Crossing the Tiber vs. Crossing the Jordan: Navigating Identity Change through Religious Conversion in the Roman Catholic Church and the Hebraic Roots Movement

Sharon Barrett

Sul Ross State University

Abstract

The paper examines the role of symbolic interaction in mediating religious conversions. It explores the implications of ritual and performance for identity, cognitive schemata, and relational communication, relying on thematic analysis of original ethnographic research conducted among two groups: Protestants who have entered the Roman Catholic Church and Protestants who have joined the Hebraic Roots Movement.

Keywords: religious conversion, identity, ritual, symbolic interactionism, Roman Catholic Church, Hebraic Roots Movement, Protestantism, Judaism, ethnography, thematic analysis

Crossing the Tiber vs. Crossing the Jordan: Navigating Identity Change through Religious Conversion in the Roman Catholic Church and the Hebraic Roots Movement

Introduction/Rationale

What makes us look forward to rituals in our lives – from making our favorite sandwich to commemorating our wedding anniversary – so much that we say we observe them "religiously"? For that matter, why do so many religious systems center their worship on rituals and ritualistic acts? Douglas (2009) takes on this intriguing question, exploring research by anthropologist Harvey Whitehouse that suggests religious behaviors have evolved to take advantage of how the human memory works. Two major types of religious systems exist: those based on dogma (the major world religions, like Christianity and Islam) and those based on personal experience (a category that includes cults as well as localized indigenous religions). Both are characterized by corresponding types of ritual behavior: the dogmatic type by high-frequency, low-arousal activities such as weekly Mass or five-times-a-day *salat*, and the experiential type by low-frequency, high-arousal activities such as the traumatic initiation rites of the Aranda Aboriginals of Australia, who force initiates to submit to elaborate circumcision and "scalp-biting" rituals.

> "Rituals are by their very nature puzzling activities that invite interpretation," says Whitehouse. Rituals also have an emotional aspect – ranging from a comforting feeling of security or togetherness to extreme terror. And rituals can be repetitive – although the frequency of repetition varies enormously. These three traits are what make religion and ritual such good bedfellows. They provide the all-important elements that allow a religion to flourish: meaning, motivation and memory.

Whitehouse links these two religious types, with their corresponding rituals, to the two major systems of memory that the brain uses. Semantic memory stories conscious knowledge about the world, while episodic memory stores high-intensity fragments of experience. Low-arousal rituals (found in dogmatic religions) tend to fix doctrines in the mind, accustoming the participant to a set of habits performed in community; high-arousal rituals (found in experiential religions) do the opposite, leaving the participant scrambling to construct meaning out of an overwhelming experience and therefore vulnerable to bonding intensely with the group.

With Whitehouse's theory in mind, we can critically examine the performance of high-frequency, low-arousal rituals in dogmatic religions, paying special note to what seems out of place: the use of this type of ritual to accomplish a relatively low-frequency, high-arousal event, that is, a religious conversion. (Conversion typically occurs once and is fraught with emotional meaning. This is analogous to an initiation rite, but at a lower level of intensity.) This paper uses ethnographic data to gain insight into the conversion experiences of two groups moving from one dogmatic religion to another: adults who enter the Roman Catholic Church from a Protestant background, and adults who enter the Hebraic Roots Movement from a Protestant background. The paper makes use of symbolic interaction theory to interrogate the role that ritual acts play in accomplishing conversion and mediating religious meaning to the convert. If, as Whitehead suggests, ritual keeps religion alive by impressing its meanings on the memory, then the symbolic act(s) of conversion is(are) vital to the religious life of the convert, who carries the memory of that act as the thing that transformed his/her identity. Going further, if the transformation of identity satisfied the convert's felt needs, it symbolizes a wellspring of identity from which the convert may draw again and again. In a real sense, then, a convert may be said to have "crossed over."

Review of Literature

Lazar, Kravetz, and Federich-Kedem (2002) found that "religious behavior can contribute to the satisfaction of a number of general human motives," which included expressing one's belief in a divine order, forming social connections, supporting family life, maintaining ethnic identity, and honoring one's upbringing. In the findings, even persons who identified as secular found satisfaction of these motives through performing some religious practices. The authors suggest that these categories of motivation correspond to Bakan's (1966) general motives for agency and communion and Frankl's (1963; Wong 1998) search for meaning in life. Missionary R. Daniel Shaw (2013) makes the relationship between ritual performance and meaning-making explicit: "Relationships…often imply the importance of ritual, as people establish behavior patterns that reflect identity and social status." Niculescu (2012) suggests that, in today's world, religious belonging has to do with how the individual chooses to self-identify more than with practices dictated by the religious community; however, according to symbolic interactionism and its corollary, social constructionism, an individual constructs his/her own identity within the context of a community. Cultural values determine the immediate and long-term felt needs that ritual performance attempts to satisfy. Group context (e.g. the beliefs of the religious community) also determines the type of ritual performance.

Deacon & Cashman (2009) rely on evolutionary theory to argue that the emergence of symbolic capacity in the human psyche resulted in three fundamental aspects that help explain religion's power in our lives. These three are (1) a predisposition to understand one's identity and place in history in narrative terms; (2) a predisposition to see the world as "two-layered," such that mundane objects and events signify "a hidden and more fundamental level of existence"; and (3) a capacity for "emergent emotional experiences" of a higher order than

primary emotions, from which derive our experiences of the transcendent (e.g. "spirituality"). In this view, if religion exists on a sort of evolutionary continuum, the dogmatic religions would be of a higher order than the experiential religions, as they utilize narrative (over a broad span of time), symbolic representation of specific doctrinal concepts, and transcendent experiences that evoke a less primal response than, for instance, traumatic initiation rites. In another view, all religions – all worldviews – exist on a spectrum from emotional to rational, and dogmatic religious systems (with their high-intensity, low-arousal rituals) are more susceptible to cognitive explanation, while experiential religions might be considered a degeneration of human religious potential into a state "in the grip" of primal emotion.

Ritual clearly derives some of its power from primal sensibilities. In their study of Sacred Harp singing, Heider & Warner (2010) describe Durkheim's analysis of "collective effervescence" (from *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, 1995), which suggests that "social solidarity, the conviction on the part of individuals that they are part of a collectivity larger than themselves, is grounded in physically involving, emotionally compelling group rituals." In other words, rituals not only express solidarity, but create it by involving the very bodies of the performers and thereby tapping into a primal level of emotional experience. Of course, the presence of a group to evoke the sense of solidarity helps explain this primal power. As Hunter (2010) observes, worldviews are created or transformed through "Significant Experiences, including Sublime experiences" (emphasis in original), and the process picks up speed as more members of a group respond. This snowball effect often culminates in the "pathology called 'Group Think.'" The essence of symbolic interaction may be its ability to create group cohesion around a symbol – that is, its role in mediating social construction. Hu (2013), drawing on Kenneth Gergen's (2009) work on epistemology, writes, "All forms of

knowledge are specific to the relationship between the knower and the known and carry within them the knower's community values."

