lives and Public Duties*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Panchenko, Alexander. 2014. "How to Make a Shrine with Your Own Hands: Local Holy Places and Vernacular Religion in Russia" In *Vernacular Religion in Everyday Life: Expressions of Belief*. 42-62. London: Routledge.
- Papal Encyclicals Online. 2017. Paenitemini on Penance: Pope Paul VI -1966, Apostolic Constitution on Penance (accessed June 18, 2020). <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/paul06/p6paen.htm>
- Park, Chris C. 1994. *Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion*. London: Routledge.
- _____. 2005. "Religion and Geography." In *Routledge Companion to Religion*, edited by John R. Hinnell. 439-455. New York: Routledge.
- Paulus PP. VI and Pope Paul VI. 1971. "Letters to Rectors of Marian Shrines." *The Furrow* 22 (7): 448-451.
- Pasture, Patrick. 2012. Beyond the Feminization Thesis. In *Gendering the History of Christianity in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, edited by Patrick Pasture, Jan Art, and Thomas Bureman. 7-34. Leuven: Leuven University Press.
- Pawlikowski, Jakub, Michał Wiechetek, Jarosław Sak and Marek Jarosz. 2015. "Beliefs in Miraculous Healings, Religiosity and Meaning in Life." *Religions* 6: 1113–1124.
- Peña, Elaine A. 2011. *Performing Piety: Making Space Sacred with the Virgin of Guadalupe*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Pocius, Gerald L. 1979 "Oral History and the Study of Material Culture." *Material Culture Review* 8: 65-69. <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/MCR/article/view/17024> (Accessed August 10, 2020).
- _____. 1986. "Holy Pictures in Newfoundland Houses: Visual Code for Secular and Supernatural Relationships." In *Media Sense: The Folklore-Popular Continuum*, edited by Peter Narváez and Martin Laba, 127-148. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press.
- _____. 1991. *A Place to Belong: Community Order and Everyday Space in Calvert, Newfoundland*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- _____. 2003. "Art." In *Eight Words for the Study of Expressive Culture*, edited by Burt Feintuch. 42-68. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

- Pollock, Della, ed. 2005. *Palgrave Studies in Oral History: Remembering, Oral History Performance*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- _____. 2004. "Religion and Geography." In *Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*, edited by J. Hinnells, 1-29. London: Routledge.
- Pope Francis. 2020. "Urbi Et Orbi Blessing: Extraordinary Moment of Prayer Presided over by Pope Francis. Vatican Archives. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/urbi/documents/papa-francesco_20200327_urbi-et-orbi-epidemia.html (Accessed February 7, 2022).
- \Pope John Paul II. 1984. Blessing of the Fishing Fleet. Canadian Conference of Bishops, Addresses, Speeches, and Homilies 1984. <https://www.cccb.ca/the-catholic-church-in-canada/papal-visits-canada/john-paul-iis-first-visit-canada/addresses-speeches-homilies/blessing-fishing-fleet/> (Accessed October 7, 2021).
- _____. 1990. Message of Mary's Maternal Love. Homily, Mass of Our Lady of Fátima, Portugal, 13 May 1982. EWTN library. <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/message-of-marys-maternal-love-8659> (Accessed February 5, 2022).
- Pohlsander, Hans A. 2004. *Emperor Constantine*, New York: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Powell, James N. 1998. *Post-Modernism for Beginners*. London: Writers and Readers Publishing.
- Primiano, Leonard Norman. 1995. "Vernacular Religion and the Search for Method in Religious Folklife." *Western Folklore* 54 (1): 37-56.
- _____. 1999. "Postmodern Sites of Catholic Sacred Materiality." In *Perspectives on American Religion and Culture*, edited by Peter W. Williams, 187-202. New York: Blackwell.
- _____. 2001a. "From 'Folk Religion' to the 'Search for Meaning': Teaching Folklore Outside the Discipline." *Ethnologies* 23 (2): 35-59.
- _____. 2001b. "What is Vernacular Catholicism? The Dignity Example." *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica*, 46 (1-2): 51-58.