Hu's next statement is telling: "Truth became synonymous with the engagement and improvisation with the social." The predisposition to situate one's identity within a narrative noted by Deacon & Cashman (2009) takes on new significance, since the narrative itself depends on what the community agrees on as "truth." As Miller (2010) notes, identity markers as well as beliefs evolve over time with changes in the community; therefore, the same narrative may be expressed in a variety of ways. The community may rely on a variety of sources to determine what qualifies as truth; an evolving mythic truth would be more acceptable to an experiential religious community, but a static propositional truth more acceptable to a dogmatic religious community. In either case, the primary felt need is for a "truth" that answers life's basic questions or at least explains life's major events in a meaningful way. The "truth" of a dogmatic religious community should address needs like the following: (1) the search for an authentic received tradition, (2) the resolution of inconsistencies in the tradition, (3) an order that distinguishes the sacred from the profane, and (4) a response to customs that fall outside of what the tradition teaches is normative. The convert to a dogmatic religion may be seeking all these things and more in the bosom of his/her adopted community.

RQ1: What is the relationship of personal felt needs to a person's desire to undergo a religious conversion?

RQ2: How do the symbolic acts and identity markers that accompany conversion address the felt needs of the convert?

Methodology

Cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1926-2006), the "ambassador from anthropology" and a pioneer of cross-disciplinary work, defined culture as a web of meanings intricately strung between the human mind and heart. As Geertz developed the concepts of local knowledge, thick description, and culture as text, he advocated for methods that would take account of "how symbols symbolize, how they function to mediate meanings" (Geertz, 1973, quoted in Koning, 2010). Theologians who study inculturation have drawn deeply from his work (Koning, 2010). After all, theology deals with "meanings" behind "symbols" (words about God, words from God); theology also embeds itself, inevitably, in cultural schemata. Religion (the word's putative derivation comes from the Latin *religare*, "to bind together again") in any culture is a set of meanings mediated through symbolic acts. Religious meanings may refer to a belief in a God or gods, a concept of human responsibility to God or the gods, and the taboos that assist humans in negotiating those responsibilities; religious symbols include all words, actions, objects, spaces, and ideas that are believed to facilitate interaction with the divine. Specific symbols often "bind together" a worshiping community, creating the sense of a shared communal life, purpose, and destiny.

Theoretical Perspective

As a scholar of religious communication, I find myself naturally drawn to symbolic interactionism, since (as Geertz recommended) it acknowledges the fundamental role of symbols in mediating the meanings that living human persons create. Long (2012) describes the interactionist paradigm (in contrast to the functionalist paradigm) as dynamic:

> The Interactionist perspective takes the position that it is people who exist and act. All the other "structures" found in society are nothing but human creations. For the

> Interactionists, society is always in a process of being created, and this occurs through communication and negotiation (emphasis in original).

Mead (1934) and Blumer (1972) developed symbolic interactionism as an interpretive paradigm. Society is defined as the web of relationships we create as we interact with objects, words, or ideas in the outside world and assign them agreed-upon meanings. Identity formation occurs as we place ourselves (the self is considered an object) in the context of other objects. By affiliating ourselves to symbols with predetermined meanings, we create identity markers that denote our status to other members of the affiliated group. Religious conversion, then, is the process of forming a new identity for oneself by taking on the attributes of a group through symbolic performances (rituals or other actions that convey an agreed-upon meaning). The surrounding web of experienced meanings or felt needs (e.g. life circumstances, a desire for increased spirituality, choices made by role models) often sets a conversion in motion by motivating a person to explore a new set of meanings and possibilities. The person undertaking a conversion process – however brief or minimal – experiences a liminal state as s/he crosses over the threshold from identity to identity. According to Blumer (1973), symbolic interaction is responsible for the creation of the self, itself: "By virtue of symbolic interaction, human group life is necessarily a formative process" (quoted in Hunter, 2010). In other words, crossing over the threshold into a worshiping community shapes the individual worshiper into a more complete person (that is, a meaning-bearing object invested with more meaning) than s/he was before entrance into the community.

As an example of the role of symbols in mediating religious meaning, Fr. Stylianos Muksuris (2004) explains the concept of liturgical mystagogy (the highest level of ritual, in

which a symbolic act is performed in order to reveal to worshipers the actual hidden mystery which the symbol represents) in the Byzantine Orthodox rite:

> In the Eastern celebration of the Eucharist, both the material and spiritual worlds, eternity and history, intersect and embrace the realm of the other. Surpassing all rational thought, liturgical mystagogy intends to raise the spiritual consciousness of the worshiper from a trivial vision of the ritual acts conducted in the church to a deeper comprehension of the meaning behind those acts. More important, however, mystagogy does not simply claim to be an exercise in the identification of symbolism; it attempts to convey the invisible divine presence through the visible human act.

Likewise, in the case of a religious conversion, the ritual act or process that facilitates the convert's "crossing over" carries a multi-layered meaning. First, it functions as a shared identity marker that allows entry into or participation in the group; second, it provides a didactic tool for explaining the group's beliefs (traditionally called *mystagogy*; for a definition with examples, see Hahn, S., & Aquilina, M. (2003): *Living the Mysteries: A Guide for Unfinished Christians*); finally, it realizes for the group a taste of the reality behind the symbol.

The above explanation of symbolic interactionism as a paradigm for understanding conversion may seem self-limiting, in that many religious systems do not require formal ritual conversion in the same manner as, for example, the Roman Catholic Church. The paradigm applies, however, even in cases where conversion happens through a gradual lifestyle change or a partial adoption of beliefs. Nicelescu (2012) cites the "Jubu" (the Jewish Buddhist, or Jew who adopts practices from Buddhism) to demonstrate that religious belonging is fluid rather than fixed, having more to do with self-identification than with identity markers established by the religious community. Furthermore, as Miller (2010) shows, identity markers (Miller's focus is on

material culture) change over time as the community evolves to face new circumstances. Therefore, I include both extremes in my analysis. Roman Catholic conversions typify conversion in the traditional sense, as converts must undergo baptism according to the Church formula, and afterward are eligible to participate in the sacraments offered to all members in good standing. Hebraic Roots conversions, while they rarely follow an established formula, still appeal to a range of acts (ritual and non-ritual) as identity markers for both initial and ongoing membership in the group. If a participant had performed whatever acts s/he considered necessary for identifying with the group (*as defined by the participant*), ***and*** if those acts were considered by the participant to afford him/her enhanced communion with the divine, then s/he was included in the analysis.

Participants

Participants were sampled through social networking and included a range of persons known to the author during her five years at a liberal arts college in the Midwestern United States and her two years at a state university in the Southwestern United States. (The sample of RCC converts is skewed toward graduates of the liberal arts college, while the sample of HRM converts is skewed toward residents of the Southwest.) They included eight females (all Caucasian) and six males (four Caucasian and two Hispanic-Latino). Four were converts to the RCC, and ten were converts to the HRM. (Of these, two were converts to Messianic Judaism, and one eventually left the HRM for Orthodox Judaism. They are included because their journeys paralleled the typical HRM journey in many ways.) I have enriched the data with thematically similar narratives from published books and blogs by other authors, considering these equally valid as texts.

A sketch of each participant follows (age reflects the year when research occurred with

that participant). Each participant, as well as any persons to whom s/he referred by name, has been given a pseudonym. I was able to supply more demographic information for some participants than for others.

Mary

Female, ca. age 20, Caucasian (German/English)

Liberal arts college junior (English major)

From major city in Western United States

Evangelical/nondenominational/charismatic to RCC

Diana

Female, ca. age 20, Caucasian

Liberal arts college junior (classics major)

From major city in Southwestern United States

Evangelical to RCC

Daniel

Male, ca. age 22, Caucasian

Liberal arts college senior (English major)

Hometown unknown

Evangelical to RCC

Iris

Female, ca. age 21, Caucasian

Liberal arts college graduate (English major)

From Midwestern United States

Mainline Protestant (Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod) to RCC

Jeffrey (husband of Rachel)

Male, ca. age 32, Caucasian (Scottish)

Farmer/home school parent (college graduate)

From rural town in Southwestern United States

Evangelical/mainline Protestant (Baptist, Methodist, and Assemblies of God)

Rachel (wife of Jeffrey)

Female, ca. age 30, Caucasian (German)

Farmer/home school parent (college graduate)

From rural town in Southwestern United States

Evangelical/mainline Protestant (Baptist, Methodist, and Assemblies of God)

Dennis (husband of Angie)

Male, ca. age 60, Hispanic-Latino (Sephardi Jew)

Business owner (high school graduate)

From rural town in Southwestern United States

Roman Catholic to evangelical/nondenominational/charismatic to HRM

Angie (wife of Dennis)

Female, ca. age 55, Caucasian

Business owner, former elementary teacher (college graduate)

From rural town in Southwestern United States

Evangelical/nondenominational/charismatic to HRM

Rylie

Female, ca. age 20, Caucasian (Scottish, Irish)

Liberal arts college senior (religion and philosophy major)

From rural town in Northwestern United States

Evangelical/nondenominational/unchurched to HRM

James

Male, ca. age 35, Caucasian (German)

Accountant (college graduate)

From medium-sized city in Southwestern United States

Mainline Protestant (United Methodist Church) to HRM and later Messianic

Arthur (husband of Molly)

Male, ca. age 60, Caucasian (Ashkenazi Jew)

Advertising consultant, former home school parent (college graduate and master's degree)

From medium-sized city in Southwestern United States

Evangelical/mainline Protestant (Baptist) to Messianic

Molly (wife of Arthur)

Female, ca. age 58, Caucasian

Advertising consultant, former home school parent (college graduate and master's degree)

From medium-sized city in Southwestern United States

Evangelical/mainline Protestant (Baptist) to Messianic

Edith

Female, age 72, Caucasian (Scottish, Irish, Cherokee, French Sephardi Jew)

Retired nurse (high school graduate, L.V.N.)

From rural town in Southwestern United States

Mainline Protestant (Episcopal, Presbyterian) to HRM

Frances

Female, ca. age 50, Caucasian (Irish)

Medical coder, former public administrator (college graduate)

From major city in Western United States

Evangelical/charismatic to Messianic and later HRM

Simon

Male, ca. age 45, Hispanic-Latino

Auto mechanic/day laborer (high school graduate)

From medium-sized city in Southwestern United States

Pentecostal to HRM

David

Male, ca. age 55, Hispanic-Latino

Congregational leader (education level unknown)

From large city in Southwestern United States

RCC and later Baptist to HRM and later Orthodox

Instrumentation

The instrumentation took two forms: semi-structured interviews (that is, spontaneous personal conversations with participants) and internet research (that is, a survey of participants' public blog postings). Care was taken to protect participants' privacy by removing identifying personal details or replacing them with pseudonyms.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using Thematic Content Analysis (TCA). Anderson (2007) writes that TCA is designed

> …to give expression to the communality of voices across participants. Every attempt reasonable is made to employ names for themes from the actual words of participants and to group themes in [a] manner that directly reflects the texts as a whole.

Ryan in "Techniques to Identify Themes in Qualitative Data" writes that themes may come from a variety of sources: from the literature, from the nature of the topic under study, "from researchers' values, theoretical orientation, and personal experience with the subject matter (Bulmer 1979; Strauss 1987; Maxwell 1996)," or directly from the texts via the process called *open coding*. After transcription, themes were distilled from the data using a combination of sources, primarily the researcher's values and personal experience with the subject matter. The process roughly paralleled Aronson's (1994) description:

> Themes are defined as units derived from patterns such as "conversation topics, vocabulary, recurring activities, meanings, feelings, or folk sayings and proverbs" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1989, p.131). Themes are identified by "bringing together components or fragments of ideas or experiences, which often are meaningless when viewed alone" (Leininger, 1985, p. 60). Themes that emerge from the informants' stories are pieced together to form a comprehensive picture of their collective experience. The "coherence of ideas rests with the analyst who has rigorously studied how different ideas or components fit together in a meaningful way when linked together" (Leininger, 1985, p. 60). Constas (1992) reiterates this point and states that the "interpretative approach should be considered as a distinct point of origination" (p. 258).

In keeping with the above statements, the researcher considers her "interpretative approach [to be] a distinct point of origination" in that she has extracted from her past experience themes that resonate with the texts at hand. What emerged from the texts is a narrative of the conversion

process as a unidirectional activity with a starting point and a goal. A complex relationship seems to exist between initial felt needs and the subsequent adoption of particular identity markers to meet each need, confirming the statement (pervasive in the literature) that symbolic interaction mediates meaning and suggesting (in response to RQ1) that meaning-making provides fulfillment for felt needs.