- _____. 2012. "Afterword: Manifestations of the Religious Vernacular: Ambiguity, Power, and Creativity." In *Vernacular Religion in Everyday Life: Expressions of Belief*, edited by Marian Bowman and Úlo Valk, 382-90. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing.
- Promey, Sally. 2001. "The Public Display of Religion." In *The Visual Culture of American Religions*, edited by David Morgan and Sally M. Promey. 27-48. Berkley: University of California Press.
- Prowse, Daniel Woodley. 1895. *A History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial, and Foreign Records*. Memorial University Library Archives. <http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/ref/collection/cns/id/21115> (Accessed December 1, 2018).

- Radford, Rosemary Ruther. 1977. *Mary: The Feminine Face of the Church*. Philadelphia Westminster Press.
- Rahner, Karl. 1966. *The Church after the Council*. New York. Herder and Herder.
- Ranger, T. O., and E. J. Hobsbawm. 2012. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rappaport, Roy A. 1992, "Ritual." In *Folklore, Cultural Performances, and Popular Entertainments*, edited by Richard Bauman, 249-260. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rattue, James. 1995. *The Living Stream: Holy Wells in Historical Context*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press.
- Reader, Ian. 2013. *Pilgrimage in the Marketplace*. New York: Routledge.
- Reader, Ian, and Tony Waltar, eds. 1993. *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Reinberg, Virginia. 2019. *Storied Places: Pilgrim Shrines, Nature, and History in Early Modern France*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Renews and its Grotto, N/A. 1927. St. John's: Trade Printers and Publishers.
- Renzetti, Claire M., and Yocum, Sandra, eds. 2013. *Clergy Sexual Abuse: Social Science Perspectives*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Reynolds, Neil. 2018 (2009). "What Newfoundland Can Teach Us." Opinion. The Globe and Mail. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/rob-commentary/what-newfoundland-can-teach-us/article793205/> (accessed March 28, 2019).
- Richardson, Milda Bakšys. 2005. "Reverence and Resistance in Lithuanian Wayside Shrines". *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* (10): 249-267.
- Rocca, Francis, Yelin Hong, and Josh Ulick. N/D. How the Catholic World Is Changing. Wall Street Journal. <http://graphics.wsj.com/catholics-world/> (Accessed March 12, 2022).
- Rocha, Biff. 2015. "Happy Birthday Baltimore Catechism!" *Catechetical Leader* 26 (6). https://www.academia.edu/44763901/Happy_Birthday_Baltimore_Catechism_ (Assessed July 15, 2021).
- Rollmann, Hans. 1990. "Historical Overview of the Archdiocese to 1979." In *The Report of the Archdiocesan Commission of Enquiry into the Sexual Abuse of Children by Members of the Clergy*. Gordon A. Winter, Chairman. Appendix B.175-179. St. John's: Archdiocese of St. John's.
- Rosary since Vatican II, The. 1995. All about Mary, University of Dayton. <https://udayton.edu/imri/mary/r/rosary-since-vatican-ii.php> (Accessed January 20, 2022).
- Roten Johann G. 2000. "Marian Devotion for the New Millennium." *Marian Studies* 51 (7): 52-95.
- Rubin, Miri. 2004. "Mary." *History Workshop Journal* (58):1-16.

- _____. 2007. "Mary in the Middle Ages: from Diversity to Discipline." *Studies in Church History* 43: 212-229.
- _____. 2009. *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary*. New Haven: Yale Press.
- Ruether, Rosemary Radford. 1979. *Mary: The Feminine Face of the Church*. London: SCM Press.
- Ryden, Kent C. 1993. *Mapping the Invisible Landscape: Folklore, Writing, and the Sense of Place*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.
- Salamon, Hagar and Harvey E. Goldberg. 2012. "Myth, Ritual, Symbol." In *A Companion to Folklore*, edited by Regina F. Bendix and Galit Hasan-Rokem. 119-135. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Santino, Jack. 1982. "Catholic Folklore and Folk Catholicism." *New York Folklore* 8 (3/4):93-106.
- Sarefield, Daniel. 2007. "The Symbolics of Book Burning: The Establishment of a Christian Ritual of Persecution." In *The Early Christian Book*, edited by William E. Klingshirn and Linda Safran. 159-173. Washington: Catholic University of America Press.
- Klingshirn, William E., and Safran, Linda, eds. 2007. *The Early Christian Book*. Washington: Catholic University of America Press.
- Saenz, Rogelio. 2004. The Changing Demographics of Roman Catholics. PRB Resource Library. <https://www.prb.org/resources/the-changing-demographics-of-roman-catholics/> (Accessed January 18, 2022).
- Salamon, Hagar and Harvey E. Goldberg. 2012. "Myth, Ritual. And Symbol," in *A Companion to Folklore*. Edited by Regina F. Bendix and Galit Hasan Rokem, 119-135. New York: Wiley Blackwell.
- Saliers, Don E. 2014. "Artistry and Aesthetics in Modern and Postmodern Worship." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and the Arts*. Edited by Frank Burch brown. 403-427. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Santino, Jack. 1982. "Catholic Folklore and Folk Catholicism." *New York Folklore* 8 (3): 93-105.
- Saul, Josh. 2020. Catholic Church Shields \$2 Billion in Assets to Limit Abuse Payouts. Bloomberg News, Businessweek. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2020-01-08/the-catholic-church-s-strategy-to-limit-payouts-to-abuse-victims> (accessed July 6, 2022)
- Sattenspiel, Lisa. 2011. "Regional Patterns of Mortality during the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Newfoundland." *Vaccine* 29:B33-37.
- Savastano, Peter. 2010. "Changing St. Gerard's Clothes: An Exercise in Italian-American Catholic Devotion and Material Culture." In *Italian Folk: Vernacular Culture in Italian-American Lives*, edited by Joseph Sciorra, 171-187. New York: Fordham University Press.

- Scheer, Monique. 2013. "What She Looks Like: On the Recognition and Iconization of the Virgin Mary at Apparition Sites in the Twentieth Century." *Material Religion* 9 (4): 442-467. 35
- Schiffer, Michael Brian. 1999. *Material Life of Human Beings: Artifacts, Behavior and Communication*. London: Routledge.
- Scheper Hughes, Jennifer. 2016. "Contemporary Popular Catholicism in Latin America." In *The Cambridge History of Religions in Latin America*, 480-90. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sciorra, Joseph, ed. 2011. *Italian Folk: Vernacular Culture in Italian-American Lives*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- _____. 2012. "Miracles in the Land of Promise: Transmigratory Experience and Italian American Ex-votos." In *Graces Received: Painted metal Ex-Votos from Italy*, edited by Rosangela Briscese and Joseph Sciorra. 38-51. New York: John D. Calandra Italian American institute.
- _____. 2015. *Built with Faith: Italian American Imagination and Catholic Material Culture in New York City*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- Schlereth, Thomas J. 1982. *Material Culture Studies in America*: Nashville. American Association for State and Local History.
- Scribner, Robert. W. 1993. "The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the "Disenchantment of the World.'" *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 23 (3):475-494.
- Scriven, Richard. 2014. "Geographies of Pilgrimage: Meaningful Movements and Embodied Mobilities." *Geographies of Pilgrimage: Meaningful Movements and Embodied Mobilities Geography Compass* 8 (4): 249-261.
- Scott, Robert A. 2010. *Miracle Cures: Saints, Pilgrimage, and the Healing Powers of Belief*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Scribner, Robert. 1993. "The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the 'Disenchantment of the World.'" *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23 (3):475-494.
- Sheldrake, Philip. 2001. *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory, and Identity*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Simpson, Hope Lady. 1997 [1934]. *White Tie and Decorations: Sir John and Lady Hope Simpson in Newfoundland, 1934-1936*, edited by Peter Neary. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Smallwood, Joseph R., Robert D. W. Pitt, Bertram G. Riggs, Cyril F. Poole, Robert Cuff, and Catherine Horan. 1981. *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*. St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers.