Themes

The themes proved to exemplify the four typical needs addressed by dogmatic religions. Four felt needs emerged: (1) the search for the authentic Biblical tradition, (2) the problem of inconsistencies in Christian history, (3) the proper order for sacred time, daily life, and relationships, and (4) the Biblical response to pagan traditions. Each need motivated choices on the part of the religious seeker (the convert-to-be) and was reflected in specific symbolic or performative acts that s/he undertook either during or after conversion. In other words, the interplay between motivation, meaning, and memory noted by Douglas (2009) was visible in every step of the process.

Results

Karen Vogtner, principal of St. John the Evangelist School in Georgia, writes (2012), "The most rewarding aspect of my vocation [is] nurturing a strong Catholic identity and culture within the school community….Catholic identity and culture begin by reflecting upon and sharing one's own faith story." The Catholic (and, by analogy, the adherent of any dogmatic religion) finds his/her identity in the context of two narratives: the personal and the communal, which constantly intertwine. For a convert, the need to have a personal narrative that fits within the communal narrative creates the desire to share the story of one's journey into the faith, punctuated by identity markers that serve as "memory

markers" that both effect a symbolic reenactment of the journey and correspond to symbols shared in communal semantic memory. Intriguingly, stories of conversion also seem to have a didactic component; that is, they are "teaching tools" for the uninitiated just as symbolic performances are for the believer, so that the convert adopts the role of *mystagogue* in telling his/her story.

Search for an Authentic Tradition

The stories of the participants came out as pieces woven into daily life – conversations over the lunch table, posts on a blog or Facebook forum. The first, foundational need was the search for the authentic Biblical tradition in textual and oral sources. Both groups responded by, first, establishing identification with Scripture and its narrative. For Roman Catholics, this means the non-Jewish Church has replaced Israel and continues the legacy of God's people under a new covenant with a new ecclesial administration. For Hebraic Roots believers, it means the non-Israelite Church (a technical distinction that will be explained below) is grafted into Israel and is obligated to the same covenantal lifestyle that has always characterized God's people. Edith reported that reading the Bible as "one book" led her to keep the instructions given to Israel in Leviticus:

> We were blessed in that we didn't grow up in church. Growing up on the ranch, all we did was read on our own. And as the youngest with no one near my age, I read a lot. So when we read the Bible, it was Genesis to Revelation. We saw it as one book. It came natural to us to keep what was written in the first five books. I didn't learn that Leviticus had been taken out of the Bible until I went to Sunday School when we moved to town [when she was sixteen].

Edith suggests that church traditions obscure one's ability to understand the Bible as written.

At the same time, neither do the "first five books" stand alone. In her home Torah study group, Edith encourages fellow believers to immerse themselves in the narrative of Israel's history:

> I want our group to get more of the Prophets. When all you read is the first five books, you miss a lot.

While Edith makes liberal use of commentaries in her study, she treats Scripture as essentially self-interpreting. This is not necessarily the norm within the HRM; many Hebraic Roots teachers produce materials to help believers "study the Scriptures from a Hebrew perspective." In fact, the HRM has produced annotated Bible translations: *The Aramaic English New Testament* (Roth), *The Hebraic Roots Bible* (Esposito), and *The Sacred Name Scriptures* (Trimm). Yet the HRM seems to breed mixed feelings about the Messianic Jewish tendency to rely on Jewish rabbinical sources (not only the Talmud, but the mystical Zohar and more). Frances, who worshipped as a Messianic before joining Edith's HRM home study, disliked the overtly Jewish flavor:

> I went to a synagogue in Colorado that was trying to be Jewish. The Talmud, the scrolls, the kippahs, the whole thing. And I said, this is not of the LORD.

Edith stated that rabbinic sources are manmade tradition (hence not part of the Biblical narrative of God's Israel):

> We don't want to go off on too many "rabbi trails" [a pun on "rabbit trails"]. That's the problem with GLC [God's Learning Channel]. Ever since Amy [Cooper] took over, they've changed their programming until it's all these men who teach the Zohar more than they do the Word. We don't go with the traditions of rabbis, because Yeshua said those are the traditions of men. You lay heavy burdens on my people.

Simon implied that imposing "traditions" on Scripture is deliberate deception:

> …We don't do nothing like the Judeans [Jews, descended from Judah/Yehudah]. It's all our 'traditions.' It's these people over there with their long beards that brought up their new Bible, the Tahum [Targum?] Bible, and they put all these things in it to support their religion and their politics. They're not even descended from the Twelve Tribes.

Those in the HRM who do emphasize rabbinic tradition sometimes turn to Judaism instead. Such was the case with David, who began following an Orthodox rabbi after a respected HRM teacher acquainted him with this rabbi's teachings. His congregation (which he and his wife founded as a Hebraic Roots home study in 2002) is following him in the conversion process to Orthodox Judaism. They emphasize the Oral Torah (traditions of the rabbis) as their source of Scriptural interpretation *and* the essence of their identity:

> Without the Oral Torah…[the Written] Torah is the notes to the lecture. The lecture was at Mount Sinai thirty-five hundred years ago. Moses taught them how to do the commandments. Many other rulings have been made in the last 3000 years….And the only ones who know the lecture are the Jewish people, because they've kept it and guarded it.
>
> Now that we understand our heritage, we're connected to a people more than thirty-three hundred years old. When three million people hear something at the same time and they're still doing it, you know that it's not made up.

Intriguingly, this attitude toward oral tradition is analogous – if not identical – to that held by devout Roman Catholics. Whereas Orthodox Jews rely on the sages and Messianic Jews cite them in passing (while strict HRM believers take a more "Protestant" or *sola scriptura* approach), the RCC teaches that the "Church fathers" (theologians from the first three or four centuries) are the authoritative interpreters of the written Word. Following the traditions handed

down orally from the Apostles, the voice of the Church speaks through the mouth of Her bishops and doctors. In *Crossing the Tiber: Evangelical Protestants Discover the Historical Church* (1997), Steve Ray describes his cognitive schemata for Scripture growing up in a Protestant home:

> As Evangelicals, it was our practice to sit together and study the Bible, with the most important question being routinely asked: "How do you feel about this verse?" or "What does this passage mean to you?" [But t]he Scriptures were meant to be read, interpreted, and practiced within the community of the Church, under the leadership of the Magisterium (teaching office of the bishops), and in light of apostolic tradition.

The Catholic approach, which Ray says he grew to love, tends to keep individual interpretations grounded in the communal narrative, preserving identity through orthodoxy first and orthopraxy second.