- Smith, David Woodruff. 2013. "Phenomenology" In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. (Accessed February 26, 2019) <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/phenomenology/>>.

- Smith, Jonathan Z. 1987. *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Smith, Paul. 2010. "Legend". In *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art*, 2nd Edition, edited by Charlie McCormick, Charlie, and Kim White Kennedy. 772-774. Oxford: ABC-CLIO.
- Spretnak, Charlene. 2004. *Missing Mary: The Queen of Heaven and Her Re-Emergence in the Modern Church*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- _____. 2019. "Mary and Modernity". In *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, edited by Chris Maunder. 531-545. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stahl, Sandra K.D. 1977. "The Personal Narrative as Folklore." *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 14 (1): 9-30.
- St. George, Robert. 2010. "Material Culture in Folklife Studies." In *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies*, edited by Dan Hicks and Mary Carolyn Beaudry. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stephenson, Barry. 2015. *Ritual: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stone, Lisa, and Jim Zanzi. 1993. *Sacred Spaces and Other Places: A Guide to Grottos and Sculptural Environments in the Upper Midwest*. Chicago: School of the Art Institute of Chicago Press.
- Stott, John and Stephen Motyer. 2017. *Basic Introduction to the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.
- Sumiala, Johanna. 2012. *Media and Ritual: Death, Community, and Everyday Life*. London: Taylor and Francis Group.
- Sumption, Jonathan. 2003. *The Age of Pilgrimage: The Medieval Journey to God*. New Jersey: Hiddenspring.
- Swatos, William H. 2006. *On the Road to Being There: Studies in Pilgrimage and Tourism in Late Modernity*. Linden: Brill.
- Swatos, William H., and Luigi Tomasi. 2002. *From Medieval Pilgrimage to Religious Tourism: The Social and Cultural Economics of Piety*. Westport: Praeger.
- Sweet, Barb. 2022. The Shepherd has Disappeared!: Some St. John's diocese Catholic Parishioners Feel Abandoned by Church Hierarchy as Uncertainty Grows. Atlantic Canada News. Saltwire.com. <https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/news/the-shepherd-has-disappeared-some-st-johns-diocese-catholic-parishioners-feel-abandoned-by-church-hierarchy-as-uncertainty-grows-around-tenders-100700994/> (assessed July 6, 2020).
- Tambiah Stanley J. 2010. *Magic Science, and Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tangherlini, Timothy R. 1994. *Interpreting legend: Danish storytellers and their repertoires*. London: Routledge
- Tavard, George H. 1996. *The Thousand Faces of the Virgin Mary*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press.

- Taves, Ann. 1981. *The Household of Faith: Roman Catholic Devotions in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame.
- _____. 2016. *Revelatory Events: Three Case Studies of the Emergence of New Spiritual Paths*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Thavis, John. 2015. *The Vatican Prophecies: Investigating Supernatural Signs, Apparitions, and Miracles in the Modern Age*. New York: Viking Press.
- Taylor, Charles. 2007. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Taylor, Joan E. 1993. *Christians and the Holy Places: The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Taylor, Lawrence J. 1995. *Occasions of Faith: An Anthropology of Irish Catholics*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Taylor, Therese. 1995. "So Many Extraordinary Things to Tell: Letters from Lourdes 1858." *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46 (3): 457-477.
- Taylor, William. 1987. "The Virgin of Guadalupe in New Spain: An Inquiry into the Social History of Marian Devotion." *American Ethnologist* 14 (1): 9-33.
- Tedlock, Barbara. 1991. "From Participant Observation to the Observation of Participation: The Emergence of Narrative Ethnography." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 47 (1): 69-94.
- Terado, Junko. 2012. "Religion and the 'Public/Private' Problematic: The Three Public' Spheres of the Lourdes Pilgrimage." *Social Compass* 59 (3): 345-356.
- The Town of Flatrock. N/A. "About Us," (Accessed February 16, 2021) <https://townofflatrock.com/about-us/>
- Theiler, Heinrich. 2016 [1906]. *Holy water: and its Significance for Catholics*. Manchester. Sophia Institute Press.
- Thiessen, Gesa Elsbeth. 2014. "Artistic Imagination and Religious Faith." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and the Arts*, edited by Frank Burch Brown. 77-90. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Thompson, Stith. 1955-58. *Motif-index of Folk-Literature: A Classification of Narrative Elements in Folktales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Mediaeval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jestbooks, and Local Legends*. V. religion. Bloomington: Indiana University Press' (accessed March 11, 2020) <https://sites.ualberta.ca/~urban/Projects/English/Content/v.htm>
- Thorne, Bertha. 2003. *It's Like a Dream to Me: Paddy 'Iron' McCarthy of Renews Relives His First Hundred Years*. St. John's: Thornton Publishing.
- Thornton, Francis Beauchesne. 1954. *Catholic Shrines in the United States and Canada*. New York: Wilfred Funk.
- Tilley, Christopher Y. 1994. *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths, and Monuments*. Oxford: Berg.

- Tillich, Paul. 2005. "Art and Ultimate Reality." In *Theological Aesthetics: A Reader*, edited by Gesa Thiessen. 209-217. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Titiev, Mischa. 1960. "A Fresh Approach to the Problem of Magic and Religion." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 16 (3):292-298.
- Toelken, Barre. 1996. *The Dynamics of Folklore*. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- Torevell, David. 2000. *Losing the Sacred: Ritual, Modernity and Liturgical Reform*. Edinburgh: T&L Clark.
- The Pillar. N/A. 18 Newfoundland Churches for Sale in St. John's Bankruptcy. May 9, 2022. <https://www.pillarcatholic.com/p/18-newfoundland-churches-for-sale>
- The Shrine: Memory, Presence, and Prophecy of the Living God. Introduction. 1999. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerants. https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/documents/rc_pc_migrants_doc_19990525_shrine_en.html (accessed July 16, 2022).
- Thompson, Paul. 2000. *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Titiev, Mischa. 1960. "A Fresh Approach to the Problem of Magic and Religion." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 16: 292-298.
- Tracy, David 2002. *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism*. New York: Crossroad.
- Tuan, Yi-fu. 1974. *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- _____. 1975. "Place: An Experiential Perspective" *Geographical Review* 65 (2):151-165.
- _____. 1977. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- _____. 1978. "Sacred Space: An Exploration of an Idea." In *Dimensions of Human Geography: Essays on Some Familiar and Neglected Themes*. K. W. Butzer ed. 84-99. Chicago: University of Chicago, Dept. of Geography.
- _____. 1991. "Language and the Making of Place: A Narrative-Descriptive Approach" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 81 (4): 684-696.
- Tuan, Yi-Fu and Martha A. Strawn. 2009. *Religion: From Place to Placelessness*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Turner, Kay Frances. 1990. "Mexican-American Women's Home Altars: The Art of Relationship." ProQuest Thesis Publishing. (Accessed February 1, 2022).
- _____. 1999. *Beautiful Necessity: The Art and Meaning of Women's Altars*. New York: Thames and Hudson.
- Turner, Kay and Suzanne Sheriff. 1993. "Giving an Altar to St. Joseph: A Feminist Perspective on a Patronal Feast." In *Feminist Theory and the Study of Folklore*, edited by Susan

- Tower Hollis, Linda Pershing, and M. Jane Young, 89-117. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Turner, Victor W., and Edith L. B. Turner. 1978. *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Turner, Victor W. 1969/2007. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- _____. 1972. "Symbols in African Ritual." *Science* 179: 1100-05.
- _____. 1979. "Frame, Flow, and Reflection: Ritual and Drama as Public Liminality." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 6 (4):465-499.
- _____. 1988. *The Anthropology of Performance*. New York: PAJ Publications.
- Turner, Edith. 2011. "Our Lady of Knock: Reflections of a Believing Anthropologist." *New Hibernia Review* 15 (2): 121-125.
- Tweed, Thomas A. 1997. *Our Lady of the Exile: Diasporic Religion at a Cuban Catholic Shrine in Miami*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2011. "Space." *Material Religion* 7 (1):116-123.