Conversion as "Turning"

In response to the search for authenticity, conversion is imaged as a physical act expressing obedience to God. Once a person has discovered the "true" faith, his/her response ought to be one of cognitive as well as corporeal surrender. Both Catholic and Hebraic Roots converts use the language of deliberate "turning" – either "turning" more fully to Christ, in imitation of the martyrs, or "(re)turning" to observance of Torah, in imitation of Messiah Himself (who was, from all Scriptural accounts, fully Torah-observant). Ray puts it well:

> The word conversion comes from two Latin words: *vertere*, meaning to turn, and *con*, a prefix of emphasis; therefore, an emphatic or strong turning.
>
> Our conversion was a turning from one thing to something different – though not so different as some would think….A strong turning was required, and though such a turning

> would have seemed impossible only a short time before, our research and study of the primitive Church were compelling.

Likewise, Thomas Howard (a former evangelical luminary whose high-profile Catholic conversion has inspired other evangelicals to walk the same path) calls his journey a "pilgrimage," one in which he "cannot be said to have traveled anywhere" (that is, he holds to the same faith) and yet one in which his faith is more fully realized. Madrid uses the martyr motif in a compelling way, invoking the image of a lamb being led to slaughter:

> Conversion is a form of martyrdom. It involves the surrender of oneself – body, mind, intellect, and faith to Christ. It requires docility and a willingness to be led to the truth, and for many the truth lies in a direction "where you do not want to go" (John 21:18-19).

Where Catholics would speak of martyrs and saints to build a saturated cultural context for their "turning" to Christ, a common word in the HRM is *teshuvah*. This Hebrew word, equivalent to the Latin *convertere*, is best translated as "repent." Stronger than the Greek *metanoia*, a mere "change of mind" (e.g. regret for past behavior), *teshuvah* repentance involves "turning" away from sinful acts and "(re)turning" to righteousness. In both cases, "turning" is the preliminary to "crossing over."

Addressing Problems in Christian History

The second felt need is twin to the first. Since there must be a "true" revealed tradition, the disagreements and inconsistencies in Christian history must be the result of mutiny against that tradition. Entering the community that has safeguarded the true revelation provides a buffer zone against the temptation to meddle with revealed tradition. A frequent theme among converts to the RCC is the distressing disunity of the Protestant bodies, engendered by (and/or

engendering) a positive ignorance of Church history. Ray describes the continuity of community as a powerful appeal:

> Without continuity with the early Church and the intervening centuries, Protestantism was like a branch without the tree, a wing without a bird.
>
> To our amazement, the very things that had once repelled us now became compelling arguments *for* the Roman Catholic Church: the universality of the Church in both space and time, her visible unity, her survival in spite of all her problems and tares, her undefiled orthodoxy and moral teaching in the midst of rampant heresy and schisms.

Grodi relates that Cardinal John Henry Newman's statement, "To be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant," influenced his journey:

> I also learned that the flip side of Newman's adage is equally true: To cease to be deep in history is to *become* a Protestant.

By contrast, the HRM emphasizes unity (not necessarily homogeneity) in the practice of Biblical mandates, such as the seventh-day Sabbath, unadulterated by the historical practices of the institutional church. Two themes entwined the post-apostolic age (one might almost picture them as twin serpents, subtle and dangerous): paganism and anti-Semitism. The history of the early church (small "c" because the HRM generally does not speak of a universal Church) is foundational to HRM teachings; the first few centuries were a time of rapid turnover from Jewish to Gentile membership, and when Constantine mandated Christianity (including a Sunday rest day) for the Roman Empire, Gentile converts received license to import their own traditions into Christian worship. Teachers such as Brad Scott of Wildbranch Ministries emphasize the "worldview" (e.g. cognitive schemata) of the Hellenistic Greek world and its diametrical differences from the original "Hebraic" view of the apostles who penned the New Testament.

Ironically, almost the same statement is made in reverse by Ray, in a letter in which he urged an evangelical man to steep his Biblical study in tradition:

> The less you know of history, the original languages, the culture of the biblical times, the traditions of the Jews, the teaching of the Fathers, the formulations of the creeds and councils, etc., the more vulnerable you are to misunderstanding, deception, oversimplification, unnecessary complication, and heresy.

In either case, constructing one's identity is impossible without knowing one's history.

Finding "Roots" in the Believing Community

The need to settle the problems of Christian history and unite believers around one tradition elicits the response of claiming historical "roots" or primacy in an authoritative believing community that depended on that tradition. For the Catholic, the faith community extends back to the organism of post-apostolic Christianity (majority Gentile), variously described as the "fullness" of Christianity, the "family" of the Church, and the "mystical Body" of Christ. Daniel explained that the maternal figure of Mary drew him to the Church:

> Mary was what drew me to the Catholic Church….This is a medal I always wear. It's based on a painting of Mary where she is holding the infant Jesus in her arms. He's afraid and He's looking up at her to protect Him. Now, if our Lord Himself was not above looking to this woman, His mother, for comfort when He was afraid, then we can look to her as our mother as well.

The hovering presence of a maternal figure adds to the conception of the Church as a giant spiritual family. Ray takes the concept further, with a quasi-incarnational tone that alludes to "Him who fills all things" (e.g. God):

> The solution must be consistent throughout and fill every corner with light….It addresses the *full* spectrum of existence.

The HRM, on the other hand, considers the "family" of God to subsist in the "remnant" Body of Messiah (those who "keep His commands"), often referred to as the "called-out assembly" (the literal translation of the Greek *ecclesia*). The authoritative believing community is the continuum of the pre-apostolic and apostolic Messianic Way, prior to pagan accretions. When asked whether her home study group identified as Messianic, Hebraic Roots, or Christian, Angie responded:

> We identify ourselves as first-century Christians.

Edith responded with a similarly straightforward definition:

> I follow Jesus and keep Leviticus.

At first glance, the Hebraic Roots approach looks like Messianic Judaism under another name. After all, the majority of its adherents (1) follow Jesus, (2) keep Leviticus, (3) worship on the seventh day, (4) refer to Jesus by His Hebrew name (Yeshua is the most common variant), (5) usually support Israel, (6) generally support Jewish evangelization, and more. One of the key differences, however, is the interpretation of the requirements for Gentile believers coming into the kingdom; another is the definition of "Jew" and "Gentile" as ethnic categories. These differences will receive a detailed explanation in my forthcoming capstone project, *Exodus: A Journey into the Hebraic Roots Movement through Prayer, Music, and Ethnography*. In brief, the majority of the HRM differs from Messianic Judaism in teaching that all believers (not only believing Jews) are obligated to keep the Sinai commandments (or some portion of them). Less

widely held, but still influential, is the belief that most Gentiles who come into the kingdom are descended from ethnic Israel via the Ten Tribes (and therefore would be obligated to keep the commandments anyway).