- Twomey, Vincent. 2003. *The End of Irish Catholicism?* Dublin: Veritas Publications.
- Ulster Historical Foundation. 2019. Background to the Statutes. "Religion: The Penal Laws." <https://www.ancestryireland.com/history-of-the-irish-parliament/background-to-the-statutes/religion/> (assessed March 27, 2019).
- Upton, Dell. 1986. *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia*. New York: Architectural History Foundation.
- _____. 1996. "Ethnicity, Authenticity, and Invented Traditions." *Historical Archaeology* 30 (2): 1-7.
- Van Osselaer, Tine. 2019. "Marian Devotion and the "Feminization of Religion." In *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, edited by Chris Maunder. 579-591. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Vansina, Jan. 1985. *Oral Tradition as History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Varghese, Roy Abraham. 2000. *God-Sent: A History of the Accredited Apparitions of Mary*. New York: Crossroad.
- Varner, Gary R. 2007. *Menhirs, Dolmen and Circles of Stone: The Folklore and Mythology of Sacred Stone*. New York: Algora Pub.
- _____. 2009. *Sacred Wells: A Study in the History, Meaning, and Mythology of Holy Wells & Waters*. New York: Algora Pub.
- Vatican Archives (b). n/d. Congregation for the Clergy. Priests in the Early Church and in Vatican II. https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cclergy/documents/rc_con_clergy_doc_23111998_pvatican_en.html (Accessed July 15, 2021).

- Vatican Archives. n/d. Catechism of the Catholic Church. Part One: The Profession of Faith. The Credo, the Nicene Creed. http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/credo.htm (Accessed September 9, 2019).
- _____. 1963. Sacrosanctum Concilium. Chapter 1. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html. (Accessed June 19, 2020).
- _____. 1965. Dei Verbum. https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html (Accessed July 3, 2021).
- Vatican Information Services. (2016) Pilgrimages to Shrines: an Eloquent Expression of Faith. <https://visnews-en.blogspot.com/2016/01/pilgrimage-to-shrines-eloquent.html> (Accessed January 11 2022).
- Vergote, Antoine. 1982. "Folk Catholicism: Its Significance, Value and Ambiguities." *Philippine Studies* 30 (1): 5-26.
- Viladesau, Richard 2014. "Aesthetics and Religion." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and the Arts*, edited by Frank Burch Brown, 25-43. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Voye, Liliane. 2012. "The Need and the Search for Sacred Places: A Sociological Perspective" in *Loci Sacri: Understanding Sacred Places*, eds Thomas Coomans et.al. 73-92. Belgium: Leven University Press.
- Vuola, Elina. 2019. *The Virgin Mary Across Cultures: Devotion among Costa Rican Catholic and Finnish Orthodox Women*. New York: Routledge.
- Walker, Barbara. 1995. *Out of the Ordinary: Folklore and the Supernatural*. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- Wallendorf, Melanie and John F. Sherry, Jr. 1989. "The Sacred and the Profane in Consumer Behavior: Theodicy on the Odyssey." *Journal of Consumer Research* 16 (1):1-38.
- Walsham, Alexandra. 2003. "Miracles and the Counter-Reformation Mission to England." *The Historical Journal* 46 (4):779-815.
- _____. 2010. *Relics and Remains*. Oxford: Oxford Journals.
- Warms, Richard L., James Garber, and R. Jon McGee. 2004. *Sacred Realms: Essays in Religion, Belief, and Society*. New York: Oxford University.
- Warner, Marina. 1976. *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Web, Jeff. 2001. Collapse of Responsible Government, 1929-1934. Heritage Newfoundland and Labrador Web site. <https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/politics/collapse-responsible-government.php>. (Accessed April 8, 2019).

- _____. 2016. *Observing the Outports: Describing Newfoundland Culture, 1950-1980*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press
- Weber, Eugen. 1977. *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France: 1870-1914*. London: Chatto & Windus.
- Weber, Max. 1958 [1920]. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Translated by T. Parsons. New York: Scribner's.
- Welter, Barbara. 1974. "The Feminization of American Religion: 1800-1860," in *Clio's Consciousness Raised*, edited by Mary Hartman and Lois Banner. 137-157. New York.
- Werfel, Franz. 1942. *The Song of Bernadette*. New York: Viking Press.
- White, Timothy. 2010. "The Impact of British Colonialism on Irish Catholicism and National Identity: Repression, Re-emergence, and Divergence." *Études Irlandaises*: 21-37.
- Whitehead, Amy. 2018. "Devotional Bodies, Working Shrines: The Ritual Dynamics of Devotion in an Andalusian Marian Shrine." *Magic, Witchcraft and Science* 13 (2):212-230.
- Wilde, Melissa J. 2007. *Vatican II: Sociological Analysis of Religious Change*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.
- Wilken, Robert Louis. 2003. *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Wilkshire, Michael. 1966. *Gentleman in the Outports: Gobineau and Newfoundland*. Montreal: MQUP.
- Willen, Diane. 2002. "Religion and the Construction of the Feminine." In *A Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, edited by Anita Pacheco, 22-39. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Williams, Peter W. ed. 1989. *Popular Religion in America: Symbolic Change and the Modernization Process in Historical Perspective*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- _____. 2015. *America's Religions: From their Origins to the Twenty-first Century*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Wills, Gary. 2013. *Why Priests? A Failed Tradition*. New York: Viking
- Winter, Gordon A. et al. 1990. *The Report of the Archdiocesan Commission of Enquiry into the Sexual Abuse of Children by Members of the Clergy*. St. John's: The Archdiocese.
- Wilson, David. 1989. *The Irish in Canada*. Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association.
- Wilson, Stephen. 1983. *Saints and their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History*. London Cambridge University Press.
- Whitbourne, Richard. 1620. *A Discourse and Discovery of New-Found-Land: With Many Reasons to Proove How Worthy and Beneficiall a Plantation May There Be Made, after a Far Better Manner Than Now It Is*. Felix Kyngston for William Barret.

- Whitehead, Amy. 2018. "Devotional Bodies, Working Shrines." *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 6 (5):212-230.
- Woodward, Ian. 2007. *Understanding Material Culture*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Woodward, Joe. 1997. "Honour for the Mother of God: A Proposed New Dogma about the Blessed Virgin Mary May Derail Christian Ecumenism." *Alberta Report*. Edmonton. 24 (37): 35-36.
- Wright, Wendy M. 2010. *Mary and the Catholic Imagination: Le Point Vierge*. New York: Paulist Press.
- Yallop, David A. 2010. *Beyond Belief: The Catholic Church and the Child Abuse Scandal*. London: Constable.
- Yocam, Sandra. 2013. "The Priest and Catholic Culture as Symbolic System of Purity." In *Clergy Sexual Abuse*, edited by Claire Renzetti and Sandra M. Yocum. 73-93. Boston: Northeastern.
- Yoder, Don. 1971. "The Saint's Legend in the Pennsylvania German Folk-Culture" In *American Folk Legend: A Symposium*, edited by Wayland Hand. 157-185. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Ziegler, Joanna E. 2006. "Conclusion: Between Theory and Practice." In *Practicing Catholic: Ritual Body, and Contestation in the Catholic Faith*, edited by Bruce E. Morrill, Joanna Ziegler, and Susan Rodgers. 243-245: New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Ziolkowski, Jan M. 2018. "Notre Dame: The Virgin in Nineteenth-Century France." In *The Juggler of Notre Dame and the Medievalizing of Modernity: Volume 2: Medieval Meets Medievalism*, 51-96. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers. (Accessed March 3, 2020). www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv4ncpb5.5.
- Zimdars-Swartz, Sandra. 1991. *Encountering Mary: From La Salette to Medjugorje*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Zito, Angela 2010. "Body." *Material Religion* 7 (1): 18-25.
- Zumwalt, Rosemary Lévy. 1988. *American Folklore Scholarship: A Dialogue of Dissent*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