The House of Ephraim (the common name for the Ten Tribes) adds another dimension to the theme of the authoritative believing community, since, according to Yeshua's own words in the Gospels, He "came for the lost sheep of the House of Israel" (the Ten Tribes that had been "scattered among the nations" since the 700s BC). Most who enter the HRM are Caucasian, and as the British Israelism popularized by Worldwide Church of God founder Herbert W. Armstrong has found footing in the HRM, many claim Ten Tribes ancestry. Hispanic-Latinos who enter the movement often claim Sephardi Jewish ancestry. (See Sanchez, D., *Aliyah!!!: The Exodus Continues*, San Jose: Author's Choice Press, 2001.) David cited his Sephardi (Spanish Jew) and Mizrahi (African Jew) ancestry as one reason he began to explore the HRM and then Judaism. The influence of Two-House teaching from HRM teachers *and* Jewish rabbis (few people are aware that Jewish tradition teaches the Ten Tribes were identifiably present among the local Gentile nations) shaped his decision to become Orthodox. He believes the "lost tribes" must "return" (convert) to the Jewish faith:

> …We're not Messianic, but Orthodox. That means we don't proselytize Jews. Yeshua did not come for the Jews, but for the lost tribes of Israel. We believe HaShem [G-d] will take care of that [Jewish acceptance of Yeshua as the human Messiah, not as deity] in His own way.

Edith does not countenance returning to Judaism, but she is passionate about educating members of the House of Ephraim to return to their heritage. She expressed her frustration with the Christian broadcasting station God's Learning Channel:

> Every time poor Rick Wajj [co-host] is reading something in the Prophets about the Return [to the Land] and it's clearly Ephraim, Amy [Cooper] just shuts him up, and "Well, we know that refers to the Jews because they're the House of Israel in these days [a standard Messianic Jewish assertion].

For Edith and others in the HRM, the Hebrew Prophets confirm that the House of Ephraim will return to Torah and, eventually, to the Land. While the RCC creates identity through oral tradition that inheres in a universal body with a visible head, the confluence of Biblical narrative, historical precedent, and ethnic identification creates a powerful sense of HRM identity.

Ordering Life through Symbolic Acts

The third need, felt by believers who accept the authority of written or spoken word and historically continuous community, is to order one's life around these things. "Turning" and "(re)turning" are physical, embodied acts representing a surrender of self to a larger reality. Sacred time is ordered by recurring symbolic moments; daily life is ordered by practices that double as identity markers; and relationships within the community are ordered by the appeal to traditions that apply Biblical precept and precedent. Both the RCC and the HRM arrange symbolic moments important to the community in a yearly and weekly cycle. An experience like Sabbath or the Eucharist is a time of reenactment or recapitulation – a ceremony that "jogs the memory." For the RCC, this includes the seasons of Advent, Easter, and Ordinary Time; the liturgy of the Eucharist; and participation in the seven sacraments of the Church over the span of a lifetime. Each symbolic moment imparts both emotional fulfillment and spiritual power. Former fundamentalist David Currie (1996) writes:

> Evangelicals feed the souls of their faithful…through the mind. For them there is little way other than through the mind for the soul to be strengthened. For the Catholic,

> however, the will is the essential part of the soul. It is fed directly through its participation at the Mass. There is still the intellectual part of worship, but in the elements of the Eucharist, God can directly strengthen the Christian's soul against temptation.

Other than the Eucharist, the sacrament of baptism may possibly be the most important life moment for a Catholic, since it is considered to be the moment when God's sacramental grace is first imparted. Just prior to her confirmation into the RCC, Diana shared how thrilled she was to have experienced baptism and First Communion. The context was a lunch-table conversation, with students asking one another the obligatory, "So, how was your spring break?" Her response:

> Y'all, I crossed the Tiber on Easter Sunday! It was amazing.

More recently, on her blog, she reflected on being "constantly converted" through repeating the various liturgical seasons:

> As a Catholic, I have found such comfort in the idea of constant conversion, that God is actively, lovingly wooing me at all times and in all seasons, calling me to greater knowledge of Him and perfection in righteousness….In the same way, I've learned that I'm not going to transmit the faith to my children once and for all. There's a process. It's not like every Christmas after this year must be an imitation and remembrance of the perfect season I gave them now. Just as faith can grow bit by bit, year after year, so, too, can our traditions and observances.

In the HRM, the yearly cycle revolves around the Biblical Feasts, also referred to as *mo'edim* (Hebrew, "appointments"). While the HRM avoids sacramental theology, the Feasts are spoken of as times of spiritual power and blessing. Edith referred to the Passover seder as a holy observance:

> For us, this is like a high holy day. It's like going to church for Communion if you were a Catholic.

The same applies to the Sabbath, instituted in Exodus as a memorial "for all generations" to recall that YHWH created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. Frances reflected on why their home study meets on the Sabbath:

> No, I don't believe you are wrong if you meet on a Sunday or a Tuesday to study the Word. But this is the day that He said He would meet with us.

Edith concurred:

> If you and your boyfriend agreed to meet for breakfast at seven o'clock on Thursday, and you don't show up, and you say you'll go Friday instead, and he's not there, are you going to tell him, "Oh, sorry, I thought just any old day would do to meet with you?" No, of course not! Thursday is the day he set aside to meet with you. And we hurt Yeshua's feelings when we don't meet with Him on His day.

Out of the long-term cycles of symbolic moments flow smaller patterns of symbols that dot the path of daily life like milestones. After spending the summer in England, Mary recalled visiting Catholic churches in England with her British boyfriend, an Oxford student whom she later married. She had dated a Catholic previously, but not yet converted. As a member of the college's chamber vocal ensemble, she was drawn to the power of the choral song and ancient chant in the chapels and shrines they visited. The embodied, the incarnate, the sacramental has a powerful resonance in the Catholic worldview; thus, even listening to sacred music can be a symbolic identity-forming moment, just as much as carrying a crucifix, praying the Rosary, or fasting on Fridays. The sacramental framework is what imparts sacredness to the rhythms of

daily life; Iris signs off each of her blog posts with "Today is: (the day after) The Feast of the Holy Guardian Angels" or "Today is: The Feast of St. Hilary."

In contrast to the RCC, whose framework offers the comfort of a homogeneous sacramental lifestyle pursued in community, the HRM encompasses an immense variety of identity markers. Everything from ethnic background to region and occupation shapes how a family or individual chooses to keep Torah and acknowledge their "Hebrew Roots." Some attend a Sunday church because they must work on Saturday; others keep Sabbath but do not eat clean meats; some wear Jewish garb (e.g. the *tallit* or prayer shawl) in worship and have a menorah or *Magen David* (Star of David) in their home; others use no symbols at all due to their pagan origins. Some listen primarily to music by Messianic or HRM artists, while others conduct worship that looks and sounds like an evangelical service. Many – as did David's congregation before he began leaning Orthodox – practice "Davidic dance" during worship.

Others choose not to worship with a group at all. Simon advocates the so-called "lunar Sabbath" (a seventh-day cycle that begins anew with each new moon) based on a (fringe) teaching that *regular* seventh-day observance is also pagan:

> These Sundays and Saturdays are all from the pagan. Saturday was for one goddess and Sunday was for the other god, the sun god. And the Saturday was even worse [in pagan worship] than the Sunday. When you look at the Judean calendar, it [the lunar Sabbath] might fall on the Sunday this month, on the Monday next month, on the Tuesday. …But I believe the Lord is perfect, and whatever day you worship Him, you worship Him, 'cause you're doing it seven days a week.

Like many in the HRM, Simon adopts a live-and-let-live approach that accommodates differences of interpretation while also keeping himself stringently accountable (within what his

employer permits) to his own belief and practice. Rylie had a similar approach as a college student:

> I'm doing homework this Saturday until lunchtime, and then I'll rest and relax. Right now I'm taking my Sabbath from Saturday afternoon through Sunday morning. I believe in respecting the seventh day.

She kept the Sabbath according to her schedule and needs at the time, rather than strictly. A few years later, she was reading Valerie Moody's *The Feasts of Adonai: Why Christians Should Look at the Biblical Feasts* (Lubbock, TX: Hebrew Discovery Ministries, 2002) but also helping her housemates decorate a year-round "holiday tree" for Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter – holidays that stricter Hebraic Roots believers would shudder to celebrate because of their documented pagan roots.

The Sabbath is a primary identity marker and often the first step toward a Torah-observant way of life. Another is the eating of clean meats. Following the Biblical diet often brings ridicule in American society, but Frances noted that it has improved her health:

> Edith and I both recovered from autoimmune disorders that we should have died from by going back to Leviticus in our diets.

Simon took the concept further, noting that following the Biblical diet reflects the Lord's ownership of his body as a Christian:

> This is the Lord's body that I'm taking care of. People think they can eat whatever they want and "bless this food" and it will be ok. Then 20 years down the road they getting sick with cancer and heart disease [sic]. And you can't ask God for a miraculous healing for that. We need to care about what our next brother and sister in Christ is eating. But we don't even care about them.

Ultimately, every commandment seems to have an implication for relationships within community, as Simon observed regarding the eating of clean foods. The focus on identity markers can enhance or undermine relationships, depending on how the individual communicates about his/her chosen markers.

The need to order relationships *qua* relationships also runs strong. After all, relationships are the thread of the web of community; they find concrete expression in symbolic performances, from a marriage ceremony to a child's kiss goodnight. The RCC offers a long heritage of social teaching on sacramental marriage, the theology of the body, and openness to conception. Protestants with a history in the pro-life movement often find themselves drawn to Catholic teaching on life and contraception; for Kimberly Hahn (1993), this was the key that opened her heart to be receptive to other Catholic teachings. After conversion to the Church, many emphasize Catholic social teachings in their daily lives (for instance, on her blogs, Diana regularly refers to the challenges of using Natural Family Planning methods). In the HRM, home schooling is common as an expression of parents' choice to take responsibility for their children's spiritual training according to Deuteronomy 6. By extension, parents feel responsible to take charge of their children's journey to find a mate who is equally spiritual. Since the HRM has no established social teaching comparable to the RCC, models have emerged in certain teachers and families that are visible in the movement. Jeffrey and Rachel cited the example of the Waller family (http://www.hayovel.com):

> When the boy finds a girl he wants to marry, he goes to his parents, and they pray with him about it; if they think she is a good match for him and he is mature enough for marriage, he can go to her parents for their approval. But she holds the veto card. Once

> she knows he's committed to her, she can wait as long as she wants to decide. This gives her opportunities to get to know him and have a feeling of safety in saying yes.
>
> …Brayden went away to prepare a house, and they did not see each other. They really wanted to have a picture of when Jesus comes back. The whole betrothal is a picture of how God woos us as His Bride; He is committed to us, even when we reject Him.

The betrothal and marriage of Brayden and Tali Waller was memorialized in a feature-length video on the Waller family website. The most compelling aspect, and the one that has inspired other families to imitate their example, is the spiritual symbolism in which the groom represents the Messiah, irrevocably committed to His People, and the bride represents Israel and/or the church, which has the option to accept or reject His proposal.

Conversion and Cognitive Schemata

As has been noted, conversion is both a one-time liminal event and an ongoing process of personal and lifestyle changes, and sometimes a combination of both. Sometimes the longest, hardest change is not in behavior, but in worldview. A person who accepts the authority of a religious tradition that claims to have (more or less) exclusive truth needs the assurance that his/her chosen tradition can respond cogently to alternative worldviews and cultural practices. Communities in the Judeo-Christian tradition have historically wrestled with the problem of how closely God's people may mingle with the world, which is usually depicted as idolatrous and unclean. Two primary examples stand out: in the Old Testament, the feast Israel made before the Golden Calf, and in the New Testament, the concern of the Corinthian believers over whether they might eat meat sacrificed to idols. The RCC has historically encouraged Christians, in Augustine's famous phrase, to "take the gold of Egypt," that is, to make use of secular knowledge by subordinating it to Christian principles. Often, even cultural practices that fell

outside the Biblical norm were adopted to allow masses of converts (e.g. indigenous groups) a smoother entry into the faith. Diana reported that the Catholic perspective made her feel comfortable with joining a women's fraternity that used Greek-style rituals:

> I'm a classics major, so I've been learning about the Greeks and Romans and all that they did…and I've come to respect and appreciate Greco-Roman tradition more because it's a precursor to Christianity.

Almost without exception, the HRM takes the opposite perspective. A common trope is the need to "renew the mind from Greek thinking"; for examples, see Skip Moen, *Spiritual Restoration: Reclaiming the Foundations of God's World* (Xulon Press, 2008), and teachings by Brad Scott of Wildbranch Ministries (https://wildbranch.org/). Arthur and Molly, who began exploring their "Jewish roots" in part because of Arthur's Ashkenazi ancestry, articulate their journey through a "Hebraic" prism. Molly recalled:

> We wouldn't have gotten here [our Messianic synagogue] except by being Protestant: questioning the status quo, wanting to learn for ourselves, believing in, one, justification by faith and, two, priesthood of all believers. But we're really not Protestant and can't be. The Greek way is to be very individualistic, while the Hebrew way is to live and define oneself within community.

The individualism that Molly and Skip Moen denote as "Greek" flowered in post-Reformation Protestantism and fundamentalism. Far more than a label, the very word "Hebraic" serves as both symbol and antidote to historic problems in Judeo-Christianity. It offers an alternative cognitive schema: that of an ordered community, grounded in ancient narrative, reinforced by performative acts.

Discussion, Implications, and Future Directions

The journey of conversion into either the Roman Catholic Church or the Hebraic Roots Movement is one fraught with kaleidoscopic shifts in identity. The experiences of my participants illustrate how the symbolic performances of "turning" and "(re)turning" mediate a spiritual fulfillment for the felt needs common to dogmatic religious traditions. Identity markers function as the outward representation of inward changes in belief and experience. At least two concepts emerge as worthy of future investigation: the motif of "turning" and "(re)turning," and the effects of conversion on worldview change and cognitive schemata. For a detailed discussion of the implications and future directions of this research, please see my capstone project, *Exodus: A Journey into the Hebraic Roots Movement through Prayer, Music, and Ethnography*, to be completed at Sul Ross State University in 2014 and subsequently published online at my personal website.

References

Anderson, R. (2007). "Thematic Content Analysis (TCA): Descriptive Presentation of Qualitative Data." Available at www.wellknowingconsulting.org.

Aronson, J. (1994). "A Pragmatic View of Thematic Analysis." *The Qualitative Report, 2*(1). Retrieved from http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/BackIssues/QR2-1/aronson.html

Church, J.R. (1986). *Hidden Prophecies in the Psalms*. Oklahoma City, OK: Prophecy Publications.

Currie, D. (1996). *Born Fundamentalist, Born Again Catholic*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.

Dart, R.L, & Dewey, P. "Digging Up Hebrew Roots: Is This the Faith Once Delivered?" (http://www.youall.com/hebrewrootsbook.pdf).

Deacon, T., & Cashman, T. (2009). "The Role of Symbolic Capacity in the Origins of Religion." *USRNC: Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature & Culture 3*(4), 490-517.

Dowgiewicz, M., & Dowgiewicz, S. (1996). *Restoring the Early Church: Returning Intimacy and Power to the Modern Day Church*. Alpharetta, GA: Aslan Group Publishing.

Douglas, K. (2009). "Religion is based on ritual." *New Scientist, 204* (2739).

Grodi, M. (1997). *Journeys Home*. Goleta, CA: Queenship Publishing Company.

Hahn, S. (2005). *Letter and Spirit: From Written Text to Living Word in the Liturgy*. New York: Doubleday Religion.

Hahn, S., & Hahn, K. (1993). *Rome Sweet Home: Our Journey to Catholicism*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.

Howard, T. (1984). *Evangelical is Not Enough: Worship of God in Liturgy and Sacrament*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.

Lazar, A., Kravetz, S., and Frederich-Kedem, P. (2002). "The Multidimensionality of Motivation for Jewish Religious Behavior: Content, Structure, and Relationship to Religious Identity." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 41*(3), 509–519.

Long, R. (May 15, 2012). "Theoretical Perspectives." Retrieved from http://dmc122011.delmar.edu/socsci/rlong/intro/perspect.htm

Heider, A., & Warner, R.S. (2010). "Bodies in Sync: Interaction Ritual Theory Applied to Sacred Harp Singing." *Sociology of Religion 71*(1), 76-97.

Heidler, R.D. (2006). *The Messianic Church Arising! Restoring the Church to Our Covenant Roots*. Denton, TX: Glory of Zion International Ministries.

Hu, B. (2013). "A Personal Synthesis of Social Construction and Phenomenology." *The Humanistic Psychologist, 41* (4), 384-387.

Isidor, Z., & Owen, B. (1986). *The Rabbi from Burbank*. Fort Worth: Kenneth Copeland Publications.

Juster, D.C., & Juster, P.A. (1999). *One People Many Tribes: A Primer on Church History from a Messianic Jewish Perspective*. Clarence, NY: Kairos Publishers.

Madrid, P. (1994). *Surprised by Truth: 11 Converts give the Biblical and Historical Reasons for Becoming Catholic*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.

Moen, S. (2008). *Spiritual Restoration: Reclaiming the Foundations of God's World*. Xulon Press.

Miller, S.S. (2010). "Stepped Pools, Stone Vessels, and other Identity Markers of 'Complex Common Judaism'." *Journal for the Study of Judaism 41*, 214-243.

Moody, V. (2014). *The Feasts of Adonai: Why Christians should look at the Biblical Feasts*. Lubbock, TX: Gibbora Productions (Hebrew Discovery Ministries).

Muksuris, S. (2004), "Liturgical Mystagogy and Its Application in the Byzantine Prothesis Rite." *Greek Orthodox Theological Review, 49*(3-4).

Niculescu, M. (20120). "I the Jew, I the Buddhist: Multi-Religious Belonging As Inner Dialogue." *CrossCurrents 2012*.

Pitre, B. (2011). *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist: Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper*. Colorado Springs: Image Books.

Ray, S. (1997). *Crossing the Tiber: Evangelical Protestants Discover the Historical Church*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.

Ryan, G.W. [no year available]. "Techniques to Identify Themes in Qualitative Data." Retrieved from http://www.analytictech.com/mb870/Readings/ryan-bernard_techniques_to_identify_themes_in.htm

Rosen, M., & Rosen, C. (1978). *Christ in the Passover: Why is This Night Different?* Chicago: Moody Press.

Shaw, R.D. (2013). "Relationships, Rituals and Relevance." *Stimulus: The New Zealand Journal of Christian Thought & Practice 20* (3), 38-46.

Shea, M. (2013). *By What Authority?: An Evangelical Discovers Catholic Tradition*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.

Stein, R.W. (2013). *Everything Old is New Again: A Jewish Midwife's Look into Pregnancy and the Feasts of Israel*. Eagle Nest, NM: Whatever Is Lovely Publications.

Synan, V. (1997). *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans.

Vogtner, K. (2012). "Nurturing Catholic Identity: Sharing Your Faith Story." *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry & Practice*, September 2012, 175-179.

Wilson, M.R. (1989). *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans.