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"Accessing Human Rights Through Faith-based Social Justice and Cultural Citizenship:
Hartford's Low-income Latino Immigrants"

A Senior Thesis presented by:

Sarah Kacevich

to:

The Human Rights Studies Program, Trinity College (Hartford, Connecticut)

April 2013

Readers: Professor Janet Bauer and Professor Dario Euraque

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the major in Human Rights Studies

Abstract:

Many low-income Latino immigrants in Hartford lack access to the human rights to education, economic security, and mental health. The U.S. government's attitude is that immigrants should be responsible for their own resettlement. Catholic Social Teaching establishes needs related to resettlement as basic human rights. How do Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows, both Catholic faith-based organizations in Hartford, Connecticut, fill in the gaps between state-provided services and the norms of human rights? What are the implications of immigrant accommodation via faith-based social justice for the human rights discourse on citizenship and cultural relevance? A formal, exploratory case study of each of these FBOs, over a 3-month period, provide us with some answers to these questions. My project's found that that the FBOs contribute to the human rights to education, economic security, and mental health by: a) directly providing services, and b) facilitating and utilizing family and friendship networks to connect individuals to resources. They accomplish a) and b) by using cultural resources as the basis for a holistic sense of citizenship and access to rights. In the Conclusion, I note how faith-based social justice in the Hartford Latino community is a culturally relevant form of human rights advocacy.

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Introduction

Driving or walking the streets of Hartford, one sees a series of signs on brick buildings that have seen better days: “¡Dios salva!” (“God saves!”), “*Iglesia la nueva dimensión*” (New Dimension Church), “*Todos bienvenidos, una vida mejor te espera*” (“All are welcome, a better life awaits you”). At times, one hears a man’s voice echoing in Spanish through a microphone on a sidewalk, a crowd gathered around him to clap and shout in support of his message about God. Then, there are other signs of the melding of Latino urban life and Christianity in Hartford—obvious ones, like the presence of stately, well-established Catholic and Protestant churches all around the city. On the signs outside their steps, some offer a welcome written in Spanish, and still others promise some kind of step towards a better life. Then there are the more subtle, yet perhaps equally pervasive, representations of some kind of link between Christianity and social justice: like Jubilee House in the South End, an adult education center managed by Catholic sisters.

For three years, as a student at Trinity College, I noticed these surface-level signals connecting social justice, Christianity, and Latinos in Hartford, and wondered if it had any significant meaning for my field of study—human rights. After I studied abroad in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from July-December 2011, I re-encountered my interest in Latin American liberation theology. Considering the role that liberation theology had in Latin American fights for human rights during the decades of authoritarian regimes, I began to wonder how these philosophies may or may not be present in some form in the United States. I was not interested so much in the big-picture history of international relations, but rather how the Catholic-inspired quest for social justice plays out in the what is arguably the most pressing current social crisis in the United

Sates: the poverty and human rights abuses that Latino immigrants face in urban settings like Hartford.

At 43.4% of Hartford's population, Latinos make up nearly half of the small capitol city, and are largely dominated by Puerto Ricans (33.7% of Hartford Latinos, or 41,995 people), followed by Mexicans (2,272 people), a burgeoning Peruvian community (1,200 in the city and 1,800 in the suburbs) (Neagle 2005), as well as several other smaller Latino nationality groups (U.S. Census 2010). For the purposes of this project, I use the words "Hispanic" and "Latino" interchangeably. Among Hartford's Hispanics of all nationalities, 32.1% live below the poverty line (U.S. Census 2010). These statistics, which highlight the widespread poverty among a large portion of Hartford residents, elucidate why one should pay attention to the socio-economic systems that Latino immigrants encounter in Hartford.

With 32.5% of its residents of all ethnic backgrounds living below the poverty line in 2010 (Hartfordinfo.org, 2010), poverty is not unique to the Latino community, or to the foreign-born population (20% of the city) alone (Hartfordinfo.org, 2010). Yet, Latinos immigrants in Hartford experience unique cultural barriers to rights, which we investigate in this study. Among the challenges they face are factors like English-language ability and low education levels before entering the U.S. (Pew Hispanic Center 2007). Legal difficulties in accessing social needs (such as "food stamps" or a driver's license) are of concern for members of some Latino nationality groups if he or she does not have documented and/or full citizenship status in the U.S. However, as Puerto Ricans, who have U.S. citizenship, make up over one-third of Hartford's Latinos (U.S. Census 2010), legal barriers are perhaps not as urgent as they are in other metropolitan areas with large concentrations of non-Puerto Rican Hispanics. In fact, only 26% of all Latinos in Connecticut are foreign-born (U.S. Census 2010), a statistic that does not include Puerto Ricans,

yet highlights their large presence. Finally, the Pew Hispanic Center (2007) reports that 68% of all Latinos in the U.S. call themselves Catholic, a figure that indicates the strong connection between Latinos and Catholic identity.

The U.S. social services system—at the federal, state, and city level—is built around a notion of citizenship that makes them “aliens” in their new homes. Government structures make education, healthcare, employment, and other forms of economic stability difficult for these individuals to access. The systems are not culturally relevant, are fragmented and precarious, and are otherwise too limited or inaccessible. In wealth-stratified Hartford—one of the nation’s poorest cities within the wealthiest state—the gaps between services and those who need them are only exacerbated. Therefore, the human rights of this population are of urgent need for attention and study in Hartford. In particular, I chose to focus on education, economic stability, and mental health, as those rights not only are most relevant to the work of the FBOs in my case studies, but also are the rights that form the core of an inclusive sense of citizenship and stability for an immigrant in a new home nation.

As a student of Human Rights Studies, my mind is always questioning how and why the norms for treatment of each individual play out in real life—on those street corners of cities like Hartford, Connecticut, so ethnically diverse and economically challenged. A statement by Eleanor Roosevelt always commands my attention:

“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere.” (The Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute)

Thinking along these lines, it seemed to me as though the “small places” in Hartford that I noticed might be part of a bigger picture: the question of if and how low- and lower-middle income Latino immigrants *access* human rights. Jack Donnelly (2002) writes of the difference between having and enjoying a right: a human *has* rights by virtue of being human, yet he or she may or may not *enjoy* a right (at all, or to its full extent) depending on the social, cultural, economic, and political factors that mediate the reception and protection of his or her rights from the state. This part of human rights investigation—the “what happens in between”—is what continues to fascinate and challenge me as a researcher.

Might the churches and other faith-based organizations (FBOs) in Hartford be part of this process of accessing human rights, considering the social justice-related language that they promote? This is the question that I wondered as I read Peggy Levitt’s “Two Nations under God? Latino Religious Life in the United States,” in which she explains how the liberation theology movement “affirmed the Catholic Church’s commitment to the fight for social justice by articulating a theology unique to the Spanish-speaking” (152). Levitt, citing Stevens-Arroyo, describes a “Latino religious resurgence” in the U.S., one that allowed the Latino community to become “confident and assertive about its unique approach to faith.” Perhaps, I thought, I might be able to find the applications of this “Latino religious resurgence” among the Catholic FBOs in Hartford, considering the social justice-infused language that some of them seemed, on the surface, to use.

Although the liberation theology movement has clear connections to struggles for human rights in Latin American via large-scale political movements, it was not immediately apparent how social justice-inspired work might be present in the “small places”—among the Latino FBO communities in Hartford. I approached the study of Hartford mindful of how today’s FBOs have

become highly important mediators in the American immigrant accommodation system, one that relies heavily on volunteer and private-based pathways to do the re-settling work and to provide social services. Here, in the factors that mediate to what extent a Latino immigrant accesses certain human rights, lies the potential of the Catholic FBO to commit to its mission of social justice by facilitating the guarantee of rights.

After much thought about possible directions that would allow me to answer this question—a process detailed more in my chapter on Methodology—I decided to use case studies of Our Lady of Sorrows, a Catholic church in the Parkville neighborhood, and Jubilee House, an adult education center in the South End. Our Lady of Sorrows represents a variety of Latino nationality groups, most visibly Puerto Ricans and Peruvians, while Jubilee House currently draws mainly from Peruvians, Colombians, Mexicans, and a number of other Central American and South American nationalities. Utilizing ethnographic methods of interviewing and participant-observation, I applied the questions guiding my investigation to the ground level by learning about parishioners, adult education students, clergy, and staff.

Conducting these case studies allowed me to ask further questions as I began fieldwork: How do the FBOs understand and articulate social justice? What are these individuals' views of Hartford, a city that can be simultaneously hospitable and harsh? How do these FBOs view their role in the city for accommodating Latino immigrants? How does the Latino immigrant envision these FBOs when they think about seeking "help?" What makes these sites similar to or different than other FBOs, private non-faith based agencies, and state agencies? How does one utilize networks of relationships formed through FBOs to access services and rights? Where does Latino culture fit into the picture, and how might it be important to understanding notions of citizenship in the U.S.? How are the services and networks that these FBOs provide "culturally

relevant” to low-income Latino immigrants, and why does cultural relevance matter for accessing rights?

After about two months of fieldwork in Hartford (after two-and-a-half weeks in August 2012 spent researching liberation theology from primary sources in Buenos Aires), I came to some fascinating conclusions regarding how and why Our Lady of Sorrows and Jubilee House, as Catholic FBOs, are sites that facilitate Latino immigrants’ access to the human rights of education and economic security. All of these questions bring up significant implications for the discourse of universal human rights itself. By drawing upon Latinos’ cultural strengths to both provide services and facilitate networks, staff at the FBOs bring this population closer to accessing the human rights to education, economic security, and mental health. In human rights theory, the state bears the duty to guarantee the rights of individuals. Yet, in my case studies in Hartford, the state’s inadequate social service structures reflect the attitude that immigrants must be responsible for their own resettlement process.

By filling in the gaps between the low-income Latino immigrant and access to rights, the FBO becomes the duty-bearer of the right, rather than the state. As the reader will see throughout this project and in its Conclusion, Catholic FBOs’ practical expressions of social justice make immensely important contributions to the accommodation process of Latino immigrants because in taking on resettlement responsibilities, they rely on culturally relevant methods of trust, relationship-building, networking, and citizenship. Staff members utilize clients’ cultural resources, strengths, and capabilities to do advocate for human rights through a form of what Flores and Benmayor (1998) call “Latino cultural citizenship.” Therefore, the Catholic social justice that Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows express does not compete with or replace human rights discourse, but rather represents a culturally-relevant form of human rights

advocacy. This project does not take on the immense question of what is the ideal relationship between the formal, state-recognized picture of immigrant accommodation, immigration and citizenship theory from the human rights discourse, and Catholic social justice. My study provides the mappings for a preliminary understanding of existing dynamics, so as to point out a potential direction for future work on Catholic social justice and human rights.

Chapter One outlines the methodologies that I used in my fieldwork and textual analysis, while Chapter Two lays out the groundwork for my research by describing the Hispanic Church's concepts of social justice in relationship with the human rights discourse. Chapter Three explains how FBOs play a role in the accommodation of immigrants in the Northeastern U.S., while Chapter Four specifies the situation of low- and middle-income Latino immigrants in Hartford. Chapter Five uses the case studies of Our Lady of Sorrows and Jubilee House to analyze how these FBOs function, at times, as direct providers of services that guarantee rights. Chapter Six takes these case studies a few steps further by describing the networks of relationships and trusts that individuals involved in these FBOs utilize to access rights. Finally, Chapter Seven pulls together these ideas by bringing up the sites' production of "Latino cultural citizenship," in which low-income Latino immigrants use cultural strengths to access rights in a way that demands a new, inclusive, and culturally-relevant conception of citizenship.

Chapter 1: Methods for Investigating Human Rights in the Context of Immigration

Developing Relationships with my Case Studies Through Participant-Observation

Why use the methods of ethnography and participant observation to study how faith-based organizations like Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows promote the human rights of low-income Latino immigrants in Hartford? To investigate their human rights to education, economic security, and mental health, it was essential to learn about these immigrants in their “lived context.” I used a method typical of ethnography called “participant observation,” which included interviews, focus groups, informal conversation, and engagement in activities like attending social events, masses, or meetings of the Jubilee House Board of Trustees. While participant observation describes these interactions, ethnography refers to the observations that come out of participant observation. This method allowed me to give real-life meaning to the human rights norms expressed in formal documents. Participant observation also drew my attention to the significance of factors that mediate a human rights ideal and how it actually plays out in the local, Hartford setting. Because case studies of faith-based organizations in Hartford allowed me access to individuals in their lived context, this method was the most appropriate way to find the connections that I sought between faith-based social justice, low-income Latino immigrants, and human rights. Academic knowledge, prior community learning, and initial ethnographic observations gave me hypotheses to begin with. But participant observation also opened my eyes to new research questions, topics for interviews, and types of ethnographic interaction that I was not aware of when I began (like social activities in the church basement of Our Lady of Sorrows).

My participant observation unfolded through my prior community learning experiences, where I had begun to develop relationships with people connected to the Latino community in

Hartford. My relationship with Jubilee House began three years ago, when I was a freshman at Trinity College. Through a recommendation by Trinity's Office of Community Service and Civic Engagement, I tutored a student in the English as a Second Language Program at Jubilee House. In May 2012, when I was forming initial thoughts about my thesis topic, Professor Bauer asked me if I would serve on the Board of Trustees of Jubilee House. In August 2012, when I was accepted into the Community Learning Research Fellows program at Trinity, the program required me to form a formal relationship with a "community partner." Professor Bauer and I decided that my best option for a community partner would be Jubilee House because of their status as a faith-based organization, their commitment to assisting immigrants through education, and their largely Latino client base. That September, I met Sister Kelley, Executive Director, and shortly after, formalized a working relationship for the purposes of my yearlong thesis.

Soon after I confirmed my relationship with Jubilee House, I thought about how to contextualize Jubilee House in the world of faith-based social justice in Hartford. I decided to compare Jubilee House to another FBO—specifically, a house of worship. I engaged in conversations with a few faculty members with knowledge of Catholic churches in Hartford, gaining a sense of which church might be a good fit for my investigation. Eventually, I decided to re-visit Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, on New Park Avenue in the Parkville neighborhood of Hartford. The previous spring, I took a course called "Hispanic Hartford," for which I interviewed Deacon Miguel, a clergy member at Our Lady of Sorrows. Remembering the interesting nature of the Deacon's comments, and his welcoming personality, I decided to return to the church so as to propose a research relationship. After describing my project to Deacon Vicente, he immediately felt that the activities of the church, especially its Parish Office, were a good fit for what I was interested in learning about. He welcomed me into the church

community, and connected me to Carolina, a woman very active in the parish, so that I could meet parishioners.

At that point, I decided on four main categories of individuals that I would interview and study: staff and clergy at Our Lady of Sorrows; parishioners at Our Lady of Sorrows; clients at Jubilee House; and staff at Jubilee House. With these populations in mind, I was able to begin the process of applying for approval of my study from Trinity's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

The process: Gaining IRB Approval and creating interview material

Because my study involved close interactions with human participants, I needed to obtain approval from the Institutional Review Board. My project qualified for "expedited review." I met with Rachel Barlow, Trinity's Social Science Research and Data Coordinator to review drafts of my interview question sets. Furthermore, I felt that I would need Spanish translations of interview questions for at least two population: parishioners at Our Lady of Sorrows, and clients at Jubilee House. I have studied the Spanish language formally since seventh grade, and gained fluency after completing an exchange semester in Buenos Aires, Argentina from July-December 2011. However, because I am not a native Spanish speaker, and am not familiar with the Spanish most commonly spoken in Hartford—that of Puerto Ricans and Peruvians—I sought help from Professor Andrea Dyrness, a fluent Spanish-speaker who frequently conducts community-based research with Latinos. After I translated my question sets into Spanish, we combed through the scripts question-by-question, making edits for mis-translations, regional words, and cultural relevancy.

Professor Bauer and I decided that an oral consent script would be most appropriate because I would be working with populations that might have concerns or hesitations over having their stories recorded, or signing their name on a paper. Particularly because all of the Jubilee House clients, and most of the parishioners at Our Lady of Sorrows, are immigrants, I did not wish to compromise the comfort level of these individuals in completing an interview with me. For some Latino immigrants who are not citizens of the United States, these individuals could feel a real or perceived risk of signing their name in relation to something official-seeming, such as a college study, that they might perceive as having the potential to compromise their status in the U.S. A copy of the oral consent script that I used is in the Appendix. In the case of one-on-one interviews, I recorded the participant reading the oral consent script to indicate consent; for focus groups, I read the script myself on the recording, and asked the participant to say their name to indicate consent.

The application for IRB approval asks the researcher to identify potential social, psychological, and legal risks that one's study could pose to research participants. after discussion Rachel Barlow and Professor Bauer, I decided that minimal legal risk existed. Use of an oral consent script, and use of pseudonyms for my participants in my writing, minimized this risk further. In October 2012, the IRB approved my project. All participants have access to my contact information, in the form of my name, phone number, and, in some cases, my email address. It was important to provide them with access to my contact information so that should they, after giving the interview, decide that they would like me to not include all or some of my story in my study, they could request that of me. Likewise, participants are able to request a copy of my study if they would like.

The Community Learning Research Fellows

Another major component of my research process was the Community Learning Research Fellows (also referred to as Community Learning Initiative, or CLI Fellows), which I formally took part in from September 2012 through April 2013. The program required an application in April 2012. Upon acceptance, I entered into a group of about ten other student researchers and faculty sponsors, with supplementary guidance from other Trinity staff. Their feedback and advice on the first few month's of my project's development helped me to formally generate a research question, to make tentative claims, to clarify my objectives, and to develop hypothesis as the year progressed. The program also included a small stipend towards research-related costs, which I used to provide a simple lunch at some of my focus groups. Through a session on the methods of interviewing, the program helped me develop skills for designing effective interview questions.

Using Mixed Methods for Human Rights Research

According to the definitions outlined in "The Right Toolkit," a study produced by the Human Rights Center at the University of California-Berkeley School of Law about research methodologies in the human rights discipline, I used a mixed methods approach to my research. The Human Rights Center resource describes a mixed methods approach as one that "allows researchers to use both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyze data in a single study or series of studies" (49). Particularly in the investigation of human rights problems, an interdisciplinary approach is extremely valuable because it allows the researcher the approach a problem from different angles, and to incorporate both qualitative and quantitative information.

While the fieldwork that I conducted was purely qualitative, in my analysis, I draw upon

quantitative data and studies produced by others, such as material representing the socio-economic situation of Latinos in Connecticut. As the Human Rights Center study explains, qualitative methods are limited because they do not typically produce findings that one can generalize. Yet, these methods are outstanding ways to gain the “insider’s perspective” and to “understand the meanings people attach to things and events” (50). In combination with quantitative methods, which do provide widely applicable results, patterns, correlations, and trends, both approaches can “increase the scope, depth, and power of research” (50).

My study used the following six other methods: case study, document review, interview, ethnography, focus group, and discourse analysis. In the table below, I briefly outline the ways in which I used each method. Each method has its own advantages and limits. References are taken from “The Right Toolkit” (The Human Rights Center at the University of California-Berkeley School of Law).

METHOD	USE
Case Study	In depth-study of the communities tied to two institutions, Jubilee House adult education center and Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic church, both in the City of Hartford, Connecticut.
Document Review	Consultation of books, periodicals, historical records, legal acts, etc. to contextualize my fieldwork.
Interview	One-on-one interviews, with pre-scripted questions and use of an oral consent form. Lasted between 25 and 65 minutes. Utilized for Jubilee House staff.
Ethnography & Participant observation	"A research method that seeks to understand and explain practices, events and behaviors within the context of a particular culture." Please see section entitled "Why ethnography?" for further explanation.
Focus Group	Similar to an interview, but with multiple participants at the same time. "Elicits perspectives and views revealed through social interaction." Utilized for Jubilee House clients, Our Lady of Sorrows parishioners, and Our Lady of Sorrows clergy.
Discourse Analysis	"A range of techniques to analyze talk and text in context." Utilized to analyze interview, ethnography, and focus group material. Most relevant to participants' discussion of topics such as immigration, the Catholic Church, the family, and the City of Hartford.

Why use participant observation and ethnography to study immigrant rights in the local, urban setting?

Why use participant observation and ethnography, methods traditionally associated with the discipline of anthropology, for a study in the field of human rights? My conception of the role of participant observation in my thesis project initially came out of conversations with Professor Bauer, a trained anthropologist. As the Human Rights Center resource explains, ethnography is: "A research method that seeks to understand and explain practices, events and behaviors within the context of a particular culture" (40). This method involves seeing questions or issues in their "lived context" and, often, "participant observation"—spending significant time observing with and interacting with human subjects. By listening to, conversing with, observing, and otherwise interacting with subjects in a social context, one can situate their behaviors and ideas in relationship to their community, their relationships, and relevant social and cultural intermediaries of interest. (Janet Bauer, personal exchange, 2012).

Ethnography is valuable to community-based research for a human rights study because it allowed me to ask questions about human rights in their applied, lived context. Human rights, as they are expressed in human rights documents, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are *aspirational*—they set out an idealistic standard for the rights that all human beings should enjoy. Through ethnography, I could see how the guarantee of human rights plays out in reality—that is, how individuals interpret the rights that belong to them. The "interpretation of rights" by Latino immigrants in their lived context—in this case, in faith-based settings in Hartford—means the ways in which participants framed their needs and desires, as well as the ways in which they went about seeking maintenance and improvement of their own lives and those of others. Studying the "interpretation of right" also meant seeing or hearing about first-hand the barriers that Latino immigrants face in accessing their rights. So, through

ethnography, I could better understand that social and cultural pathway of interpretation that happens somewhere between the aspirational nature of human rights and the way that rights actually play out. As human rights is an interdisciplinary field of study, ethnography allowed me to draw upon and tie together knowledge from multiple disciplinary sources.

Furthermore, participant observation proved essential for not only asking questions, but *knowing* what to ask in the first place. Despite having a good deal of background knowledge, I did not pretend to enter my fieldwork already knowing all of the answers. In the case of Jubilee House, the questions that I would ask of my participants were relatively easy for me to draw up from my previous experience of as a tutor, initial conversations with staff, and information on Jubilee House's website. I supplemented what I knew at first with basic questions about Jubilee House's structure and programming.

However, at Our Lady of Sorrows, the situation was the opposite: I needed to do all kinds of participant-observation, and ask many questions, before I felt that I had enough of a handle to conduct meaningful focus groups. Ethnographic methods—such as informal meetings with Carolina and Deacon Vicente, attending masses, and attending events—allowed me to gather bits and pieces of an ever-developing puzzle. These ethnography methods allowed me to not only recruit participants, but also to develop the types of questions that I would investigate through focus groups. My focus groups would have been much less meaningful if I had attempted to record participants very soon after meeting them, or without having met them before at all.

Likewise, I am not sure if I could have even recruited parishioners without having familiarized them with my study and me by building relationships with them at masses. It was essential to build a relationship of trust, so that the parishioner was comfortable with who I was, why I attended masses, and what I wanted to ask of them. A sense of mutual trust allowed me to

ask more personal questions, and for the participant to feel comfortable sharing more information. Trust, I found, was not merely myself giving off an approachable appearance to the participant. Rather, trust was a sense that I built up over about two months of consistently speaking with them at masses, and occasionally calling them on the phone. Reciprocity was essential to forming relationships with participants at both sites. Since participants did me the favor of helping me learn about the site—whether through a formal interview or a simply allowing me to observe—it was important that I reciprocate by indicating appreciation and interest in their lives. Increasing levels of trust and reciprocity opened doors toward a broader picture of the site.

Working with individuals with “in” status at each site with very important to my ethnographic process. Sister Kelley and Sister Allison were my major connections at Jubilee House, while Carolina and Deacon Vicente were my brokers at Our Lady of Sorrows. These individuals were important not only for learning key information about the site, but also for recruiting and connecting me to other participants. For example, after my first meeting with Carolina, she offered to introduce me to people by meeting them before masses. For the next few weeks, we both arrived at mass about forty minutes early, and Carolina walked around the church with me as people filed into their seats, introducing me to people that she knew personally. Because Carolina has leadership and responsibility in the church, and has been a member for twenty years, she knows almost every parishioner, and they trust her. Through her introduction, the parishioner then trusted me. By using point-people at the church, with a high degree of connection to individuals in their setting, I relied on “snowball sampling” to recruit participants.

Other forms of participant observation, besides actual interviews and focus groups, took

place at each site. At Jubilee House, one could say that I had first used “participant observation” over three years ago, when I volunteered as an ESOL tutor. By quite literally participating in their programming, I gained knowledge of Jubilee House’s function, as well as access to personal connection with staff, such as Sister Allison, which was useful for re-connecting this year for my study. Other, less tangible, forms of time that I spent with individuals at Jubilee House included long conversations with Sister Catherine (the administrative assistant) while waiting to begin interviews with other staff members; having lunch with staff members between interviews; and informally conversing with other individuals who I encountered there, such as cleaning staff, employees of the Collaborative Center for Justice (housed within Jubilee House), and clients of Jubilee House. A more formal ethnographic engagement that I had with Jubilee House was, serving on their Board of Trustees. I attended meetings once every other month, held at the Sisters of St. Joseph home in West Hartford, with Board members including Jubilee House staff, adult professionals from the Hartford area, and one other Trinity student. The meetings allowed me first-hand access to reports on Jubilee House’s programming, development, and funding sources that I would not have necessarily heard about through my other interactions.

My ethnography engagements at Our Lady of Sorrows were more extensive and varied. These interactions happened in the form of conversations before and after masses; spending time in the church basement where parishioners serve coffee and donuts between masses on Sundays; attending a procession in honor of Our Lord of Miracles held by HESMIPERU, a Peruvian ethnic-religious fraternity that meets at the church; meetings and phone calls with Carolina and Deacon Vicente; and attending other events at the church, such as lunches in the church basement.

As often as possible, after each ethnographic engagement, I wrote a short journal entry.

These entries allowed me to gather observations about what individuals had said before or after recorded interviews or focus groups, as well as to note the most salient material that was recorded. Many times, something that did not appear so significant in the moment in which I wrote it would turn out to be a key observation.

Interviews and focus groups address the diversity of participant groups

Like ethnography, conducting interviews and focus groups was a constantly evolving process with regards to the questions that I asked, and of whom I asked them. Around September, I imagined interviewing about eight people for each participant set. However, when I did the math on the time it would take to conduct approximately thirty-two hour-long interviews between mid-October and the end of November, it did not sound realistic while balancing a full-time class schedule. I decided to make two changes. First, cutting down my expected number of participants to between three and six per participant set. Second, I decided to use focus groups, rather than one-on-one interviews, in certain cases. The table below outlines who I interviewed, and in what format. All interviews lasted approximately one hour, with the exception of the interviews with Jaime and Jeanette and with Sister Kelley, which both lasted approximately one half-hour. All interview and focus groups schedules are in the Appendix.

PARTICIPANT SET	FORMAT OF ORAL DATA COLLECTION	WHO?
ESOL Students at Jubilee House	One focus group with 10 participants. Conducted in mixed English and Spanish.	Martín, Luz, Fatima, Diana, Alejandra, Marisol, Ishmael, Magdalena, Olga, Ignacio
Staff Members at Jubilee House	One-on-one interviews. Exception: Interviewed Sister Loretta and Margaret at the same time. All conducted in English.	Sister Kelley (Executive Director); Sister Loretta (Esperanza program director); Margaret (Development Director); Sister Allison (ESOL program director); Sister Catherine (Administrative Assistant and Esperanza Program Assistant).
Parishioners at Our Lady of Sorrows	One focus group with three participants, conducted in mixed English and Spanish; Two focus groups with two participants each, one entirely in Spanish and one entirely in English.	Adriana, Gerardo, and Carolina; Graciela and Jorge González; Jeanette and Jaime.
Clergy at Our Lady of Sorrows	One focus group with three participants. Conducted in mixed English and Spanish.	Father Joseph; Deacon Miguel; Deacon Vicente.

My use of focus groups was dually motivated by a desire to save time, as well as the potential benefits of observing participants' responses in a social context. Generally, using focus groups—whether there were ten participants at once, or only two—worked well, with a few limitations at times.

While this chapter described why I used participant observation to study Our Lady of Sorrows and Jubilee House, the next chapter looks more specifically at why faith-based organizations are a valuable site through which to investigate human rights. It also locates the FBOs in comparison to other FBOs worldwide, so as to better understand the implications of their work for low-income Latino immigrants in Hartford.

Chapter 2: How the Latino Catholic commitment to social justice informs faith-based efforts in Hartford

Since the earliest centuries of Christianity, the Hispanic Church has articulated a commitment to social justice, particularly through forms such as the twentieth-century Latin American liberation theology movement and Catholic social teaching. Even from the earliest roots of human rights, key contributors such as John Locke were influenced by Christian ideologies, despite the controversial nature of this connection from the point of view of cultural relativists. The Catholic community among Latin Americans and U.S. Latinos differs, yet has important ties through philosophy, history, and charitable relationships. Those in the U.S. are especially important to consider because not only do Catholics make up 68% of Hispanics (Pew Center), who represent 16.7% of the nation's population (U.S. Census 2010), but Catholic leaders at all levels also strongly incorporate varying forms of social justice rhetoric into many aspects of the denomination's beliefs and actions. The U.S. Hispanic Catholic community expresses ideals of social justice through parish missions, political organizing and rhetoric, "development" work in Third World nations, the daily faith-associated actions of individuals, and other work by faith-based organizations.

Just as the pan-American Hispanic Church is uniquely tied to social justice, so are ideals of faith-based social justice connected to the human rights movement. "Social justice" describes a society where the state guarantees the human rights of individuals. I would take this relationship a step further by saying that individuals' actions and rhetoric on behalf of faith-based social justice—for oneself and for others—contribute to the movement for the guarantee of individuals' human rights, whether or not he or she who speaks in terms of social justice necessarily chooses to associate with the language of human rights. In this sense, social justice

expressions in the Hispanic Catholic Church—presented in the form of Catholic social teaching—combine with times when Latino Catholics *do* explicitly use human rights rhetoric. The result has a highly significant place in the history and present moment of human rights discourse. From the liberation-theology inspired “base communities” of Brazil, to the faith-based organizations of indigenous Argentina, to the Catholic parishes in urban Hartford, Connecticut, Catholics have a strong relationship with human rights that is worth paying attention to. As we will see throughout this project, the expressions of social justice at Our Lady of Sorrows and Jubilee House represent a culturally-relevant effort to guarantee human rights.

In the present-day U.S, a majority of Latinos of all income levels in urban areas such as Hartford associate with a Catholic or other Christian denomination. In a 2007 report (“Changing Faiths: Latinos and the Transformation of American Religion”), the Pew Hispanic Center stated that 68% of Hispanics identify themselves as Roman Catholic. 15% of Hispanic identify as evangelical Protestants, and 8% do not affiliate with a religion. Because low-income and lower-middle-income Latinos in particular face a host of human rights violations tied to discriminatory policies and economic insecurity, social justice is a major variable in their lives. Social justice may or may not be part of the picture of a low-income Latino’s personal relationship with God and his or her faith community. However, authors such as Levitt and Wood, in their writings on civic life and the Hispanic church, infer a strong presence of social justice in much of this sector of church life and leadership.

In my project I made a conscious decision to study sites where the ideal of social justice saturates the work of all or most individuals involved. By doing so, I tie the Hispanic Church’s past of struggles for human rights in Latin America, as well as its present-day FBO work there, to the present-day manifestation of this struggle in urban Hartford, Connecticut. Those involved

in the work of Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows are even re-defining the very notion of citizenship—which lies at the heart of human rights and the current immigration debate—re-forming it in a model specific to empowering the faithful Latino.

Centuries ago, the U.S. Hispanic Church commits to social justice

Several characteristics of the U.S. Hispanic population presented in the Pew Center's (2007) report identify a large body of poor, immigrant Hispanic Catholics. Of the 68% of all Hispanic who are Catholic, the likelihood that one is foreign-born is higher: 74% of Hispanic foreign-born (immigrant) adults identify as Catholic, compared to only 58% of the native born. In turn, says the report, "it is not surprising that Latino Catholics are less likely to speak English and tend to be less educated and poorer than Hispanics of other religious traditions" (Pew Hispanic Center, 12). Forty-two percent of all Latino Catholics did not graduate from high school, and 46% have a household income of less than \$30,000 per year. Finally, Hispanics are very likely to attend "ethnic churches," or churches where Hispanics are a majority of parishioners, some Latinos are clergy, and masses take place in Spanish.

These demographics paint a portrait of Hispanic Catholic parishes that are likely to be strongly ethno-centric, poor, and low-educated. In impoverished, Latino-dominated Hartford, these statistics are likely to be even more pronounced (see Chapter 4). The poverty and low education levels that I described earlier do not automatically translate into concern for social justice. However, given the demographics, it is clear that U.S. Hispanic Catholic churches represent a large body of individuals who struggle with economic security and education levels—topics that Catholic social teaching addresses.

In *On the Move* (2006), Moises Sandoval describes this community in the second half of the twentieth century as one that struggled for rights, leadership and clergy positions, and ministry to Hispanic immigrant groups. Even from its earlier days pre-1946, Moises asserts that, much like the Latin American Church, it considered itself “the church of the poor.” Hispanics began to form a modern-day vision of a social justice through high participation in the Civil Rights Movement; PADRES; the Las Hermanas group; Basic Christian Communities (tied to the ideas of Brazilian liberation theologian Leonardo Boff); and an often up-hill battle for increased representation of Hispanics in church leadership positions, including the first Hispanic bishops.

With this growth in mind, one can envision the parallel rise of social justice work by these communities, encompassed in Catholic social teaching (CST). Not all of the occurrences that Moises describes are exclusively Catholic, nor are the faith-based organizers that Wood analyzes all Catholic (others are mainly evangelical or Pentecostal). Yet, Wood presents a large representation of Catholics in social justice efforts: about one-third of the professional organizers are Catholic, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) provides about 16 percent of funding for faith-based community organizing, and CST is very visible in the lingo of organizers (152). Catholic social justice efforts also take place in forms that cannot be categorized as “community organizing.” This work takes place through FBOs, is less studied, and is therefore more difficult to quantify (see Chapter 3).

Catholic social teaching on social and economic rights is present in the rhetoric of Church leadership, as well as that of local U.S. faith communities. In the following pages, when I refer to Hispanic Catholic “churches,” I also include women religious (unless otherwise noted), who often do not work directly through a particular church (see the end of this chapter for more on the relationship between women religious and the Church). In a chapter in *Christianity and Human*

Rights, John Sniegocki explains how through the words of Pope John Paul II, Catholic social teaching (CST) “clearly asserts legal significance for economic rights, and assigns to the state important roles in guaranteeing these rights” (152). Echoing the words of liberation theologians, Pope John Paul emphasizes the state’s priority to the poor and marginalized. Sniegocki also finds that U.S. bishops state a “mutually reinforcing” relationship between civil-political rights and social-economic rights, an association that U.S. secular voices are not always so keen to make to the same degree (153). Drawing from the Vatican’s commitment to social and economic rights, the U.S. Catholic Church follows in the footsteps of Latin American movements, yet with a voice distinct to the current U.S. political situation where state actors often marginalize economic needs.

Wood, Levitt, and Stevens-Arroyo describe how through faith-based community organizing, U.S. Hispanic faith communities articulate a commitment to a relatively wide variety of social and economic rights. In turn, these groups form a particular vision of social justice. Efforts by faith communities on behalf of social justice could take the form of charity, service, or social justice (Adkins, Occhipinti, and Hefferan). For example, at Our Lady of Sorrows, “charity” takes the form of ad-hoc financial assistance to individuals through the parish office. At Jubilee House, adult education classes contribute to social justice by providing the Latino immigrant with an opportunity to improve his or her education level and employment possibilities.

The multi-denomination Christian initiatives that Wood (2005) describes in “*Fé y Acción Social: Hispanic Churches in Faith-Based Community Organizing*” take the form of community-based organizing, which differs significantly from what Our Lady of Sorrows and Jubilee House do. Yet, the rights topics that they fight for are relevant for understanding the connection

between faith and social justice: housing in New York City (the Nehemiah Project); public schools in San Diego (the San Diego Organizing Project), Oakland (The Oakland Community Organization), Texas (the Texas IAF for Alliance Schools), and the PICO California Project; economic development in San Antonio (COPS for Project Quest job-training program); policing in Oakland (the Oakland Community Organization); health care for the “working poor” (PICO California Project); and youth recreational and after-school programs nationwide (148).

It is not clear how many U.S. Catholic churches take part in social justice work to a notable degree. While tracking the goals of self-described FBOs is relatively straight-forward, other social justice-related organizations do not refer to themselves as faith-based in an obvious way. Likewise, many churches that engage in social justice efforts do not make their missions clear in easy-to-see ways such as websites and publications. With regard to faith-based community organizing, Wood and Warren’s Interfaith Funders study estimates that at least 20 percent of the 3,300 congregations that that part in community organizing are predominantly (more than half) Latino (Wood 149).

Writings by Peggy Levitt and Stevens-Arroyo make one of the most clear and interesting bridges between Latin American liberation theology and present-day U.S. Hispanic faith communities. In “Two Nations Under God? Latino Religious Life in the United States,” Levitt (2008) describes how the liberation theology movement “affirmed the Catholic Church’s commitment to the fight for social justice by articulating a theology unique to the Spanish-speaking” (153). Coinciding with liberation theology were the 1960s Vatican II policy changes that shifted focus to preserving Latino identity; the *Cursillo* Spanish-language faith education movement; and the civil rights, black power, and United Farm Workers’ movements. Together, these factors formed what Stevens-Arroyo (1998) calls a Latino religious resurgence:

Latino Catholic leaders redefined their role as restoring and developing a distinct Latino religion that could not be absorbed into the Euro American religious experience. Latino Protestants took their lead from their Catholic colleagues and also initiated changes to preserve Latino uniqueness in their own denominations. This resurgence, Stevens-Arroyo claims, has brought about certain irreversible changes in religion in the United States. Latino religious practices are no longer considered inferior to their Euro American variants. Permanent institutional spaces have been created for the maintenance of diverse language and cultural expressions. As a result, the Latino community has grown confident and assertive about its unique approach to faith.

Based on Stevens-Arroyo's analysis, liberation theology had a profound influence on the very rise in identity of these churches. Likewise, traces of liberation theology's values saturate the rhetoric of U.S. Hispanic Catholics that perform social justice work. Therefore, it is worth looking more deeply at liberation theology and its possible impact on what goes on in Hartford's Catholic FBOs.

Argentine liberation theologians leave a mark on human rights and today's urban practice

Now we will take a look at which aspects of Latin American liberation theology are most relevant to underscoring my findings in Hartford. Specifically, I am interested in writings on the types of human rights in question—economic security and education—and how human rights efforts tied to liberation theology make themselves present in communities. The relationship between liberation theology and human rights is long, complicated, and beyond the scope of this project. Therefore, I focus on liberation theology history that has two characteristics: relevance to my fieldwork in Hartford; and, two, ties to the movement's presence in Argentina, where most of my knowledge about Latin America is. My goal is to understand how a bridge between Latin American Catholic social justice and its local re-incarceration might actually take place. Of particular relevance to education and economic security—the two rights topics I honed in on in Hartford—are liberation theologians who concerned themselves with education and local-level

community organizing (such as Boff and Freire), as well as all those who worked in solidarity with movements for workers' rights and conditions.

Brazilian leader Leonardo Boff's Christian *comunidades de base* or *comunidades eclesiales de base* ("base communities," "ecclesiastical base communities," or CEBs), which were a central aspect of liberation theology's organization and spread, present an interesting comparison for understanding FBOs in Hartford. In one of his major writings from 1984, *Eclesiogénesis: Las comunidades de base reinventan la Iglesia* (*Ecclesiogenesis: Base communities re-invent the Church*), Boff writes about base communities, understood as diverse communities of faithful individuals, often impoverished and illiterate peasants and workers who organized themselves under the leadership of a lay person or priest in rural and urban areas that did not have geographic access to a formally-established parish. Boff writes of base communities as the source of a Church "born from the bases," where those in the "interior" of CEBs consider the Church to be one made up of these diverse, numerous communities. Yet, the *jerarquía*, or higher-ups, of the Church typically did not recognize base communities as part of the Church. Rather, they defined the Church as that which originated top-down, directly from the *Concilio* (Vatican Council); or, at minimum, as the formally-established parishes that were out of reach for many peasants and *obreros* (urban laborers). The CEBs believed just the opposite: by holding inter-community discussions on class issues and material conditions through the process known as consciousness-raising, community worship took the form of class awareness.

I do not intend to make the point that Our Lady of Sorrows, or any other FBO in Hartford, is a direct representation of a CEB. In reality, Our Lady of Sorrows shares important differences with Boff's CEBs: for example, the parish was founded as an Anglo-dominated, well-established church. Certainly its members are neither illiterate peasants nor disenfranchised

obreros. Despite these important distinctions, the CEB model has in common with Our Lady of Sorrows, and even Jubilee House, a sense of class awareness raised through a consistent and conscious awareness of faith and scripture. This awareness is present in the charitable parish office, the social justice ministry of the church's youth group, and the class-sensitive approach of Jubilee House's adult education programming. Likewise, certainly Jubilee House, and perhaps Our Lady of Sorrows', share a certain distance from the higher-ups of the Church that may allow their clergy and lay-people to conduct in social justice work that the Church would not necessarily recognize or support. One basic parallel is apparent: like the Latin American Church neglected to recognize the desire for the rural and urban marginalized peoples to organize and worship (hence, necessitating the rise of CEBs where parishes were lacking), so has the U.S. government consciously pulled out public sector funding for services that incorporate immigrants. Working through largely private pathways, FBOs like Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows express social justice despite the neglectful ways of the public sector.

Of special interest to me is the Argentine coalition of liberation theology-practicing priests called *El Movimiento de sacerdotes para el tercer mundo* (MSTM), or The Movement of Priests for the Third World. This group, which began to organize in 1967, desired to "situate themselves as priests facing the economic, social, and political reality of Argentina and eventually of Latin America" (*Sacerdotes para el Tercer Mundo: Crónica, documentos, y reflexión*). The priests often aligned with student organizations and workers' unions to protest conditions and policy changes; protested and wrote against the government eradication of *villas miserias* (shantytowns) in which many priests themselves worked; and participated in popular movements for the working rights of *obreros* and *campesinos* (farmworking peasants).

Much of the history of MSTM centers on its leader, Father Carlos Mugica, assassinated in 1974, who, along with other priests worked in the *villas* of Buenos Aires. The *villas* did, and still do today, consist mainly of immigrants of Bolivian, Paraguayan, and Chilean origin who fled their countries for political or economic reasons, as well as Argentines from the poor “interior” of the country who looked for a better life in the capital city. The goals of the MSTM working in the *villas* were to “be the voice of those who have no voice,” to live poor, to denounce the miserable living conditions of the poor as a result of failed state structures, to raise consciousness among the *villeros* (shantytown inhabitants), to help the *villeros* organize, and to bring them the message of God. The rights topics that these *curas villeros* (priests of the shantytowns) worked upon typically were basic needs like water, infrastructure, and health, as well as drug addiction issues like the infamous *paco*. Here, too, we see a tentative parallel to the Christian Latino immigrants of Hartford who come to the city seeking economic opportunity or safety from political violence, only to encounter intolerable living conditions and marginalized status.

The numerous structures and organizations in the *villas* of Buenos Aires that bear Mugica’s name drew Universidad de Buenos Aires researcher Micaela Cuesta to write “Teología de la Liberación como historia, presencia, y práctica urbana en la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: Notas de campo” (“Liberation theology as history, present, and urban practice in the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires: Field notes”), part of the project *Global Prayers: Redemption and liberation in the city*. Cuesta notes how Mugica and his colleagues of *curas villeros* (priests of the shantytowns) left a legacy not only in the thinking of their survivors and successors, but also in the form of a physical presence in the *villas* and other less precarious neighborhoods. Examples include murals of Mugica, graffiti stencils of his face, makeshift

monuments, paintings, and numerous small businesses and institutions that bear his name. Especially of interest is the latter group, which Cuesta refers to as proof of the “secularization” process through which liberation theology has passed. Numerous community centers and other social-political organizations—such as a women’s shelter, an urbanization project, a textile cooperative, children’s centers, and community food and gathering centers (*comedores*)—bear the name or physical marks referring to Mugica. Some of these organizations, says Cuesta, once had an affiliation with the official Argentine Ministry of the Church, but nowadays operate autonomously or enjoy a function largely independent from the Church.

Upon reading and hearing these observations from Cuesta, I was immediately intrigued by the resonance of these images with the early social justice-related visuals cues that I picked up on in Hartford. I became interested in understanding how liberation theology and other, more general expressions of social justice, were present at Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows. In the following section, I explore how the ministries of individuals in Hartford that I studied relate to CST and to the writings of liberation theologians.

Hartford case studies: Conceptualizing expressions of social justice as echoes of liberation theology and Catholic social teaching

Through interviews and focus groups with staff at Jubilee House and clergy at Our Lady of Sorrows, two major themes emerge that describe both FBOs’ conceptualizations of social justice. A majority of staff and clergy spoke of 1) the immigrant or poor as a neighbor, equal, and/or brother or sister, and 2) the importance of seeing and valuing the marginalized person as a whole individual with needs and capabilities. These themes define why service providers (staff and clergy) do the work that they do, and what makes their approach unique compared to other faiths’ efforts and those by the public sphere.

They explained that commitment to these axioms arises directly out of scripture, as well as through a personal understanding of CST-motivated work with the poor. In speaking about the connection between her faith and her service work, Sister Claire stated: “The adage is to live the gospel value....In the gospel, a lawyer asks Jesus ‘who is my neighbor,’ and always, the neighbor is the person in need.”¹ At times, service providers posed their concepts of social justice in contrast to mainstream, politicized notions of the immigrant or poor as “the other,” the “alien,” or a person without intelligence and ability. Deacon Miguel, discussing how clergy work with the people, in contrast to non-faith based agencies, said:

People call the immigrant like it’s someone who isn’t supposed to be here.... “alien.” You think that’s fair? ... But when I go to the house, and I say, “what you need?” And then I feel more proud. When you give, you no ask, no, you give it.²

Finally, a majority of those interviewed designated the poor as a priority and a preference in their work.

Many of the clergy and sisters at both FBOs have extensive backgrounds working with poor and marginalized groups in Latin America and the United States. Father of Joe of Our Lady of Sorrows was born to poor Irish immigrant parents, then worked with the poor in Argentina, Peru, and Brazil before returning to Hartford to work on impoverished Latino mecca Park St. After finding a man frozen on the steps of Immaculate Conception church, he founded Immaculate Conception shelter, today one of the most well-known shelters in the city. Deacon Vicente and Deacon Miguel also worked on Park. St. before coming to Our Lady of Sorrows. At Jubilee House, Sister Catherine spent years with migrant farm workers in Delaware, improving their access to healthcare services. Sister Loretta lived in rural Pennsylvania working with coal mining communities, mainly women, towards their education and financial independence. All

¹ Interview with Sister Claire on 1 November 2012.

² Interview with Deacon Miguel on 14 November 2012.

five of these individuals cited their experiences living and working with the poorest people as central to giving purpose and ability to what they do in Hartford. Father Joe in particular came into contact with the era of liberation theology in Latin America. Through the pasts of these service providers, one can see how belief in a preferential option for the poor is present in the philosophies of those who work at Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows.

The topics that the FBO leaders I studied focus on—education, economic security, and mental health—likewise echo the priorities of liberation theology writers. Leonardo Boff, in his writings on CEBs, as well as Paulo Friere, in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, asserted popular education as the basis for a just society. Jubilee House's central mission is to provide adult education to the Hartford community through ESOL courses and the *Esperanza* college-preparatory and job skills program. At Our Lady of Sorrows, while clergy did not directly discuss education, other parishioner leaders, such as Graciela and Jorge, identified education for youth as a top priority—and public weakness—in Hartford. At both FBOs, financial security and economic opportunity consistently appeared in interviews as highly important to the struggle and success of the individuals with whom the FBOs work. Like the FBOs in Hartford today, liberation theologians across the board were concerned with topics related to economic security, such as: working conditions; pay fairness; class consciousness; material inequality; systems of production; and the plight of *obreros*, *campesinos*, and other marginalized workers.

The connection between service providers' motivations and the beliefs of liberation theology is not simple and direct. However, it is not coincidental, either. In short, the work of Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows are modern-day representations of how CST has been transmitted from the Latin American liberation theology of the 1960s-1980s to today's fight for immigrant rights in a hostile United States. In the following section, I discuss in more detail the

complexities of the relationship between human rights, CST, politics, and the Catholic Church as it is relevant to my case studies.

Conflicting narratives: Human rights and Catholic social justice work

The relationship between human rights and Christianity (and the Catholic Church in particular) is long, complicated, and mixed. Yet, alone, the immensity of work that Christian FBOs do on behalf of marginalized groups worldwide calls for a nuanced understanding of how those dynamics play out daily in Hartford. Frederick Shepherd in *Christianity and Human Rights* puts it most simply: “Human rights campaigns (with Christian participations) are nothing new, and...the nature of the Christian role in these efforts is significant, but decidedly mixed” (xvi). Specific historical incidences aside, Adkins, Occhipinti, and Hefferan note how the Social Gospel movement that emerged in the late nineteenth century “asserted that poverty and inequality were the result of societal forces, not individuals’ shortcomings, and that Christians had a responsibility to work for the transformation of the social order” (3). These authors also point out that faith-based charity work for the poor, the sick, the incarcerated, orphans, and the like *precedes* the rise of the modern-day nation state—an interesting contrast to the present day U.S.’s constitutional “separation of church and state” (2-3). Additionally, both Shepherd and Adkins, Occhipinti, and Hefferan note how among most faiths, there is much common ground in fights for social, economic, and political topics. Divisions are more likely to appear within different factions of the same religion.

Both of these points inform my understanding of Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows, which prove similar to that which occurs among other Catholic FBOs that the authors describe in *Not by Faith Alone* and *Bridging the Gaps*. At these FBOs, social justice work often

takes place with a notable degree of separation from the larger Church's watchful eye. Thus, the FBOs' work often contributes many positives towards the guarantees of human rights. Yet, not each and every approach or belief is intended to perfectly aligned with the ideals of human rights.

For the purposes of my project, it is most relevant to briefly discuss two of the major conflicts that come to mind when thinking of Christianity and human rights. First, in the second half of the twentieth century, violence and oppression towards liberation theologians (such as members of SPTM) from Church higher-ups contrasted with the pro-human rights efforts of those who followed liberation theology. Particularly in Argentina, the Church had a dual role during the most recent dictatorship under Videla (1976-1983). The regime saw left-leaning Christians as threats, especially those who expressed social justice. These individuals were numerous among the "disappeared." At the same time, many political historians accuse the Church of contributing to—or at least staying silent about—the violence of the era. Second, as Shepherd and many other authors touch upon, the human rights discourse often faces the critique of the cultural relativist who says that the movement is deep-seated in Western, Christian values that are not necessarily "universal," or, even, are colonialist and/or imperialist. This critique provides for an interesting contrast to my findings about values shared at Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows: inter-cultural respect among participants and service providers, commitment to cultural relativism of services, and a Latino-centric concept of citizenship.

One particular human rights issue that is central to what I investigated at these FBOs—immigration—demonstrates an important convergence between CST and human rights. Staff members at Jubilee House spoke of their personal dedication to immigrants, naming the

immigrant and the refugee as top priorities for Catholics to assist out of scriptural interpretation.³ Close to one hundred percent of Jubilee Houses' adult education and resettlement services go to the benefit of immigrants and refugees. Likewise, the clergy and parishioners of Our Lady of Sorrows expressed a deep commitment to their own Latino community, many of whom are immigrants. Clergy members such as Father Valentín in particular posed the person-centered, no-questions-asked approach of the parish office in contrast to what he perceived as broader society's harsh view of the immigrant as "alien." Despite these grassroots-level expressions that align with human rights, it is possible that the Catholic Church has not always—and perhaps, still does not today—take enough of a stance on immigration to consider the institution an ally to this area of human rights work. Sandoval explains how the church was slow to develop a position on Hispanic immigration. The Church opposed illegal immigration and the post-WWII state-sponsored *bracero* program that brought Mexican farm workers to the U.S. Later, however, members of the Hispanic Church from laity to bishops denounced violence against undocumented immigrants, protested behavior of the Immigration and Naturalization Services, and advised the US Commission on Civil Rights on immigration issues (139-140).

During fieldwork, I came upon many examples of times when clergy and staff presented views in direct opposition to advice from the larger Catholic Church. A bulletin available for parishioners to take at Our Lady of Sorrows, printed in Washington D.C. and likely widely distributed among Catholic churches during the 2012 presidential election season, described the Church's stances of various political issues: workers' rights, the sanctity of the family, and respect for human life, among others. Yet, during my focus group with clergy, Father Joe called the Church "myopic" when it comes to conservative political views such as some expressed in

³ See reference to interview with Sister Claire regarding the immigrant in scripture.

the bulletin. He criticized those within the Church who discouraged church members from voting for President Obama solely due to his views on abortion, considering Obama's efforts on behalf of the poor and marginalized that do support much of the Church's priorities. Father Joe even leads a confession and support group for the gay community, another demographic condemned by most higher-ups within the Church. At Jubilee House, when I asked Sister Allison and Sister Kelley what kind of messages they received from the Church, their most salient comment is that they did not receive any communication at all. Sister Allison went on to express how she feels that a women's body is her own, and that she knows what is best for it—alluding to, perhaps, disagreement with anti-abortion and anti-birth control campaigns from the Church. Although none of the Jubilee House sisters mentioned affiliation with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious—the group representing 80% of U.S. women religious that was reprimanded by the Vatican in April 2012 for challenging church teachings on homosexuality, questioning the male-only priesthood, and promoting “radical feminist themes”—words like those from Sister Allison call to mind the separation between the values of a majority of women religious and the Vatican, recently highlighted in the media.

What do all of these interesting contrasts mean for understanding how and why Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows contribute to the broader picture of FBO work on behalf of the rights of Latino immigrants? The relative degree of autonomy with which these individuals work has important implications for the type of efforts that they carry out. With seemingly little oversight and communication from Church higher-ups regarding social justice work, faith-based service providers are able to dedicate themselves to their personal interpretation of scripture. In combination with backgrounds working with the poorest of the poor in the rural U.S., Latin America, and Hartford, their personal conceptions of social justice translate into concern for the

immigrant, the refugee, and the otherwise poor. Many defenders of human rights have some kind of emotional connection to their work, but those who do so through the lens of faith-based social justice frame it in terms of faith. Their views align with human rights discourse to a much greater degree than some of the views that the larger Church perpetuates. In this sense, faith-based initiatives, such as those among the large Latino Catholic community in Hartford, are a culturally-specific expression of human rights at the local, grassroots level.

Chapter 3: Faith-based Case Studies: Spanning the Continuum of Charity, Service, and Justice

Why is work by faith-based organizations that accommodate immigrants of significance to human rights? Where do Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows fall on the spectrum of FBOs in comparison to what's out there in Hartford, what comparable FBOs world-wide do, and what the rest of Catholics performing social justice do? These are the questions that the following chapter addresses.

Implications for human rights theory: Why study FBOs that work to accommodate immigrants?

Neoliberal U.S. policies of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries meant that governments pulled out large bodies of funding and programming for social causes, leaving behind a large gap in social services. This disparity deeply affects all marginalized populations, but especially immigrants and refugees, who rely on social services for the basic needs that allow them to settle and integrate into their new home cities. Without extensive state-based services, the integration of immigrants fell to largely private pathways, in which FBOs play a major role. Adkins, Occhipinti, and Hefferan (2010) describe the reaction from third-party, non-governmental FBOs to neoliberal policy: "Faith-based organizations attempt to mend the fissures and mitigate the effects of neoliberal capitalism, poverty, and the social service sector on the poor and powerless" (1). Sossin and Smith (2006) explain how in responding to the policy changes left behind, FBOs took on the expectation to "deliver uniquely beneficial services and to mobilize social capital to compensate." It is well-established by other authors that FBOs play a major role in filling the gaps between what government programs left behind, and what marginalized individuals, such as immigrants, need.

From a human rights perspective, this phenomenon is of immense importance because it brings up two important theoretical issues: *access* to a right, and *having versus enjoying* a right. By virtue of being a human being, an individual has a basic set of human rights outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights documents. But, Jack Donnelly describes an important distinction: “rights are put to use, claimed, exercised only when they are threatened or denied,” he writes (11). The duty-bearer of the right—i.e. the state—responds to one’s claim by respecting or violating the right, says, Donnelly. In turn, the individual enjoys or does not enjoy his or her right.

Somewhere in between respect and violation, enjoying or not enjoying a right, lies access. For example, a woman has the human right to a basic education. But, perhaps she cannot *access* this right because she lives in a remote village with no close-by school system; or, she lives in a poor family and must work to support them rather than attending school. The woman cannot *access* her human right to education because socio-economic gaps exist. If, according to human rights discourse, the state is the ultimate duty-bearer, then the state must not only protect the individual from violation of his or her rights, but also provide the individual with the means to access a right. So, what does it mean when the state uses neoliberal policy to opt out of their duty to provide the necessary social services for immigrants to integrate into a new urban home? In effect, they fail to provide the means to access basic human rights such as education and economic stability? As we know, many immigrants turn to FBOs to help them access rights. As a result, the low-income Latino immigrants that I came upon in my case studies access rights *outside of* the realm of the state. In the theory of human rights, a trend where the state no longer functions as the duty-bearer raises all kinds of “how” and “why” questions.

As we will see especially in Chapter Seven and the Conclusion, these case studies demonstrate how faith-based social justice on behalf of Latino immigrants is a form of human rights struggle. This dynamic is a positive response to those who critique human rights from a “cultural relativist” viewpoint. However, it nevertheless raises another critique of the human rights discourse—is the human rights discourse de-valORIZED when the state neglects its duties to the rights of Latino immigrants to such a harmful extent? Are mechanisms for state compliance (e.g. the binding nature of treaties) enough to ensure that states at least attempt to fulfill their duties toward Latino immigrants?

The tendency for FBOs to take on and implement social service programs has not gone unnoticed by federal higher-ups. Proof is President Barack Obama’s White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, a sequel to President George W. Bush’s White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. In a discussion about the Roundtable on Religion & Social Welfare Policy’s 2009 report “Taking Stock: The Bush Faith-Based Initiative and What Lies Ahead,” a participant explains what passed in the last twenty years: “the laws have eased the way for an increase in contracting with faith-based groups to receive public funding for social services, and particularly to reach out to smaller, grassroots faith-based organizations, encouraging and helping them compete for social service grants.” Another key aspect of the federal relationship with FBOs is the Charitable Choice provision, included in 1996 welfare reform, stating that FBOs may not be excluded as providers; they do not need to rid of their religious identity in order to receive government funds; and hiring of employees is allowed to be based on the applicants’ faith, as long as it does not conflict with state laws. In short, the Office’s eleven centers partner with local FBOs, mainly assisting them in competing for federal grants through which to implement programming. Interestingly, Jubilee House’s Community

Block Development Grant, which funds the Esperanza Program, does not come through the White House Office, but rather through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

If the state preferences private, faith-based pathways to immigrant integration—even encouraging them through President Obama’s Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships—what kind of implications exist for the concept of citizenship, from a human rights point of view? “Citizenship” is at the core of human rights. The term implies a collection of rights belonging to each individual through membership in a nation. Recently, many human rights scholars have argued for a universal notion of citizenship, in which the individual’s rights are not tied to membership of a particular state, but rather are guaranteed universally, across state borders.

As most U.S. Americans are well aware due to the current political debate on illegal immigration, many Latino immigrants in the U.S. are undocumented, or otherwise hold a residency status other than permanent citizenship (see Chapter 4). Without citizenship status, it is immensely difficult to gain access to basic services that contribute to rights, such as medical care. Even Latino immigrants with documented status or citizenship, like Hartford’s Puerto Ricans, struggle due to socio-economic and structural barriers. Citizenship involves more than a legal relationship between the individual and the state. Rather, it implies that the individual is able to “belong” to the state by being a protected, fulfilled, contributing, and self-sufficient member of society. Without guarantee of rights like education and economic stability, how can an individual fit those criteria?

Furthermore, access to other rights, like employment and freedom from violence, stem from basic rights like education and economic stability. A holistic, well-rounded concept of

citizenship, then, acknowledges the intersectionality of rights and the tendency for access to one right to be dependent on access to another. Without state support for immigrants' education and economic security, "citizenship" is highly flawed. FBOs come into the picture by bridging the gap between access and rights, in effect assisting the immigrant to achieve citizenship (in the sense of rights, if not legally). Despite the benefits of such a dynamic, the state is no longer the full bearer of citizenship, which further raises the important critique of who bears duties in human rights theory. (For more on citizenship, see Chapter Seven.)

Perhaps some of the U.S. state's reluctance to take up the needs of low-income Latino immigrants also stems from a historical focus on civil and politics rights over economic and social rights. Compared to Latin America and other regions, the rhetoric on economic and social rights, even at the grassroots level, is far less present in the U.S. The lack may be due in part to lingering Cold War values, in which the U.S. avoided social and economic language associated with USSR communism. The needs of many immigrants in the U.S., but especially low-income Latinos, very much situate around economic and social rights.

Which objectives of FBOs do Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows embody?

Adkins, Occhipinti, and Hefferan (2010) modify Nile Harper's (1999) "continuum" model of FBO work to present an outline of commonalities and differences among three types of efforts: charity, service, and justice. The factors that they use to analyze charity, service, and justice include: realm, time, who benefits, responds to, pattern, current model, strength, and limits. Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows represent elements of all three types. A brief look at the presence and interaction of charity, service, and justice in these case studies helps us get a

preliminary sense of the work that they do. This analysis raises important differences between the two FBOs that I detail in later chapters.

At Jubilee House, service and justice have a larger role than does charity. My analysis is based on the three programs that Jubilee House offers (ESOL, Esperanza college preparation and job training, and Refugee Assistance Services), as well as the organization's overall philosophy.

The table below is a basic summary only, based on the "continuum" model:

JUBILEE HOUSE	
REALM	Service-oriented: private and public; organized delivery of assistance to families, individuals, and groups.
TIME	ESOL and Esperanza programs provide long-term solutions (service, justice). Refugee Assistance Services may provide assistance across the board, from immediate response (charity) to long-term relationships.
WHO BENEFITS	Direct help to individuals, families, small groups (service).
RESPONDS TO	Difficult to say whether responds to "secondary consequences of unjust conditions" (service) or the "basic causes of injustice" (justice); possibly both occur.
PATTERN	Can deliver dependable, stable, continuous supply of goods and services efficiently (service).
CURRENT MODEL	Both service and justice. Includes elements of aid (service) and community development (justice) aspects such as job training.
STRENGTH	Involves some strengths of all three types: personal, involves volunteers, promotes giving (charity); organized, prepared, accountability, social safety net, promotes new beginnings (service); self-development, empowers people to meet their needs (justice).
LIMITS	Limits are more associated with justice: requires time, hard work, compromise, financial resources.

Efforts at Our Lady of Sorrows are more mixed, tending towards charity, with some representations of service and justice. Justice rhetoric is most apparent in the sermons of clergy and in the network-building of parishioners through church groups and personal relationships. This text makes a contribution to human rights literature by highlighting the significance of networking among the FBO communities. Charity abounds in the parish office, which provides

individual financial assistance, occasional ad-hoc shelter, advice on resource-seeking outside of the church, and a soup kitchen during winter months. The following table summarizes these observations in the continuum model:

OUR LADY OF SORROWS	
REALM	Charity-oriented: Private; personal acts of compassion; individual deeds of assistance; voluntary aid organizations.
TIME	Charity, service, and justice. Range from quick responses and emergency needs to long-term timelines.
WHO BENEFITS	Charity: Direct help to individuals, families, small groups, neighborhood communities.
RESPONDS TO	Charity, service, and justice. Includes responses to the secondary effects of injustice (through charity), as well as basic causes of injustice and group oppression (through spiritual rhetoric).
PATTERN	Mainly charity: repeated responses to individual needs.
CURRENT MODEL	Soup kitchen and parish office that gives financial assistance, advice, and some ad-hoc shelter (charity). Networks formed among parishioners, especially in programs/groups, are informal, but represent some community development (justice).
STRENGTH	Both charity and justice. Personal and deals with immediate needs (charity), but also engages people in self-development and partnership-forming (justice).
LIMITS	Limits of charity (does not deal with the basic causes of human problems; is reactive, sporadic; may inhibit responsibility); service (dependency, apathy); and justice (requires time, risk-taking, financial resources; no guarantee of success).

The significant role of FBOs in facilitating networks among parishioners and clients is perhaps a tendency related to, yet distinct from, charity, service, and justice. In chapters Six and Seven, we detail the ways in which FBO staff rely upon their contacts at other Hartford Catholic FBOs to recruit clients, refer clients to resources, and disseminate information. Perhaps more importantly, FBOs promote networks among the Hartford Latino community. Staff draw upon the family and friendship ties of clients and parishioners to conduct their work. For example, Jubilee House's ESOL program no longer needs to advertise, as students constantly refer friends

and family to the courses. FBOs' promotion of Latino immigrant networks is a perhaps overlooked aspect of their work. Interestingly, networking may be most closely connected to the "justice" work of FBOs outlined in the continuum model. While networking does not take place directly alongside advocacy work at Jubilee House or Our Lady of Sorrows, "networking effects" do connect immigrants to resources. In this sense, networks help low-income Latino immigrants in Hartford to overcome barriers to accessing rights.

An analysis of Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows through the continuum model makes apparent that these FBOs are distinct from the kind of faith-based community organizing (FBCO) that Wood (2005) describes. FBCO makes an important contribution to the realm of faith-based work for human rights, and is especially significant among Hispanic Catholic groups. Yet, organizing is entirely different from the methodology of Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows. For example, alliances for public schools in California such as PICO advocated for education reform through faith-based community organizing (Wood 2005). Jubilee House also addresses the human right to education, but through adult education programs. The sites that I studied may include limited elements associated with community organizing, such as networking-building at Our Lady of Sorrows, or Jubilee House's affiliation with the Collaborative Center for Justice (see later chapters). However, the vast majority of their work centers on established programs, spiritual-personal counseling, ad-hoc and temporary charity efforts, and informal referrals to other social services. Much of existing research on Hispanic faith-based efforts for rights topics has centered on community organizing. I would like to turn the conversation in the direction of what Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows do: direct provision of services and referrals to other services.

Of course, the sites where I conducted case studies do not exist in a vacuum, but rather are part of the larger picture of private, public, and faith-based social services in Hartford and the State of Connecticut. One part of the picture is the Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry of the Archdiocese of Hartford, based out of New Haven, Connecticut. The Office uses the ideals of CST to work with parishes' social ministries, provides some educational programming, encourages environmental justice, helps facilitate parish relationships with aid in developing nations, develops leadership through conferences and trainings, and administers financial aid programs such as the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD). Despite what seems to be some common ground between the Office and my case study sites, staff noted that they actually have little interaction. Their lack of a deep relationship reflects how the FBOs work largely outside of both state and Catholic formalized structures for social and economic issues.

It seems more likely that the FBOs operate somewhat independently of support from this branch of the Archdiocese, save some quiet interactions. Our Lady of Sorrows did take a collection of money donations to the CCHD at a November mass, and included its informational pamphlet in the church bulletin. The Office website describes the CCHD as the following: "The domestic anti-poverty, social justice program of the U.S. Catholic bishops. Its mission is to address the root causes of poverty in America through promotion and support of community-controlled, self-help organizations and through transformative education." In the Archdiocese of Hartford, the Campaign seeks to educate parishioners about poverty in the state, and to fund groups in the archdiocese who work to end poverty.

Besides some degree of charity-related efforts like that Catholic Campaign for Human Development, Our Lady of Sorrows' activities that are of relevance to this study take place with a relative degree of independence from the Archdiocese of Hartford. The church may have more

freedom to make decisions regarding charity, service, and justice on its own. The distance of their relationship may also imply that activities that contribute to human rights happen more organically, bottom-up, through the actions of parishioners and clergy, rather than top-down through the direction of the Archdiocese. In the following chapter, I will detail the situations that cause low-income Latino immigrants, particularly in resource-strapped Hartford, to struggle with threats to their human rights to education, economic security, and mental health.

Chapter 4: Navigating the human rights to education, economic security, and mental health in Hartford

Returning to the concept of *having versus enjoying a right* is a good starting place for an investigation of why low-income Latino immigrants in Hartford face difficulty in accessing the human rights to education, economic security, and mental health through state-based and some private pathways. Lack of services, immigration policies and other structural issues, cultural relevancy, and socio-economic patterns in urban Hartford all form barriers to access that make it challenging for him or her to enjoy rights. In the following chapter, I will explore the demographics of low-income Latino immigrants in Connecticut; the nature of education, economic security, and mental health as human rights; why they are most relevant to my case studies; what kinds of services exist in Hartford; and why cultural relevance is so important to understanding access to rights through FBOs.

In the United States—and especially in Connecticut—Latino immigrants face socio-economic challenges across the board that make threats to their rights particularly urgent. Extreme wealth stratification between suburban and urban areas in Connecticut only exacerbates the situation. The Pew Research Hispanic Center (2007) provides a slew of statistics based on a sample of the 2010 American Community Survey (“Changing Faiths: Latinos and the Transformation of American Religion”). Foreign-born Latinos account for 26% of all Connecticut Latinos, who, in turn, make up 13% of the state. At 33.7% of Latinos in Hartford, Puerto Ricans are a significant majority. But, the newest arrivals—Peruvians and Colombians—are joining Mexicans, Cubans, El Salvadorians, Dominicans, and Guatemalans as other Latino ethnic groups.

Compared to the non-Hispanic whites in Hartford, who take in \$40,000 a year, all Hartford Hispanics' median annual personal earnings are only \$21,000. Poverty data for the City of Hartford is just as concerning: 20% of all Hispanics ages 18-64 live below the poverty line, while 27% age 17 and younger do. Descriptions of their jobs that ESOL students at Jubilee House are a testament to the high levels of unemployment, under-employment, and insecure job situations of Latino immigrants in Hartford, all of which feed poverty. A female participant in my focus group described her employment as such:

I job temporary in the apartment. When I coming to United States in 2001, I job for 8 years in laundry. And no more job in the laundry because accident in the elbow. Now, only temporary. I job in different jobs. Maybe cleaning. *¿Cómo se dice?* [How do you say?] Temporary.

As we will detail more later, language is a major factor in poverty, as 76% of all Latinos in the State of Connecticut speak a language other than English at home. At 48% of Latinos in the State, the number of foreign-born Latinos without health insurance is also strikingly problematic. This initial demographic overview provides a sense of the extremity of socio-economic challenges that most Latino immigrants in Connecticut face. Alongside other urban centers like Bridgeport and New Haven, Hartford experiences unique difficulties in addressing issues of poverty, education, health, and employment for foreign-born Latinos. (Pew Research Hispanic Center, 2007)

How does human rights language express the human rights to education, economic security, and mental health, and why do these rights matter for Latino immigrants?

Education, economic security, and mental health are interconnected human rights topics that deeply affect low-income Latino immigrants' ability to live a stable, fulfilling, and secure life. The communities of Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows most frequently address these

rights. It is no coincidence that with such extreme need and a pattern of lacking services, the FBOs' focus would fall as such. Barriers to these rights are a telling reflection of Hartford's socio-economic patterns and structural deficiencies—yet they might also be integral to improvement. For these reasons, we will take a closer look at how education, economic security, and mental health are incorporated into both the human rights discourse and the fabric of Latino life in Hartford.

The human right to education appears in major documents with slightly varying language, three of which I summarize in the table below:

TABLE 4A: Education in Major Human Rights Documents		
DOCUMENT	ARTICLES	KEY LANGUAGE
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	26	Right to education; free, compulsory education; availability of higher and technical education; parent choice in type of schooling.
International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights	13	Right to education; tolerance among racial, ethnic, and religious groups; compulsory and free primary education; accessible secondary education and technical education; equally accessible higher education; fundamental education for those without complete education; improvement of staff and school systems; parent choice of schools.
CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women)	10	Right to education equal to men; career and vocational training; curriculum, staff, and equipment; elimination of gendered stereotypes in education; adult, literacy, and continuing education; reduction of drop-out rates; physical education; health and family planning.

This table's selected representations of education in human rights documents shows the breadth of the topic, as well as some areas where access is particularly difficult for this population: secondary and higher education, vocational and technical education, fundamental education for

adults without complete education, and literacy, among other issues beyond the scope of this project. Data from a 2012 Pew Research Hispanic Center report shows that low educational attainment persists among Hispanics, as only 34% have a high school diploma or equivalent, and 13% a bachelor's degree or higher. Clearly, a large population of adult foreign-born Latinos in Connecticut struggles to access high school-level education or an equivalent. For example, in a focus group with ESOL students at Jubilee House, a man who immigrated from Mexico stated that Jubilee House's program is the first time he has been enrolled in schooling since he dropped out of high school in Mexico at age 14. The education gap for Latino immigrant in Hartford is likely due to a combination of factors: lack of schooling in their home countries prior to arriving in the U.S.; inadequate adult education services in impoverished Connecticut cities like Hartford; and economic-cultural factors such as the demands of responsibilities to family or multiple jobs. Improved access to adult education—such as that which Jubilee House provides—can mean better employment opportunities, easier navigation of social services like medical care that require English-language skills, and greater ability to assist children with schooling and daily life. The benefits of education contribute to access to other inter-connected rights that, together, form an inclusive and holistic form of “citizenship.” (For more on citizenship, see Chapter 7.)

While adult education is the focus of this project, the education of their children is also a major concern of Latino immigrants in Hartford. Over the past few decades, Hartford has experienced a much-debated and publicized struggle to reform schools and decrease the disparity between urban and suburban school quality. During interviews, student and parishioner participants at both sites expressed the need for improved education for their youth, especially support services for those trying to attend college.⁴ Some students at Jubilee House felt that City

⁴ Interviews conducted with English as a Second Language students at Jubilee House on 6 Nov. 2012 and with Graciela and Jorge at Our Lady of Sorrows on 11 Nov. 2012.

of Hartford government “discriminated” against Latinos by not providing adequate school systems for their children. In addition to concern for their children’s education, several Jubilee House students commented on the improvements that ESOL and other adult education brought to their lives.

You will not find the phrases “economic security” or “economic stability” explicitly included in most human rights documents. Rather, I consciously chose to use these phrases as umbrella terms that represent several interconnected rights such as employment, social security, and standard of living, among others, included in the chart below. Using the term “economic security”—rather than just “employment rights” or similar phrases—allows me to discuss the whole picture of barriers that low-income Latino immigrants face to living secure, independent, and safe lives for themselves and their families. Like education, a host of other rights, from medical care to housing, stem from economic security, making this right central to the version of citizenship that I have discussed.

TABLE 4B: Rights that Form Economic Security, in Major Human Rights Documents

DOCUMENT	ARTICLES	KEY LANGUAGE
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	23, 24, 25	Right to work; free choice of employment; fair conditions; protection against unemployment; equal pay; pay worthy of human dignity; social protection; rest and leisure; working hours; holidays with pay. Standard of living; food; housing; medical care; social services; unemployment security; special care for mothers and children.
International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights	6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11	Right to work; choice of work; technical and vocational training; safe conditions of work; fair wage; decent living; equal opportunity for advancement; rest, leisure, and holidays; membership in trade unions; social security; protection of the family; benefits for new mothers; freedom from economic exploitation for

		children; standard of living; clothing, housing, living conditions; access to food.
CEDAW	11, 13	Equal right to work as men; employment opportunities; choice of profession; promotion; job security; benefits; vocational training; social security; health and safety in work conditions; maternity leave; child care; family benefits; loans and mortgages.

In the lives of individuals that come into contact with Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows, economic security primarily translates into the desire to support family members (in the U.S. or in their home country) and to sustain steady employment. Many low-income Latino families face insecurity in situations such as single-parents households; households where only one parent works; inconsistent or insecure employment like domestic work, construction, factory, retail positions, or similar; low pay; employer abuse; and illegal or otherwise contract-less labor. In the face of these challenges, many individuals have financial responsibility to a family network in Hartford, elsewhere in the U.S., or in their home country. These responsibilities put a strain on many Latino immigrant households, who face the struggles of low income levels and employment rates highlighted in the 2007 Pew Research Hispanic Center study. With such high unemployment—and even greater under-employment or insecure job situations—it is difficult to access the other rights and capabilities that make up holistic citizenship.

Access to government assistance, like Medicare and food stamps, is a challenge for documented and undocumented immigrants alike. Even some immigrants with legal status, but not full citizenship, may not be eligible for all types of benefits. The government's choice to limit access to benefits even to legal residents reflects the state's attitude that immigrants should support themselves or be supported by the family that they join in the U.S. Cultural barriers to

accessing services are yet another layer on top of limitations related to citizenship status. They are particularly relevant for my study of Hartford's Latino immigrants because of the high concentration of Puerto Ricans (33.7% of Hartford Latinos), who *do* have full U.S. citizenship (U.S. Census 2010). For example, a woman who participated in my focus group with ESOL students at Jubilee House expressed how improving her initially limited English skills made essential activities like doctors appointments more accessible:

When coming in here...nothing English, only hello and goodbye. Now, it's better...I know I grow because talking in the doctor, in appointment, in other job, I explain better.

Latina immigrants experience gendered, heightened versions of economic insecurity and dependence, making their need for access to education and employment-related rights even greater. Many Latina immigrants in the Hartford area, like those that attend Jubilee House classes, do not work or hold domestic positions like house cleaning, cooking, sewing, and childcare. Barriers to secure employment include lack of English language, lack of employable skills, low education levels, undocumented or non-citizen immigration status, and some values perpetuated in Latino family and intimate partner relationships. The result of work outside of the traditional labor sphere, like domestic help or even agriculture, is threats to Latina immigrants' bodily integrity, health, and ability to provide an adequate standard of living for herself and her children. Education and other means to economic security are integral to a Latina immigrant's ability to seek a consistent, safe job, to gain English-language skills, and to otherwise build a more secure, rights-respecting life. (Kacevich 2012)

In my case studies, the human right to mental health appears very differently than do the rights to economic security and adult education, for two main reasons. One, the discussion of the right to mental health is more relevant to Our Lady of Sorrows than to Jubilee House. Spiritual counseling and social support through parishioner groups and relationships contribute to the

mental health of the church's members. While relationships among students and staff at Jubilee House that promote coping with stress do exist, their possible effects on mental health are not as striking as what goes on at the church. In Chapter Five, I expand on the mental health challenges that low-income Latino immigrants face, as well as the difficulty of accessing mental health services in a resource-strapped urban setting such as Hartford. Table 4C outlines how major human rights documents express the right to mental health. Much of the rights language relevant to mental health stems from statements about health in general.

TABLE 4C: Mental Health in Major Human Rights Documents		
DOCUMENT	ARTICLES	KEY LANGUAGE
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	25	Standard of living adequate for health and well-being; includes medical care and necessary social services; right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood.
International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights	12	Enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; insurances for medical services and medical attention for all.
CEDAW	12	Eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure equal access to health care services, including those related to family planning.

Mapping what's out there in Hartford

In an attempt to contextualize the question of access to education, economic security, and mental health rights in the Hartford setting, I will briefly map out some relevant social services that exist in Hartford. As one can see in the table below, several resources geared towards Latinos use cultural capital to attract, support, and assist Latinos. Of the organizations included in this list taken from the Hispanic Hartford project's website, all are private and generally not-

for-profit. They cater to a wide variety of needs, which may or may not directly include or contribute to the two rights we are considering in particular. Either way, these organizations provide spaces for network-building, empowerment, security, and cultural expression among Latino immigrants and non-immigrants alike. Table 4D summarizes my internet survey of Latino-specific and Latino-frequented services, most of which the Hispanic Hartford website lists. Many of these organizations contribute to the rights to economic security in some form, while others have education components for adults. A few, such as Latino Community Services and Mi Casa, may support the mental health of Latinos in the Hartford community.

TABLE 4D: Latino-specific and Latino-frequented Social Services in Hartford	
AGENCY	WHAT IS OFFERED?
Alianca Brasileira Estados Unidos	Community development. Educational services and resources for the Brazilian community.
CAUSA, Inc. (Connecticut Association for United Spanish Action)	Educational, health, housing, AIDS, childcare, and elderly services.
Community Renewal Team, Inc.	Not all Latino-specific. Housing, education, health services, employment, and basic needs.
Connecticut Puerto Rican Forum	Employment, training, and technical skills.
Guakia, Inc.	School of Hispanic music, art and culture. (Wethersfield, CT)
HART (Hartford Areas Rally Together)	Community organizing. Goals: the development of culture; increasing the level of leadership in the community; and the development of the relationship between Trinity College and its neighborhood. Not all Latino-specific.
Hispanic Health Council	Improves the health and social well being of Puerto Ricans/Latinos and other underserved communities through community-based research, direct service, training and advocacy.
Catholic Charities	Adoption, pregnancy advising, childcare, family and mental health care, support for immigrants and refugees, assistance for the disabled, and guidance for youth. Not all services are Latino-specific.

Hogar Crea International of Connecticut, Inc. & Hogar Crea Women's Center	Services for drug-abusing individuals; services geared toward women.
La Casa de Puerto Rico	Development of living for families from low income households, activities for youth, services for the elderly, and help with civil rights.
Latinos/as Contra SIDA, Inc. (Latino Community Services)	Assistance in prevention, education, and services for individuals that are suffering from the effects of HIV/AIDS.
Mi Casa Family Service and Education Center	Youth Programs: leadership skills, recreation and sports, art and dance. GED or ESL classes for adults and youth. Parent Programs: Support groups, action commission. Other services: group counseling; educational groups; drug abuse counseling. Family programs: parenting, family advice, family activities, drug abuse prevention.
New England Farm Workers Council (Partners for Community)	Employment and family assistance.
Padres Abriendo Puertas	Works to guarantee access to education for Latino children with physical disabilities or mental health problems.
San Juan Sports Center, Inc.	Recreation programming and education.
South Hartford Initiative	Neighborhood revitalization; affording housing; economic opportunity; financial assistance for individuals and businesses.
The Village for Families and Children	Programs that help children that have suffered abuse, negligence, or violence and for those that are vulnerable to emotional and psychological problems, and/or with learning and behavioral disabilities.
Center for Latino Progress	Offers education, training, supportive services, leadership development, and advocacy. Provides culturally competent programs for individuals, community growth, and economic opportunities.

Beyond these Latino-specific and Latino-dominated resources, Latino immigrants represent a large portion of individuals taking part in adult education programs, especially ESL. (However, while Latinos are well represented in most ESL programs, Latino students take courses side-by-side with students from other nations.) Some offerings are more accessible and robust than others, although many are generally available at a free or reduced cost, making them

popular with low-income individuals. That said, leaders such as those involved in Hartford Public Library's "community dialogue" action group on adult learning recognize a need for more plentiful and perhaps re-worked adult education programming.⁵

TABLE 4E: Adult Education Programs in Hartford⁶	
Adult Education Provider	Offerings
Jubilee House	ESOL sessions four times per week; Esperanza (college-preparatory adult education, job skills) on a weekly basis.
Hartford Adult Education	ESOL and GED classes.
Capital Community College	ESL curriculum: Four levels from beginner to advanced. Courses in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Supplementary online computer-assisted language learning. First two levels are non-credit; third and fourth levels are credit-bearing. New students require an application, placement exam, and writing sample.
Catholic Charities ⁷	Primarily for refugees. ESOL classes include curriculum in life skills (hygiene, driver's test, nutrition, fire safety, etc.) and family services (addiction, domestic violence, trauma). Citizenship education. Parental Leadership education.
CREC (Capital Region Education Council)	"Community Education" umbrella includes: Adult basic education (External Diploma Program, GED, Adult Basic Skills, English as a Second Language, Citizenship preparation classes); "Learning Forever" program; Transition to Employment program; Youth and Family Development; Adult Training & Development Network; Career and Technical Education; Collaborative on Adult Literacy Resource Library; 21st Century Community Learning Centers; PACT; Teaching American History.
Hartford Public Library (multiple branches)	Adult literacy services with independent study resources. Immigrant- and refugee-gearred services: ESOL; Citizenship courses; ESOL self-study.

⁵ See citations on Hartford Public Library's "Community Dialogue" action groups, 2012.

⁶ See citations from programs' websites unless otherwise noted.

⁷ Information gathered from interview with Nilofer Haider of Catholic Charities conducted by Naveed Sobhan on 27 Nov. 2012.

Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford	Two-thirds of students participate in ESL programs; one-third are native English speakers who read and write below a sixth-grade level. Classes include: Basic Literacy (Reading and Writing for native English speakers); English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); Computer Literacy; Math Literacy; Theresa Fiondella Pre-GED; GED; Citizenship; Job Readiness; Writing; Conversation.
Urban League of Greater Hartford	Family literacy training for parents and caregivers; GED preparation; basic skills training; career/college transition services for youth and adults; college transition and Job Placement services; financial literacy.
Center for Latino Progress (Connecticut Puerto Rican Forum)	Focuses on the workplace by teaching basic skills necessary to work safely, communicate effectively, understand training materials, and respond to organizational change. Program areas: Basic Math; English as Second Language; Spanish as Second Language; OSHA 10 Spanish; Assessment CASAS, TABE, Harrington O'Shea.

The “community dialogue” action groups to study adult learning in Hartford, formed out of Hartford Public Library’s downtown branch starting in July 2001, symbolize a recognition on the part of community stake-holders of the high importance of adult education in the city, as well as its need for improvement and expansion in this area. The action groups are part of a larger community engagement project funded by a grant to HPL from the national Institute of Museum and Library Sciences. The library, which itself provides a large portion of adult education classes such as ESL and citizenship, is increasingly a hub for immigrant and refugee services, many of which Latino immigrants frequently use. HPL’s IMLS Advisory Team and the Immigrant Advisory Group (IAG), in combination with a survey completed by 100 immigrants and non-immigrants in the immediate community, decided on the topic of adult learning for the first city-level dialogue. Action groups meeting between May and December 2012 eventually focused on four themes: barriers to access and addressing stereotypes; accreditation and licensing;

coordination of services and opportunities; supporting formal and informal networks. The “barriers to access” group completed interviews with three adult education providers listed in the table above (Catholic Charities, Jubilee House, and HPL). The interviews, as well as discussion among group members, identified strengths and weaknesses that shed light on what Jubilee House offers and helps to situate the organization in the greater context of adult learning in the city.

Just as adult learning is a multi-faceted topic, economic security for Latino immigrants in Hartford involves consideration of an expansive network of private and governmental agencies, as well as other less tangible—but equally significant—factors. Economic security is perhaps more complicated to track and present in a simple, table format. Many of the social services listed in Table 4C provide some sort of support for economic security, such as housing assistance, financial assistance, or job training. But, with this list, I do not pretend to recognize all other formalized services that low-income Latino immigrants rely upon to address their economic need and advancement. Both public and private organizations not geared specifically to Latinos, immigrants, or even low-income individuals all play a role. For example, the Department of Social Services’ food security, housing services, and food, cash, and heating assistance may be very relevant to the well-being of a low-income Latino immigrant, even if the Department and its sub-agencies do not identify with a Latino-specific mission.

However, this population is equally likely to utilize friendship and kinship networks to seek employment, fill in for temporary and emergency financial needs, and find childcare. Family and friendship networks mostly often constitute a type of social capital that Stepick (2007), in his study of immigrants in Miami, describes as “bonding” social capital. That is, they are ties that “emerge from networks where people share perceived identity relations” based on race, ethnicity,

gender, class, and/or religion, all contributing to trust and an assumption of similarity (15). These networks in and of themselves have true value because they provide insight into urban Latino culture and are generally thought of as strong (15). Vilna Bashi, studying West Indian immigrants, describes how ethnically-based networks can be more or less effective depending on specific employment situations or individual cases (145). Yet, issues of cultural relevance, financial necessity, low awareness about services, other inaccessibility problems, lack of a network from higher education, and shortage of appropriate service also contribute to Latino immigrants' high reliance on personal networks. A strong example is the participants in my focus group with ESOL students at Jubilee House, all of whom mentioned that a friend, family member, or other acquaintance recommended the courses to them. In future chapters, we will consider networks in more depth.

Organization leaders, government officials, and those who utilize services approach the distribution of social resources from a wide range of philosophies and political orientations. I take the angle of human rights to question the extent to which the City of Hartford and the State of Connecticut support adult education, economic security, and mental health for Latino immigrants. The coordination and communication—or lack of—between human rights-related public bodies speaks to possible divergences between human rights perspectives and competing philosophies, especially those that public agents favor. The State's Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities states its mission as the following:

The mission of the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities is to eliminate discrimination through civil and human rights law enforcement and to establish equal opportunity and justice for all persons within the state through advocacy and education. (State of Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities)

While the existence of a human rights commission is a step in the right direction, its focus on discrimination, civil rights, and affirmative action neglects the possibility for a different angle: coordination with social service agencies that address economic and social rights. Considering the U.S.'s historical focus on civil and political rights, this disparity is not surprising. Yet, it limits the potential for an expansion of the state's thinking about adult education and economic security as vital human rights concerns in Hartford and Connecticut. Private organizations are perhaps more likely to use or reference human rights language and frameworks. For example, Bauer and Chivakos note in "What's Islam got to do with it?" that cultural brokers in Hartford working to resettle refugees through Islamic faith-based coalitions sometimes reached a personal motivation based in concern for human rights. That said, none of the Latino-frequented social services and adult education programs that I researched online visibly incorporate human rights into their mission statement. Despite the low prevalence of human rights language, organizations may contribute to the advancement and protection of rights, much like Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows.

Standards used to gauge cultural competence of services

Throughout much of this project, I argue that both FBOs contribute to human rights through a culturally relevant approach to providing services and facilitating networks. So, I will briefly explain what cultural relevance (or cultural competency) are and why it is so important to whether low-income Latino immigrants access rights. In "A Primer for Developing a Public Agency Service Ethos to Cultural Competency in Public Services Programming and Public Services Delivery," Mitchell Rice, writing in the context of Spanish-speaking immigrants, explains that in the late 1990s and early 2000s, researchers advocated for adaptation of public

programs and services to the culture of the target population. Past researchers included heightening cultural accessibility by “removing obstacles to services accessibility, such as not speaking the language or not providing interpreter services, child care, and transportation” (Rice 2008, p. 22). Prior research also emphasizes the significance of three cultural components: ethnicity-match, language-match, and location of the service agency in the ethnic community (Rice 2008, p. 22). Rice, citing Farr et al (2005), goes on to define cultural competency as “the integration of knowledge, awareness, sensitivity, attitudes, skills, and encounters by individuals in the programs and services to acknowledge and respect the cultural traditions of their clients and their communities.” Rice’s description of cultural competence is valuable because it acknowledges the wide range of aspects and life experiences that make up culture, and situates culture as the basis for accessible programs.

Jubilee House practices cultural competency by considering how language, child care, and transportation affect how clients access their services. Cultural competency at Our Lady of Sorrows is built upon language, as direct services and networking happen almost entirely in Spanish. Both FBOs frequently take into account the factors that Rice lists in his definition of cultural competence. They do so by using a model of service based in Latino cultural strengths, capabilities, and resources, which I describe in Chapter Seven. Cultural competency on the part of the FBOs makes them more accessible and relevant to low-income Latino immigrants than are many other services in Hartford. Hence, cultural competency is a key piece of how FBOs fill in the gap between a human rights norm and access to the right.

Chapter 5: Case Studies: How Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows Directly Contribute to Rights

In my case studies, efforts related economic security, education, and mental health varied in their content, approach, and level of formal conceptualization; yet all demonstrate cultural competence in their direct contribution to the human rights of low-income Latino immigrants. Two important commonalities occur in almost all examples: staff employ a high degree of cultural competence, and draw upon the individual capabilities of clients to best serve them. Both are a major reason why someone concerned with human rights should pay attention to these FBOs. As I explained in detail in earlier chapters, there are deep implications for human rights when FBOs provide services that the state would have, or should have, offered prior to the current period of neoliberalism. When a FBO provides, for example, alternative mental health care through spiritual counseling—especially if the care-seeker is not able to or chooses not to access traditional, state-based mental health care—the FBO, rather than the state, is the duty-bearer of the right to mental health. The following chapter looks in detail into examples such as this one.

Jubilee House: A commitment to immigrant education founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph

Jubilee House, a ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph, is an adult education center located in the South End neighborhood of Hartford. It employs 8 staff members and offers three branches of service: English for Speakers of Other Languages, Esperanza Academic Program, and Refugee Assistance Services. An understanding of Jubilee House's direct provision of services is rooted in both their strengths (a supportive, individualized, academically sound, and culturally diverse learning environment) and their weaknesses (financial limitations, mixed

visibility in the City of Hartford). Program titles and descriptions reveal a fair amount of information, but less obvious factors--such as finances, scope of outreach, and the question of cultural relevance--are equally crucial for contextualizing Jubilee House's contribution to the phenomenon of faith-based provision of services to Latino immigrants. Table 5A provides basic information about Jubilee House, including its mission statement, target population, areas served, ethnicities represented, programs offered, staff, affiliations, and location.

TABLE 5A: JUBILEE HOUSE--INSTITUTIONAL DESCRIPTORS	
Mission Statement	Founded in 1997, Jubilee House is a non-profit, non-sectarian community adult education center and gathering place operated as a ministry of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chambery. Jubilee House's mission is to be a place where people of varied background and experience gather to teach, learn, and share in surroundings conducive to human and spiritual growth.
Target Population	Immigrants of all nationalities and citizenship statuses; refugees; some non-immigrant adults with low education level.
Areas Served	Priority for Hartford. Majority from South End neighborhood.
Nationalities Represented	ESOL and Esperanza programs primarily serve: Refugee Assistance Services primarily serve: Bosnian, Liberian, Somali, Burmese, Burundi, Iraqi, and Bhutanese.
Programs Offered	English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); Esperanza Academic Program ("writing, math, computer literacy, and world of work instruction to adults who have a high school diploma or GED and who wish to pursue higher education or build life/work skills."); Refugee Assistance Services.
Staff	One full-time executive director; One full-time RAC director; 6 part-time staff members.
Affiliations	Sisters of St. Joseph; Archdiocese of Hartford.
Location	Clifford St. in South End neighborhood of Hartford.

Programming for adult education and refugee services spans a relatively wide variety of needs and incorporates multiple approaches based on the strengths of the tutors and students. ESOL

and Esperanza primarily serve immigrants, but a few Esperanza students are non-immigrants with a low education level. While Jubilee House does not cater to a particular ethnic group--and in fact, makes an active commitment to welcome diverse cultures--the majority of ESOL and Esperanza students are Latino immigrants. Recently, Refugee Assistance Services' director, Olivia, has begun to collaborate with Sister Allison (ESOL Director) and Sister Loretta (Esperanza Director) to provide some services to immigrants, in addition to refugees. While most refugees receiving services at Jubilee House are not Latino, Olivia's work with immigrants shows that Refugee Assistance may indeed have a significant role in resettling some Latino immigrants. Table 5B provides more detail on programming at Jubilee House:

TABLE 5B: JUBILEE HOUSE--PROGRAMS			
Program Name	English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)⁸	Esperanza Academic Program⁹	Refugee Assistance Services¹⁰
Content	One-on-one ESOL instruction using curriculum workbooks of increasing difficulty. Emphasis on conversation.	Writing, math, computer literacy, financial literacy, and workplace training to adults with a high school diploma or GED. Serves as "bridge" to traditional higher education.	Help individuals and families access medical and dental care and state assistance programs; deal with landlords and school issues; apply for green cards and citizenship; other general resettlement issues.

⁸ Information gathered from interview with Sister Allison on 15 Nov. 2012.

⁹ Information gathered from interviews with Sister Loretta 7 Nov. 2012 and Sister Claire on 1 Nov. 2012.

¹⁰ Information gathered from interview with Sister Kelley on 30 Nov. 2012 and Jubilee House website.

Format	Classes offered Monday-Thursday mornings for two hours, for two 5-month semesters per year. Students may attend 1-4 times per week. All tutors are volunteers. Approximately 50 tutors work one-on-one with 50 students.	Classes on Saturdays for three hours per week in three 8-week semesters. Approx. 6 students per 1 teacher. Instructors are professionals with teaching experience. Students take a pre- and post-assessment tests. Has worked in conjunction with Capitol Community College.	Assistance to refugee individuals and families with medical and dental care, state assistance programs, housing, K-12 schooling, applications for green cards and citizenship. Offers some emergency loans.
Fees	Tuition is \$40 per semester.	Registration is \$45. Tuition on a sliding scale based on income.	Services are free.
Demographics of Clients	All are immigrants. Majority Latinos. Prevalent countries of origin represented: Majority Peru, Colombia; also Mexico, Honduras, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Bosnia, Albania, Guinea, Myanmar. Majority Hartford residents; some West Hartford and New Britain.	Two-thirds are immigrants; one-third non-immigrants (including Puerto Ricans). 22 of 30 students are from Hartford. Prevalent nationalities represented: Colombian, Puerto Rican, Peruvian, Brazilian. Some Central Americans and Mexicans. Most live in South End of Hartford; a few from North End or other neighborhoods.	Majority refugees, some immigrants. Prevalent countries of origin represented: Bosnia, Liberia, Somalia, Burma, Burundi, Iraq, Bhutan.

In a focus group that I conducted with ten ESOL students, participants described a range of motivations for engaging in the ESOL program to improve their English.¹¹ Many cited the desire to become employed, to obtain a more secure or better-paying job, or to gain promotion in their current job. Participants described being unemployed, experiencing “temporary” work, or else working regularly in fields like house-cleaning, sewing, retail, and construction. Several students also indicated their need for English skills to assist their children with homework or

¹¹ Information from ESOL students gathered from a focus group conducted on 6 Nov. 2012.

communicate with their children's teachers and school administrators. One participant explained: I'm interested in coming because of my first daughter... Sometimes she comes back with the homework, and I can't help her. So that's why I am interested in to learn English, and teach about homework, and help her." Finally, some participants described, as a result of participation in ESOL, an increased ability to successfully navigate life skills, such as appointments, doctors visits, obtaining a driver's license, and the like.

In interviews¹², Sister Loretta (Esperanza director) and Sister Claire (assistant director of Esperanza) described Esperanza students as those who have a basic mastery of English, but seek improved life skills, confidence conducting themselves in English in professional and public settings, and a "bridge" to traditional higher education. Many Esperanza students are employed in manufacturing jobs in the Greater Hartford area. Sister Loretta emphasized the importance of improving participants' English public-speaking skills for their ability to assert their rights and needs with figures of daily life, such as landlords, medical personnel, and school officials.

Financial context: Dependence on grants, low visibility, and desire to expand

As we discussed in Chapter Three, the rise of FBOs as providers of social services correlates with a pulling-out of government programming during periods of neoliberal policy. FBOs like Jubilee House often take on the burden of resettling immigrants--specifically, of providing education for adults--with limited state-provided resources. In combination with the overwhelmed social service structure of the city, and the extreme financial need of many of its residents, Hartford's city government perhaps does not prioritize giving to private and faith-based providers of adult education. That said, Development Director Margaret¹³, as well as

¹² Interviews with Sister Loretta (conducted on 7 Nov. 2012) and Sister Catherine (conducted on 1 Nov. 2012).

¹³ Interview with Margaret conducted in 7 Nov. 2012.

several other staff members, cited a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) as a cornerstone of Jubilee House's funding. Staff¹⁴ describe the CDBG as a grant handed down from the federal level, to the state level, and finally through the City of Hartford to Jubilee House. The grant mainly funds the Esperanza program, and only subsidizes tuition costs for Hartford residents. CDBGs are administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Development (HUD).

Private funding constitutes a large portion of Jubilee House's current financial capabilities. Its staff and Board of Directors are focused on expanding private funding sources—whether through individual donations, corporate sponsorships, or fundraising events—in order to sustain Jubilee House in the present and coming years. Currently, the FBO receives an annual grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Lincoln Financial, a large Hartford-based company, supports the Esperanza program in particular. The non-profit receives private individual donations throughout the year, as well as solicits an “annual appeal” from individual supporters. Fundraising events form the remainder of financial capital. In the past, Jubilee House has held a small Garden Party fundraiser annually, but they have begun to expand with larger fundraising events, such as a charity concert held at St. Joseph's Cathedral in West Hartford. Moving forward, their goal is to gain more corporate sponsorships for programs or for fundraising events.¹⁵

Margaret, hired within the past year to conduct development work part-time, intends to expand financial resources by raising the public profile of the organization. Her goals include building up to larger fundraisers, increasing collaboration with other agencies, securing corporate sponsorships, and expanding individual-level participation in donations and annual appeals. She

¹⁴ Information gathered from interview with Sister Allison (15 Nov. 2012) and Sister Kelley (30 Nov. 2012).

¹⁵ Information gathered from interview with Margaret on 7 Nov. 2012.

also explained that due to the 2007 economic downturn, individuals' financial giving decreased, which in turn has caused many non-profits to take on entrepreneurial-like efforts to raise funds. Sister Loretta, who participates in Hartford Public Library's community dialogue on adult learning, is aware of a new pilot program that could possibly be added to Jubilee House's current programming.

Executive Director Sister Kelley expressed satisfaction with Jubilee House's programming considering its limited resources. However, she described the perennial difficulty for most non-profits of funding executive director positions. Sister Kelley emphasized the lack of revenue the site receives from program fees, which are intentionally very low. While she believes that an expansion of programming is possible, and desirable, in the future, she feels that her organization needs to first strengthen its financial resources. No staff members mentioned opposition from possible funders due to its faith-based institutional status, or another reason. The primary reason for lack of grant funding appeared to be the time constraints of seeking and applying for grants, as well as the generally limited availability of grants at all.

A dot among a sea of providers? Scope, vision, and visibility

In addition to the challenge of expanding their financial resources, Jubilee House staff members described the difficulty of making their programs more visible in the Hartford area. Sister Kelley felt strongly that Jubilee House has been well-known in the city mayor's office for several years. The relationship began under the leadership of Mayor Michael "Mike" Peters, who facilitated the return of Jubilee House's property from the state to the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1997. Former Mayor Segarra once attended their fundraiser, while Mayor Perez supported the institution because he was a graduate of St. Augustine School, a Catholic school located down the street. Besides the Mayor's Office, the city government has at least some awareness of

Jubilee House because it provides a CDBG. Sister Kelley also noted that while the “official” church--i.e. higher-ups at the state and national levels--likely do not notice the organization’s work, local churches are very aware and supportive of Jubilee House’s mission. As a ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph--and an employer of several Sisters of Mercy and a Daughter of the Holy Spirit--Jubilee House is well-known among the community of women religious and the other local FBOs that the sisters may represent.

Margaret and Sister Loretta painted a significantly less visible picture of Jubilee House’s place on the map of service providers in Hartford. Margaret spoke mainly of lack of relationships with corporate sponsors, who might hold the key to increasing financial resources for Jubilee House. Sister Loretta remembered how HPL community dialogue members initially had not heard of Jubilee House, but upon learning of her work with immigrants, soon began to regard her as a knowledgeable stakeholder. She also spoke of FBOs in general as “the pearl that is not seen” in the larger, public scale, because their leaders are motivated from a scriptural basis. “They feel as if they’re doing it from a scriptural basis, and they don’t need to be rewarded for the good they do... So, sisters in general...they’re reluctant to blow their horn,” Sister Loretta noted.¹⁶ Because FBO staff do not seek recognition or reward, they may focus much more on programming and relationships with clients, rather than the marketing and fundraising sides of running a non-profit. As a result, many FBOs have low visibility, says Sister Loretta, which limits the connections they make to community partners and individual donors that may increase their financial capital.

Sister Loretta and Sister Allison emphasized the role of faith networks, family, and friends in forming awareness of Jubilee House among clients. Sister Kelley estimated that about

¹⁶ Interview conducted on 7 Nov. 2012.

eighty percent of clients have some kind of faith network, Christian or non-Christian. Sister Loretta explained how many Esperanza students are referred to her program by their churches, mainly in the South End of Hartford. These students have the desire to serve as lectors at their church, but lack a strong enough ability to read aloud in English. As one can see in Table 5B, programs are primarily intended to serve Hartford residents, although New Britain, West Hartford, and suburban residents represent a small minority of students. Both Sister Allison and Sister Loretta stated that their programs were overwhelmed with requests for participation, and that there is little need for them to advertise, although they do place information in church bulletins and flyers.

Among organizations with the shared objective of adult education, staff asserted that Jubilee House is the only site that provides the unique combination of ESOL, Esperanza's "bridge" to higher education, and Refugee Assistance Services. Originally, the Jubilee House building was a residence for some of the Sisters of St. Joseph. In the early 1990s, the State of Connecticut owned the building, which lay empty. Between 1996-1997, the Sisters of St. Joseph reclaimed their building from State ownership, intending to make it of use for a community need. The Sisters conducted focus groups in the South End to determine what need the community felt was most pressing for the use of the institution. South End residents agreed that the neighborhood most needed resources for adult education, and hence the mission unfolded. Jubilee House began with ESOL and the Esperanza Program. After borrowing space inside Jubilee House and functioning as an independent volunteer organization, the Refugee Assistance Center became a formal part of Jubilee House in 2005 after existing through volunteer efforts since 1998.

Staff and clients have are aware of several other options for adult education in Hartford. However, Sister Kelley emphasized the unique depth and breath of services at Jubilee House. Clients spoke many times about their preference for its supportive learning environment and individualized attention.

Cultural relevance: Learning environment, individual attention, curriculum, and diversity

In fact, the cultural relevance that staff and clients spoke of is perhaps the single most important factors for understanding what makes Jubilee House unique among adult education sites, and in what way it supports low-income Latinos' access to the human rights to education and economic security. As I mentioned in Chapter Four, cultural relevance is part of the "bridge" or the "gap" between a service, program, or agency and its current and prospective clients. Therefore, it is critical to the extent to which a low-income Latino immigrant *accesses* the right to adult education, which, in turn, contributes to economic security. For example, an adult education program that holds classes on weeknights may have trouble catering to adult women, who might work or not be able to find childcare at that time.

During interviews and focus groups, staff and clients' comments relating to cultural relevancy fell under six major themes: Individualized attention; Supportive learning environment; recognition of the importance of other needs and priorities that effect learning; positive referrals to the service from faith, family, friendship networks; appropriateness of academic curriculum; and inter-cultural respect without discrimination. Both participant groups distinguished Jubilee House from other adult education sites by referencing the large class sizes and repetition that they encountered elsewhere. Jubilee Houses' commitment to one-on-one ESOL tutoring and one-to-six teacher-to-student ratio in Esperanza classes reflects a recognition of adult learners' need to flourish and take risks in an individualized, safe environment.

Another salient theme was inter-cultural respect and infrequency of discrimination among people of different cultural groups and learning abilities. By far, focus group participants from the ESOL program, who totaled 9 immigrants (all Latino) and one refugee (from Sierra Leone), identified this theme significantly more often than others. One participant said of Jubilee House, “It’s a different experience, cus they have different cultures to compare. They speak to each other like a human being. You say something wrong, nobody laugh... The environment is a safe environment.” The frequency of this type of observation among clients indicates, perhaps, a dissimilar experience at other agencies--related or not related to adult education--and the high degree of value that Latino immigrants place on inter-cultural respect. Table 5C shows in further detail a thematic analysis of interview and focus group participants’ observations:

TABLE 5C: JUBILEE HOUSE--INDICATORS OF CULTURAL RELEVANCE			
THEME	NUMBERS OF MENTIONS	SAMPLE QUOTE	SUB-THEMES
Individualized attention	Students: 4 Staff: 9	"I like it here because everyone have one teacher for one people." --ESOL student	n/a
Supportive learning environment	Students: 7 Staff: 10	"The teachers are <i>con mucha disposición</i> ." (with much disposition). --ESOL student	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff and tutors' general disposition, patience, and support. 2. Unique strengths of female service providers. 3. Strong commitment to and patience for service, based in faith. 4. Staff members' extensive past experience in diverse domestic and international settings.

Recognition of importance of other needs and priorities that effect learning	Students: 2 Staff: 4	"..if their needs are not taken, it's hard to learn." --Sister Allison, on ESOL students	n/a
Positive referrals to service from faith, family, friendship networks	Students: 3 Staff: 3	"I came to Jubilee House because one of my friends came before over here." --Jorge, ESOL student	n/a
Appropriateness of academic curriculum	Students: 5 Staff: 6	"When they arrived from Peru, or Puerto Rico, or something, they were getting extra help, but they just weren't right in sync with their regular class, because they had to learn the English language first." --Sister Loretta, on Esperanza Program students.	n/a
Respect among cultures; no discrimination	Students: 12 Staff: 9	"They're equal, everybody. They don't choose your ideas. You're adults. You're black, you're white, you're Latino, your ideas." --Ishmael, ESOL student.	n/a

A discussion of cultural relevance, particularly of clients' use of personal referrals to gain awareness of Jubilee House, provides a valuable lead-in into the second half of this chapter. The following sections discuss direct provision of services at Our Lady of Sorrows, much of which concerns the value for human rights of culturally relevant, alternative mental health services and inter-personal networks.

Our Lady of Sorrows Parish: "We are the mortar, not the bricks"

A simple statement by Father Joseph ("Padre José" or "Father Joe") sums up well the function, in his eyes, of the Parish Office of Our Lady of Sorrows: "We are the mortar, not the bricks." Take a look at the parish's website, and you might find basic information about mass

times, sacraments, and the like. A deeper, ethnographic study like mine showed to me that there is much more going on at the church, and that it is worth paying attention to. Financial and material assistance, spiritual counseling from clergy, close community bonds formed by church programs and groups--all contribute in a significant and highly unique way to the human rights to economic security and mental health. Father Joe's assessment implies that the church fills in the gaps where the efforts of state (and, perhaps, private agencies) fall short. I would like to take the analogy a step beyond and assert that the church also provides a setting for culturally relevant, alternative support of its parishioners' mental health.

The human right to economic security: ad-hoc assistance reveals gaps in state-based means

On the first day that I visited the Parish Office, Deacon Vicente immediately told me, "oh yeah, people come in here looking for help all the time." Through a focus group¹⁷ with parish clergy including Father Joe, Deacon Vicente, and Deacon Miguel, it became clear that the parish office (which also includes Father Ben and an administrative assistant, Rosa) provides financial and material assistance on an ad-hoc, as-needed basis. In Chapter 6, we will explore a different kind of help that the Parish Office also takes part in: referring visitors to social services outside of the church. Staff members' help efforts contribute to the human right of economic security by giving struggling individuals a hand when they face a tough situation, such as inability to pay a utility bill in a particular month. However, these activities do not take place in a sustainable or systematic way—nor does staff intend for them to. In this sense, while provision of material and financial assistance at the Parish Office does contribute to economic security, the dynamic perhaps is most important because it highlights a) poverty in Hartford and b) the gaps in public

¹⁷ Focus group with Our Lady of Sorrows clergy conducted on 14 Nov. 2012.

and non-faith-based private services that could (or should) otherwise support an individual or family's economic well-being.

Because the church provides direct economic support, although not in a formalized way, their philosophy represents a departure from the official U.S. stance on immigration policy. Current U.S. policy expects immigrants to stand on their own feet, with little direct assistance. On the other hand, the church directly responds to the economic needs that immigrants face while adjusting to life in the U.S. Jubilee House falls somewhere in the middle. While Jubilee House does recognize the range of issues that immigrants face, their response—education—trains immigrants to eventually be self-sufficient. Jubilee House's ESOL and Esperanza programs do not provide direct economic support. The Refugee Assistance Center provides minimal support towards refugees' economic security, such as emergency loans. However, financial help represents a very small portion of their work.

Based on anecdotes from the focus group, the clergy described activities associated with direct provision such as: helping visitors to the Parish Office with money to pay bills; running a food pantry during winter months; providing temporary shelter and meals at the Parish Office for individuals and families facing unusual circumstances; organizing a Thanksgiving Day food donation drive for a shelter on Park Street; hosting fundraisers for individuals with extraordinary medical or personal need; and assisting residents of a nearby senior housing facility with basic needs. As Adriana, an active parishioner, noted during a focus group¹⁸, most efforts are informal, while the food pantry is an example of a more formalized activity. Deacon Vicente and Father Joe described the role of the church as the source that can supply the need of an individual in the

¹⁸ Focus group with Our Lady of Sorrows parishioners Adriana, Gerardo, and Carolina on 10 Nov. 2012.

moment of crisis, while a non-faith-based agency's response may delay due to intra-organizational complications or lack of resources.

Those who seek help at the Parish Office are more likely to *not* be a parishioner of Our Lady of Sorrow than that be one, although some parishioners do so. Clergy noted that the most visible faces of the church, such as members of Prayer Group and *Cursillo*, would rarely look for help. Rather, these parishioners are more likely to donate to the Office's efforts, as do non-parishioners. Visitors come from Parkville, the neighborhood of the church, whose residents are mainly of low- and middle- socio-economic status. They also from other areas of Hartford such as the North End, Hartford's poorest neighborhood.

Clergy and parishioner-leaders often make choices on how to help an individual based on values of democratic decision-making, respect for privacy, and concern for the individual over his or her problem. When a parishioner or non-parishioner voices a need to a parishioner active in leadership roles, he or she relays the problem to the Hispanic Church Council (an internal body), which in coordination with clergy, makes a decision about how to help the individual. It did not appear that clergy seek advice of the Hispanic Church Council when an individual comes directly to the Parish Office, although clergy frequently refer help-seekers to parishioners who may be able to further assist or connect them (see Chapter 6).

Father Joe explained that staff tries to solve "ninety-five percent" of issues within the church network, and rarely turns someone down, despite his suspicions that individual occasionally take advantage of the church's generosity. This no-questions-asked approach to giving is perhaps both a strength and weakness of the church's contribution to economic security. "I have a hard time saying no" to someone in needed, stated Father Joe. On the positive side, the clergy's high value on privacy and respect for the individual encourages immigrants to

communicate. They may avoid seeking help from an agency because they fear revealing their personal information. On the other hand, Father Joe noted that while the church can “compete with anyone” to help in the moment, in the long run, the church’s help is not sustainable compared to any agency in general.

Barriers to mental health care for Latinos & Potential for spirituality-based complements

Literature on mental health care services brings to light serious barriers that Latinos face in accessing mental health care services, possibly exacerbated by stressors associated with the immigration process, poverty, discrimination, and trauma faced in one’s home country. However, studies like that by the Surgeon General (“Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity,” 2001) also identify important strengths of Latinos: resilience, and coping by drawing upon spirituality. Authors like Aranda (2008) and Cardemil and Moreno (2013) observe how religion and spirituality may in fact be a quite strong protective factor for the mental health of Latinos. These insights from the literature give context to the value of a faith setting like Our Lady of Sorrows for Latinos’ right to mental health.

Latinos of all immigration statuses and nationalities face high rates of depression; “culturally bound syndromes” such as *ataques de nervios* (relatable to panic attacks); and lower rates of suicide than whites, but higher indices of suicidal ideation (Vega and Lopez, 2001, pp. 136-138). Family-oriented structures are a possible strength of the Latino family, but they may also contribute to risk. Other aspects of Latino culture relevant to risks for negative mental health outcomes include lower formal education levels than national average; lower income levels; and greater risk for physical health disorders like obesity, diabetes, and tuberculosis, especially among Puerto Ricans, who represent the majority of Latinos in Hartford (Vega and Lopez, 2001, pp. 131-132).

Low-income Latino immigrants may face stressors associated with at least four factors: poverty, discrimination, the immigration and resettlement process, and trauma experienced in one's home country. The extent to which one experiences these factors--and experiences stress in response--may vary depending on how recently an individual immigrated. Staff at both FBOs noted how Peruvians and Colombians are the most visible group of new Latino arrivals in Hartford, while Puerto Ricans are more likely to be well-established. While the immigration and resettlement process surely causes stress, some studies, like that by the Surgeon General, actually show that higher levels of acculturation may correlate with *less* ability to cope with stress.

Central American immigrants are more likely to have faced stress as a result of violence in their home countries, while Puerto Ricans' and Mexicans' lower economic and educational backgrounds (compared to other Hispanic ethnic groups) put them at increased risk for experiencing a mental health disorder. Latinos comprise a large percentage of groups who are at high risk for developing a mental health problem and/or lacking access to mental health care. These groups include: incarcerated individuals; Vietnam War veterans; refugees; and individuals with drug and alcohol use issues (133-134). Each of these contextual factors are reflected in three major barriers that Latinos of all nationalities face in accessing mental health services: Lack of Spanish-speaking psychologists; lack of health insurance (in 2001, Latinos made up 12% of the U.S. population, yet 25% of the uninsured); and increased likelihood to seek help for mental health issues in the regular primary care setting, which makes detection and diagnosis more difficult (141-142).

On the positive side, the Surgeon General's 2001 report identified two major strengths of Latinos, which in turn have significant implications for the contribution of the faith setting to the human right to mental health care. Latinos are highly resilient due to a tendency to compare their

hardships in the U.S. to worse experiences in their home country, as well as their high aspiration to success (140). Hispanic families also may use positive coping methods, such as: drawing up their spirituality and finding hope through a strong belief in God; a tendency to *not* blame the patient and to receive less criticism from family members if experiencing mental health symptoms; and warmth in inter-personal relationships. The report concluded that these strengths could be very valuable for approaching mental health services from the point of view of well-being and prevention. Maria Aranda's study, "Relationship between religious involvement and psychological well-being: A social justice perspective," found that among older-aged Latinos, "higher levels of religious attendance were associated with lower risk of depressive illness after adjusting for selective factors" (9). Immigrants were more likely to attend services than non-immigrant Latinos (9). Cardemil and Moreno's report, "Religiosity and Mental Health Services: An Exploratory Study of Help Seeking Among Latinos," found that Latinos of all ages preferred to use spiritual and religious coping mechanisms when dealing with adversity.

Of particular interest to my case study of Our Lady of Sorrows is Latino families' use of spirituality and social support as positive coping mechanisms. In the following two sections, I will explore in detail the role of spiritual counseling and parishioner groups as mechanisms for culturally relevant, accessible alternatives to mental health services for Latinos. Social support found in the church community may have direct effects on mental health (e.g. spiritual counseling), indirect effects (e.g. knowing that a supporting mentor is available if necessary), or a buffer effect (e.g. involvement in the youth group rather than engagement in negative activities). As these options are cost-free, language-appropriate, and draw upon a shared faith and culture, they make a large contribution to the guarantee of parishioners' human right to

mental health care--a right that is seriously threatened by factors of like lack of access to health insurance or Spanish-language services.

Spiritual counseling as a support mechanism for mental health

Literature on spiritual communities from community psychology sheds light on the significance of spiritual counseling that religious leaders in the church frequently provide. Graciela, Jorge, Jeanette, and Jaime¹⁹ all stated during interviews that they often turn to their close relationships with the priests and deacons when seeking support. Jorge and Graciela mentioned looking to clergy in time of familial illness or struggle, while all four interviewees cited desire to grow closer to God as a major reason to engage in conversation with clergy. Jaime described the beneficial relationship that he and his wife, Jeanette, have with clergy: "They have an open door policy... We feel that we can go to them anytime."

Carolina, a woman religious who is highly active in the church, spoke of her frequent conversations with parishioners, especially women. If she learns of a parishioner's struggles through conversation, she makes an effort to follow up with phone calls, explaining to me that her goal is simply to provide support and a listening ear, rather than literally solve the individual's problems. Finally, clergy and women religious like Carolina make visits to local hospitals, convalescent homes, and family homes to counsel the sick and elderly.

Interestingly, Graciela stated that besides the Bible and the clergy, she does not see where else she would find spiritual help, besides in a trained psychologist. It was not clear whether she would be adverse or open to visiting a clinical psychologist in a formal setting. Her reference to traditional psychological practice is a testament to the role of spiritual counseling at Our Lady of Sorrows as an alternative, culturally relevant source of support for parishioners' mental health.

¹⁹ Interviews conducted with Graciela and Jorge on 11 Nov. 2012 and with Jeannette and Jaime on 18 Nov. 2012.

This support is based in close personal relationships, trust, shared Catholic faith, and shared respect for Latino culture and Spanish language.

Jeanette and Jaime, a middle-aged couple who married six years ago and raise several children between them, shared with me the marriage counseling that they received from the priests when their relationship got off to a “rocky start.” Jeanette grew up at Our Lady of Sorrows, and Jaime was also raised Catholic. Jaime spent his adolescence living in shelters in Hartford, being involved in drugs and violence on the streets. At first, he struggled with the stability of married home life with Jeanette, but the couple found peace and purpose in the church after receiving counseling there. Jaime shared: “I wasn’t used to having a stable home... I wasn’t accustomed to a family setting ... Together, we decided that this was the place to come, and see if we could fix our marriage. And ever since then, we live here.” The couple now lead the parish youth group for teenagers.

Church groups provide inter-parishioner support and solidarity

Along the same lines as one-on-one spiritual counseling, the numerous formalized groups and programs within the church provide a group setting in which parishioner-members not only grow in faith, but also receive the benefits of peer support for coping. Some groups are church-based chapters of national or international programs. Others are unique to the church, yet share commonalities with similar church groups around the globe. Programs span a diverse range of age groups, ethnic associations, and activities, although they all function around a shared faith and desire to build community. Many individuals are part of more than one group. For example, an adult may take part in both Prayer Group and *Cursillo*, or be a parent to a child in *Catecismo* or Youth Group. Married couples frequently participate together. In Chapter 6, we will re-visit

these programs as they relate to network building and referrals. Table 5D highlights the major programs within the church:

TABLE 5D: OUR LADY OF SORROWS--PARISHIONER GROUPS AND PROGRAMS		
Group/Program Name	Who?	What?
Prayer Group	Adults	Weekly prayer in informal setting; some discussion and bible study; relationship-building with participants.
<i>Cursillo Movement</i>	Adults	Intensive weekend-long retreat intended to build relationship with God and increase faith knowledge. Local version of an international movement.
Ladies of the Divine Providence	Adult women, mainly Puerto Rican	Women organize rituals and celebrations based around faith and Puerto Rican culture. Make visits to the sick and elderly.
HESMIPERU	Adult Peruvian men and women	"The Brotherhood of the Lord of Miracles" is a chapter of an international co-ed religious fraternity of the Peruvian community. It holds regular meetings at the church and organizes rituals, celebrations, and special masses.
Teen Group ("Youth Group")	Young adults ages 18-21	Preparation for some sacraments, group events and outings, discussion, and social justice-based community service. Lead by 2-3 adult parishioners with assistance from parents.
Lectors and Eucharistic Ministry	Adult men and women.	Take on responsibilities at all masses of reading Bible passages. Serve the communion and wine.
<i>Catecismo</i>	Elementary-aged children, with some parental participation	(English: "Catechism.") Youth religious education, preparation for sacraments, activities. Meets once a month or more, on Sundays.

Interview participants explained that strong emotional support thrives among members of each group. Discussion and regular face-to-face time builds familiarity, trust, and knowledge of one another's lives. Conversation may also help facilitate parishioners' ability to distinguish

between what psychology calls external versus internal attribution of one's need for support. For example, focus on internal attribution may lend a parishioner motivation and agency, while emphasis on external factors may relieve individual burden and victim blaming. Graciela cited that in times of personal crisis, such as death of a family member, support from group members is particularly present. When I asked about what makes a faith-based setting distinct, Adriana responded that at all parish activities, "you can talk about religion."²⁰ The shared language of faith builds unity, she said, in a way that one would not necessarily encounter in a non-faith-based environment. Psychology literature states that across many cases, a positive role model (such as a priest, woman religious, or group leader) is frequently the number one indicator of mental well-being and buffering effects. (Kloos et al 2007)

The Youth Group's values of social justice and well being for urban teenagers are particularly interesting. Lead by Jeanette and Jaime (who, until recently, were assistant directors to head director María), who themselves are parents of young adults, the group of about 15 teenagers is intended to serve as an alternative outlet to the temptations of drinking, partying, and other challenges of teenage life in Hartford. In addition to preparation for sacraments (like Confirmation), Jeanette and Jaime model the positive values of church community and education by organizing outings, social activities, and fundraising efforts for a small college scholarship given annually to a Youth Group member. Jeanette sees the group as an setting for support and growth for the "average" teen, in comparison to other after-school programs for teens in Hartford, which that she feels are more geared toward the individual "in need," or recovering from a substance abuse or emotional problem. The couple has found parental involvement in the group to be a strong indicator of the teen's long-term commitment, as is mentoring from young

²⁰ Information gathered from a focus group with Adriana, Carolina, and Gerardo on 11 Nov. 2012.

adult “graduates” of the program. Finally, Youth Group members enjoy serving their community through dinners and food drives for the homeless, as well as other social-justice related service activities focused on topics like immigration and water pollution. Social justice advocacy takes place in coordination with various Hartford organizations, and is based on a program of the Archdiocese of Hartford.

Literature from immigration studies and psychology increasingly identifies not only barriers to accessing mental health services for Latinos, but also the positive value of spirituality as a coping mechanism. Evidence from interviews at Our Lady of Sorrows are consistent with these findings, indicating that the faith community can provide protective factors for dealing with stressors that low-income Latino immigrants experience. Parishioners’ use of spirituality and social support within the church setting brings up the charge of cultural relevance that scholars and practitioners of human rights often face.

Most U.S. academics and policy-makers pose traditional, clinically-based mental health care (e.g. psychotherapy in a clinician’s office) as the Western (and even geographically Northern) representation of the human right to mental health care because this form is what health insurance and state-based social services typically offer. Spiritual counseling and church-based social support serve as buffers, complements, and/or alternatives to traditional mental health care based on the Western model. Is the state-based, Westernized form of mental health care on its own enough, or even the most beneficial, for low-income Latino immigrants? Findings from this section indicate that we should take into account the culturally-relevant support for mental health that Latinos find through the faith setting.

A wide range of activities at Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows contribute to the human rights to education, economic security, and mental health by considering the inter-

connectedness of rights and using a high degree of cultural competency. While my observations in Chapter Five focused on direct services that staff provide, Chapter Six considers the FBOs' work in a different angle. Just as important to the human rights that this study concerns are the networks of family and friends that low-income Latino immigrants rely upon to access rights. Chapter Six investigates how staff and clients alike utilize networks to overcome barriers, connecting this population to services and information that are critical to the guarantee of human rights.

Chapter 6: The Network of Access to Human Rights

In Chapter Five, we looked critically at ways in which Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows directly provide services to clients, ranging from material resources to spiritual counseling. Just as important to consider is the FBOs' "work" that is less visible and tangible: referring "clients" to agencies and other individuals, as well as generally serving as a network of information. Interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic observation about this "networking effect" revealed critical ways in which communication barriers, complicated legal structures, and lack of awareness of services limit low-income Latino immigrants' access to a wide variety of human rights. The exchange of referrals and information among clients who are part of FBO communities is a key strength of both sites. Staff draw upon the networks of the clients themselves, demonstrating the power of Latino immigrants' own cultural resource. Information and referrals are most likely to contribute to the human right to economic security, although they may indirectly influence education and mental health. Throughout the chapter, we will keep in mind an important conclusion of Chapter Five: that economic security represents a holistic framework including several rights, such as employment and housing. Unlike my analysis of direct provision of services in Chapter Five, the FBOs share more common ground when it comes to the networking effect. Rather than looking at each FBO as separate case studies, we will compare the two throughout the chapter.

Networks connect a wide range of people, settings, and rights

"Who" seeks help in the form of information or a referral is a good starting point, as it is not immediately obvious. An important distinction in understanding the church's Parish Office is

that a significant portion of those who seek help there are not actually parishioners. Church parishioners do visit the Parish Office, but they may be just as likely to discuss a non-urgent need, like a sacrament, than to request something like material assistance. In fact, visitors may come from other parishes, or not have a faith affiliation at all. They may come from Parkville, or from any other neighborhood of Hartford. For the purpose of ease, in this chapter I will refer to both parishioner and non-parishioner visitors to the Parish Office as “clients.” At Jubilee House, the “who” is more clear: ESOL students, Esperanza students, and clients of the Refugee Assistance Center (RAC) seek help, and are all referred to by staff as “clients.” Many clients live in the South End, but perhaps just as many come from other neighborhoods of Hartford. A few are residents of neighboring towns and cities such as Wethersfield, West Hartford, and New Britain.

Across both FBOs, helping figures addressed a wide range of needs through information providing and referrals. Topics that interview participants mentioned included: children’s items (books, clothes); clothing; food; gas or heating assistance; immigration-related processes such as citizenship and green cards; general paperwork; needs related to social security and the Department of Social Services; housing and rent assistance; general financial assistance; health care for women, men, and children; temporary shelters; finding a lawyer; and information geared toward teens, like pregnancy, alcohol, and drug use. The majority of these needs contribute to the human right to economic security.

The direction or location of the referral may be another individual within the organization, a private non-faith-based agency, a public agency, or another Catholic FBO. Participants specifically referenced sending someone to, or providing them with information related, to several places, such as: another ESOL program (if the student could not make the hours of

Jubilee House's program); the Collaborative Center for Justice (an advocacy-oriented FBO that rents space inside Jubilee House's building, but has no formal affiliation); the Community Renewal Team (CRT, which offers a variety of services, such as child care); and food pantries.

Across the board, the number one way in which interview participants cited that people find out about the FBOs' services was "word of mouth." More than half of participants in the ESOL student focus group said that a friend or family member referred them to the ESOL program. Clergy at Jubilee House said that kinship and friendship networks explain how individuals find out that they can receive help of some form at the church. Only one time did a participant mention that another agency would refer someone to an FBO. Deacon Vicente stated that Hartford's Food Share program provides clients with a list of available food pantries, including the one at Our Lady of Sorrows during the winter. Jubilee House staff do not need to advertise the ESOL program at all; in fact, Sister Allison operates on a waiting list. Sister Loretta does advertise the Esperanza program through television, ads in church bulletins, flyers mailed to former students' homes and to agencies, and heavy reliance on students' personal networks. Within the church, Jeanette noted that when it comes to the Youth Group, parish families might become aware of the program simply by hearing of its activities at the church, or even by hearing the radio ads that she has aired in the past.

Our Lady of Sorrows clergy also mentioned referring someone who comes into the Parish Office to a trusted parishioner. Likewise, active parishioners such as Carolina send parishioners in need to the Parish Office. At Jubilee House, when Sister Allison hears of an ESOL student's need, she might recommend that they work with Olivia, director of the Refugee Assistance Center. The reverse happens when a client of the RAC is in need of English language learning.

We will re-visit inter-organizational communication later on in the chapter in the section of this chapter called “The diverse dynamics of ‘helping’ relationships.””

Staff and clients draw upon the faith network as a resource

The role of the Catholic faith network is relatively obvious at Our Lady of Sorrows, as the FBO is a house of worship. However, Jubilee House is a faith-based organization that serves clients of a variety of faith backgrounds, and consciously does not integrate faith language into its services. Despite this apparent non-connection, much of the success of Jubilee House actually depends on staff’s drawing upon the Catholic faith network in Hartford. This dynamic occurs in two ways.

One, staff frequently advertise the Esperanza program in local Catholic churches’ bulletins, and used to do the same for ESOL, before demand became so strong. Sister Kelley estimates that about eighty percent of clients have some kind of affiliation with a religious group (Christian or not), which would make them more likely to become aware of Jubilee Houses’ services. Sister Loretta increasingly communicates with local church members who train lectors (readers at mass) so as to “recruit” Spanish-speaking individuals who may want to improve their ability to serve as lectors. These individuals, she says, are ideal students for Esperanza’s Public Speaking class. Second, many of the services to which staff would refer a client are in fact Catholic, such as Malta House (health services) or another ESOL program (such as Sophia’s Place, also a ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph in West Hartford). When I asked ESOL students where they would go when they need help of any form, several responded that they could count on a church for material help.

The diverse dynamics of “helping” relationships

Between both FBOs, there is a great diversity in the dynamics of the relationship between the help-provider and the individual who seeks “help” in the form of information or referral. Questions to identify these dynamics include who provides the help; how the helping figure becomes aware of the help-seeker’s need; how the helping figure assesses the need and an appropriate response; ways in which the relationship dynamic might be gender-related; to what extent the helping relationship is informal versus formalized; to what extent reciprocity occurs; and what factors make an individual more or less likely to access information or a referral once they are regularly part of the FBOs network.

Both ESOL tutors and professional staff provide Jubilee House clients with information and referrals. A particularly close or long-term relationship with his or her tutor, or with Sister Allison, would make it more likely that staff become aware of an ESOL student’s need. She observed, “If a student has a good relationship, they can learn more easily. Because there’s a certain comfort level. Sister Allison also cited her strong listening skills and students’ trust of her as an open resource. Only within the RAC is help with information and referrals formalized. Otherwise, staff and tutors’ awareness of needs only comes out of conversation with clients. Likewise, there is no formal expectation of reciprocity between client and staff member or tutor--although Sister Allison did mention that most tutors do receive a high degree of personal satisfaction from tutoring.

Helping relationships in the Our Lady of Sorrows community are more fluid and varied in their dynamic, speaking to the multiple roles that individuals within this community may play. If clergy cannot or choose not to fulfill a request within the Parish Office, they may recommend that a help-seeker (parishioner or not) work with an active parishioner who is knowledgeable

about their need. Likewise, parishioners cited sending fellow parishioners with a need either to the clergy, or to another one of their own. The common denominator is trust: clergy must trust the parishioner to whom they send the need, just as an individual seeking a leg up at the Parish Office understands that it is a “no questions asked” environment of privacy and respect. For example, Jorge explained how “the issue is that the agency is political,” while the church helps the individual in a more unconditional sense. Chapter Seven takes this observation further by exploring the implications of the Catholic commitment to a concept of citizenship specific to the Latino immigrant.

Almost all interview participants emphasized that intra-parish groups, such as Prayer Group, created strong bonds among parishioners (Stepick’s “bonding” connections), raising awareness about one another’s’ desires and needs--both material and spiritual--as they arise. A peer might provide another member with information or referral, or, recommend that the person work with the clergy. Within the Youth Group, Jeanette noted how parental involvement alongside the teen (e.g. providing rides, attending events) indicates greater long-term commitment of the teen. Long-term involvement may in turn increase the benefits of information that he or she may gain from being part of the group. Adriana observed that helping dynamics are almost entirely informal, with the exception of the soup kitchen. As a parishioner active in leadership roles such as the “Spanish Council,” she expressed a desire to formalize some of these processes, suggesting the formation of a committee, the general increase of connection between individuals and services through the church, and/or presentations after the Spanish mass from local agencies. She did recall a visit to the Spanish mass by the Hispanic Health Council, a non-profit, secular organization in Hartford dedicated to the health and well-being of Latinos. (www.Hispanichealth.com)

At both FBOs, the gender dynamics of helping relationships are at times consistent with traditional gender stereotypes, and at other times, divergent. For example, Sister Allison felt that her strong listening skills and approachable nature (which make clients likely to express their needs to her) are part of both her gender and her faith. Carolina, a women religious and highly active parishioner, is likely to work with other women in an informal-way, such as providing support and motivation through talks on the phone. At the same time, visitors to the Parish Office receive information and referrals from the all-male clergy, who also possess well-developed listening skills, from what interview participants noted.

Why pay attention to the “invisible work?” Reflections on barriers to access

While exchange of information is common within most communities, it is no small coincidence that the “networking effect” takes place with such high frequency within both FBOs. The faith-based “networking effect” may be a direct reflection of not only the lack of resources in Hartford, but also the barriers that low-income Latino immigrants face in accessing services that contribute to the human right to economic security. Participants most commonly raised two concerns regarding social services in Hartford related to economic security, other than the nature of ESOL programs. Participants spoke of a) lack of awareness about resources, and b) complicated barriers to utilizing resources and receiving benefits even if the individual is aware that they exist. These observations represent the “social life of rights,” or the cultural and structural factors that mediate how an individual accesses a human right.

For example, three of the ten focus group participants from Jubilee House’s ESOL program observed how many people, themselves included, do not know about resources available to deal with their need. Only one participant--a male who mentioned utilizing at least four social service

programs--cited individual motivation and effort as the factor that most determines the extent to which one accesses opportunities and resources. Jeanette and Jaime of Our Lady of Sorrows echoed ESOL students' sentiments about lack of awareness. Jaime stated that although Hartford is a "tough" community that experiences violence, "There's a lot of also good things in the community. You just gotta reach out and look. You gotta know. And a lot of people don't know about the programs that are in the city." Father Joe expanded the perspective to that of service-providers, explaining, "I find that there's great cooperation among agencies....The problem is lack of communication. What's available, where is it available, et cetera." He expressed confidence in the 2-1-1 system, a phone directory of services and resources, but said that even 2-1-1 is often overloaded with calls. General lack of marketing, as well as lack of Spanish-language information about resources, may contribute to participants' sense of low awareness of services.

Even when an individual is aware of a service that could potentially meet their need related to economic security, legal and institutional barriers often complicate the likelihood that a low-income Latino immigrant will actually access the service or receive the benefit. A large portion of Olivia's work at the RAC (with both immigrants and refugees) involves assisting clients with immigration-related paperwork; obtaining citizenship or green cards; helping with tasks at social security offices; assisting with processes of the Department of Social Services; and otherwise guiding individuals through appointments of all kinds. Sister Allison stated that the need for this type of assistance is due in large part to the unavailability of the state-provided caseworkers that many of Jubilee House's clients are assigned. She sees Jubilee House as critical in fulfilling roles such as "keeping people aware of situations that they need to deal with" and

providing clients with information about “things that they might think aren’t right, that they have an absolute right to, but somebody tells them that they don’t.”

Adriana noted similar difficulties in her personal, informal experiences helping acquaintances navigate social services. She specifically mentioned how, for example, in order to obtain SNAP benefits (Connecticut’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as food stamps), an agency asked Adrian’s acquaintance to provide the signature of an affidavit who was his “sponsor” when he immigrated to the U.S. over twenty years ago--a person with whom the individual is no longer in touch. Carolina and Ana both described that services and agencies are numerous, but one must “jump through hoops” to receive their resources. In response to their adversities, said Carolina, individuals in need come to the church, where they know that they can receive guidance towards obtaining what they need.

A major strength of both FBOs, then, is their ability to facilitate communication about resources through a culturally relevant setting. Here we see a valuable example of a way in which FBOs do not necessarily “reinvent the wheel” in terms of what they provide to clients. Rather, the FBOs provide a space to which low-income Latino immigrants can turn to mentors who are knowledgeable both about city resources and the culture of the help-seeker. Furthermore, the FBOs use clients’ family and friendship networks as a strength upon which to advance the organization’s mission itself. For example, ESOL students constantly refer new students to Jubilee House, just as one parishioner refers another to spiritual counseling or another agency. Networks are a valuable cultural resource of the Latino community itself. Because the FBOs use community networks to help clients access rights, the organization has a high degree of cultural relevance.

At FBOs, individuals receive direction about resources related to economic security, which buffers the effects of low awareness and one's ability to navigate complicated social services systems. This dynamic is very interesting because it is unlike provision of services, which directly takes on responsibilities previously associated with the state. The "networking effect" is a direct response to inadequate communication and resources, yet it serves as a *complement* to state-based and private resources. Here we raise the major question for human rights brought up in Chapter Three--*who is the duty-bearer, the state or the FBO?*--but in a different way. Even if the state is the duty-bearer, can low-income Latino immigrants *access* rights without the FBO? Chapter Seven takes a closer look at many of these ideas, such as cultural resources and possible peer-mentoring processes.

Chapter 7: Redefining citizenship for the Latino immigrant in Hartford

After discussing in Chapter Five and Six the ways in which Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows both directly provide services and connect clients to resources through networking, it is clear that both FBOs do “work” that is significant to low-income Latino immigrants because it raises important questions for the concept of citizenship in human rights discourse. The FBOs perform their work based on models that utilize and respect the strengths and capabilities of their Latino clients, taking into account the whole person and the way in which his or her rights interconnect to form “citizenship” that goes beyond national membership. By doing so, they advance a holistic, rights-inclusive sense of citizenship that draws from *latinidad* and Catholic faith.

This concept challenges the United States government’s sense of citizenship, which imagines the “citizen” as an individual with national membership. The state’s limited legal sense of citizenship means that Latino immigrants lacking full legal citizenship cannot access government provisions that support basic rights like healthcare, housing, food, and education. However, even Latinos who *are* full citizens lack access to rights because of barriers such as poverty. The human rights discourse is beginning to advance a more holistic sense of citizenship through literature and policy that champions the cross-border universality of rights. Yet, gaps remain because the human rights version of universal citizenship is based in compliance to international treaties and supra-national bodies like the United Nations. As we will see in this chapter, bottom-up approaches like Flores’ “Latino cultural citizenship,” which both FBOs employ, may be a more valuable and effective means to guarantee access to rights for Latino immigrants.

Context from human rights literature on universal citizenship—is it enough?

In a literature review in which he discusses immigration in the European Union, Anthony Messina (1996) presents ways in which human rights theory challenges concepts of citizenship that are tied to full national member status. The authors that Messina reviews bring up the idea of a possible “postnational citizenship regime,” one where universal human rights replace rights based in citizenship to a nation. Messina includes a statement from Soysal: “The rights and claims of the individual are legitimized by ideologies grounded in a transnational community, through international codes and conventions, and laws on human rights, independent of their citizenship in a nation-state” (Soysal 142). The human rights corpus currently advances the idea of universal human rights, regardless of citizenship to a nation. Although some progress has been made, the universality of rights via international human rights law has not yet played out in the U.S. or in the E.U.

Beth Lyon (2007), focusing on immigrant labor rights in “From Sanctuary to Shaping International Law: How Unauthorized Immigrant Workers in America Are Advocating Beyond U.S. Borders,” writes that U.S. law has shifted toward less protection for immigrant workers in the last several decades. U.S. law differs from international law in that the latter establishes “a right to equal employment law protection and even...the right to special protection in the workplace” (Lyons 30). Beyond labor rights alone, many Latino immigrants in the U.S. are, as we know, denied rights due to their immigration status. The same is true for many immigrants with even full citizenship status—like Puerto Ricans in Hartford—due to economic and cultural barriers. Interestingly, the universal human rights regime arose around the same time as the liberation theology movement. Perhaps their parallel development indicates how social action “from below” is the basis of Catholic faith-based accommodation of Latino immigrants.

In the same vein, it is possible that universal human rights theory may have its own gaps in connecting discourse to practice. Should the “post-national citizenship regime,” based in universal human rights, ever reach the U.S., would Latino immigrants have access to rights like education, mental health, and economic security? Or would they continue to face economic and cultural barriers like the ones we have seen in my study? I believe that citizenship tied to the nation-state opens doors to certain privileges, but it is not the single key to guaranteeing rights related to the immigrant accommodation process. Immigrants need resettlement support that goes beyond granting of legal status. This is the support that faith-based organizations like Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows currently provide.

In states like the U.S., which has ratified many of the international codes, conventions, and laws on human rights that Soysal mentions, signing international human rights treaties does not necessarily translate into compliance with measures, like adult education, that are equally as important for guaranteeing citizenship in an expanded sense. A holistic, rights-inclusive concept of citizenship goes beyond basic civil-political rights that come with citizenship to a nation-state. It includes rights like economic security, education, mental health—as well as others not directly considered in this study, like bodily integrity—that are inter-connected and represent the spectrum of rights that the duty-bearer must truly guarantee. For example, the rights that stem from employment, the basis for economic security, form the core of “citizenship.” “Citizenship” is a term that encapsulates not only the right to literally participate in a political contract between the people and the state, but also to seek a decent standard of living. In combination with barriers to access, neoliberal policies that fund little for social services drive faith-based organizations to pick up the responsibility for an expanded concept of citizenship. The next section, which explores the idea of “Latino cultural citizenship,” takes an approach that complements holistic

citizenship because it, considers the individual immigrant's strengths and needs as inter-connected.

Flores and Benmayor's "Latino cultural citizenship"

In a series of essays entitled *Latino cultural citizenship* (2007), edited by William Flores and Rina Benmayor, the authors propose a theory that serves as a valuable launching-pad for analyzing the work that Our Lady of Sorrows and Jubilee House perform in expanding Latino immigrants' citizenship. Through a series of case studies of Latino communities in California, Texas, and New York, the authors assert an underlying theme: "culture interprets and constructs citizenship" (6). Flores and Benmayor state how various Latino groups claim membership in their societies as they "struggle to build communities, claim social rights...become recognized as active agents in society" and balance incorporation into U.S. society with simultaneous development of "specifically Latino cultural forms of expression" (2). The text is particularly helpful in its description of the discrimination that Puerto Ricans—a majority among Hartford Latinos—face, despite holding U.S. citizenship: "Puerto Ricans are still treated as second-class citizens. Viewed as 'foreigners,' they receive the same harsh anti-immigrant treatment as other Latinos" (3). Discrimination against Puerto Ricans is an example of how the rights that form citizenship begin at the local level, from the bottom-up, rather than solely from the top-down perspective of a universal human rights regime.

Throughout the text, but especially in the chapter entitled "Claiming Cultural Citizenship in East Harlem: 'Si Esto Puede Ayudar a la Comunidad Mía...'" (Benmayor, Rosa M. Torruellas, Ana L. Juarbe), the authors present difference as a resource, rather than a threat. In East Harlem, New York, low-income Puerto Rican women in the El Barrio Popular Education Program draw upon cultural resources in the face of disempowering structural forces. The

women's recurring affirmations of dignity, respect, shame, and *ayuda mutual* (mutual aid) in their life histories symbolize the role of cultural meanings, resources, and practices in the struggle for cultural citizenship (153).

In thinking about my own case studies, I considered the cultural resources that stem from not only *latinidad* (Latino identity) but also Catholic faith. At Jubilee House, the majority of clients are Latino, yet do not see their interaction with the setting in faith-based terms. Staff, on the other hand, are white women, and hence do not share Latino cultures with their clients. Yet, staff frame their clients' strengths, which are based in *latinidad*, through compassion and respect originating in Catholic social teaching. At Our Lady of Sorrows, a majority of staff and client-parishioners are Latino, with the exceptions of the highest parish leadership—Father Joe and Father Ben, who nevertheless demonstrate a high degree of cultural competency. Except for some individuals who seek help at the parish office, and may or may not be of the Catholic faith, all actors involved in Our Lady of Sorrows frame action and reception of aid in Catholic terms. In the following sections, I analyze the cultural strengths of clients at both sites so as to demonstrate the ways in which clients and service providers use culture to (in the words of Flores and Benmayor) interpret and construct citizenship. Through culture, these actors also challenge citizenship beyond the limited scope that the government lays out, allow them to access rights that form a truly holistic concept of citizenship.

One might also compare Flores and Benmayor's ideas to viewpoints that present themselves as alternatives to or extensions of human rights, such as Martha Nussbaum's "human capabilities." Nussbaum, who writes in the context of women and international development, presents "capabilities" as an addition to human rights, including capabilities that prominent human rights documents do not, such as bodily integrity; sense, imagination, and thought;

emotions; practical reason; and control over one's environment, among others (78-80). Bringing up basic civil-political human rights like free speech and voting, she writes, "to secure rights to citizens in these areas is to put them in a position of combined capability to function in that area" (98). That is, "capabilities" do not replace human rights, but rather consider the material, emotional, and political needs that an individual needs in order to be *capable* of function and participation in an area of rights.

"Capabilities" concerns many of the questions that "barriers to access" brings up. For example, Nussbaum's text reminds me of Sister Allison's commitment to "seeing the whole person" in her work with ESOL students. In the following two sections, I explore the ways in which staff and clients at Our Lady of Sorrows and Jubilee House use cultural strengths to go beyond barriers, gaining access to rights beyond that which state-based ideas of citizenship grant them.

"They don't make choices for you:" At Jubilee House, an approach based in strengths and capabilities

By drawing upon respect for clients' learning capabilities and their inter-personal networks, Jubilee House staff and clients advance a strengths-based approach to advancing the rights to adult education and economic security. ESOL students recognized that staff members respect students' cultures, family obligations, and education backgrounds, promoting a safe, discrimination-free space where learning can take place. Students mirror this respect for one another. ESOL student Marco's comment "they don't make choices for you" epitomizes clients' appreciation of mutual respect at Jubilee House. Sister Allison spoke of her commitment to making clients aware of the things that they have an "absolute right" to, even if other service providers tell them that they do not have a right. Sister Loretta brought up clients' talents and

abilities, which are often not recognized by employers and the general public due to their low English skills. Loreta observed:

I have found that these very capable adults are taking housekeeping, and maintenance jobs, and just to support themselves and their families. I think Esperanza means ‘hope,’ that there is a place for them, that they can be respected for what they stand for, their beliefs, they can express their beliefs to people, and encourage them to be more outgoing and not be shy about the opportunities and the life that they have for others.

The small class sizes (one teacher for six students) in the Esperanza Program and the one-on-one ESOL program likewise give importance to the individual, allowing volunteers and staff to become well aware of students’ need and goals. By emphasizing respect among cultures and backgrounds, staff are better able to identify and bring out the learning styles, preferences, and abilities of students.

Likewise, Jubilee House staff and clients use one another’s family, friendship, and faith networks to build their client body and reach an ever-growing pool of Latinos in Hartford. There are no complicated marketing and outreach schemes; just reliance on word of mouth, flyers to homes and agencies, and ads in church bulletins. Staff do some outreach to local churches and agencies, but the real recruiting power comes from the clients themselves. Person-to-person references have the power to convince the individual that Jubilee House is a positive place where one can receive adult education, especially in the face of dissatisfaction with class sizes at other locations. In this way, Jubilee House uses the strength of the Latino community network to help clients make contact with adult education and economic security. By using their cultural network and the value of trust, Latinos in the South End of Hartford (and beyond) empower one another to access these rights.

Networks, spirituality, and cultural pride at Our Lady of Sorrows

Like Jubilee House, clergy and parishioner-leaders use the cultural strengths of parishioners—inter-personal networks, spirituality and faith, and ethnic-cultural pride—to build a Latino parish community where individuals access rights. The networking effect, discussed in Chapter Six, is perhaps even more expansive than that which takes place at Jubilee House. Our Lady of Sorrows is complicated in that both parishioners and non-parishioners access rights through the church's resources. In thinking about cultural strengths, it is not fair to say that every client that enters the Parish Office doors is a person of Catholic faith, or identifies with Latino culture. However, there is ample material with which to appreciate the strength-based work that does take place solely among Latino parishioners. Staff and parishioners draw upon their family and friendship network to encourage new members to join the church or to become more active. Furthermore, within the church itself, pathways of information-sharing and social support, especially among organized groups, rely upon the strong “bonding” ties of parishioners to one another and to clergy.

An especially interesting phenomenon is one brought up by Adriana: the potential for more established Latinos to mentor recently-immigrated Latinos or those that struggle with economic and legal-status-related issues. Adriana stated that she frequently helps other Latinos navigate the complicated barriers of social services, like the anecdote of the individual whose service provider required an affidavit's signature, although he had been in the U.S. for twenty years. Both Adriana and Carolina expressed desire for Our Lady of Sorrows to formalize the church's assistance to parishioners in accessing and learning about services, through avenues such as a committee or post-mass presentations. These strategies, as well as the informal work

that people like Adriana currently do, utilize the Latino network to bridge important barriers to accessing rights like economic security.

If networking is what connects parishioners and clergy, then a shared Catholic faith is the common cultural bond that both facilitates and deepens those connections. In an obvious sense, all parishioners attend masses, groups, and events at Our Lady of Sorrows due to their shared spirituality. Connections may reach beyond the walls of the church and Parish Office to the homes and streets of Hartford (and beyond), where acquaintance and family networks spread widely. Adriana's comment that lines of communication are more open at the church ("you can talk about religion") than at non-faith-based agencies indicates that the immediate shared bond of faith allows individuals to enter into a community of trust and understanding. Catholic faith is also the bread and butter of the spirituality-based counseling and social support networks discussed in Chapter Five. Finally, faith informs the attitudes of clergy and parishioner-leaders who provide services in a no-questions-asked model (see Chapter Five). Each of these aspects demonstrate how a common faith unites the individuals of the church, informing the relationships and work that are so critical to accessing the rights to mental health and economic security.

Parishioners of all nationalities share the common bond of the Catholic faith, while simultaneously celebrating the cultural heritages of various countries of origin, especially Puerto Rico and Peru. As I noted earlier, a majority of parishioners are of Puerto Rican and Peruvian heritage, although among those that I met or interviewed, there were Hondurans, Colombians, Dominicans, Panamanians, and El Salvadorians. Jaime related Latino solidarity to the common bond of support for immigrants:

We're not just fighting for our own people....Every immigrant, not just immigrants that come to the church and find rescue in the church.... And in the church, people help, and

it shows we're not just involved, we're looking out for each other. We are also each other's guardians.

Cultural and ethnic pride is also expressed through special masses to honor a saint or holiday, as well as nationality-based groups like HESMIPERU, the Peruvian co-ed fraternity. These types of gatherings and images raise the church community's sense of collective awareness of culture, promote a sense of connection to Latinos around the world, and transform Our Lady of Sorrows into what a Pew Hispanic Center report calls an "ethnic church" (2007, "Changing Faiths: Latinos and the Transformation of American Religion"). Clergy and parishioner-leaders expressed a strong sense of cultural community among the Hispanic members of Our Lady of Sorrows, which informs the critical bonds among parishioners and group members, discussed in Chapters Five and Six.

Interview participants also mentioned a generally positive relationship with the "Anglo" community. European-Americans founded Our Lady of Sorrows. Although there are still two English-language masses each Sunday and a Parish Council for the Anglo community, Hispanic members greatly outnumber Anglos in parish participation and mass attendance (300 people attend each Spanish mass). For years, the Spanish-language mass took place in the church basement, where coffee hours, events, and religious education now take place. The literal rise of the Spanish mass from the basement to the church itself symbolizes the rise in positive identity and respect for the Hispanic church community. A strong cultural-ethnic identity permeates all corners of church life, providing a bond comparable to that of spirituality, yet also going beyond faith. Staff and active parishioners use cultural-ethnic pride to unite their community in the struggle for rights in the face of government attitudes that peg them as "aliens."

Concluding thoughts

In the last two sections, we have seen how Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows draw upon cultural resources to advance an expanded, rights-inclusive notion of citizenship for Latino immigrants. The result is increased access to services, like education or spiritual counseling, as well as a heightened sense of belonging to a community in a city and nation where government and civilians alike often perceive the Latino immigrant as “the other,” a threat. Access to rights through cultural competence, direct service, and networks represents human rights advocacy “from below,” which perhaps reflects the relationship between social movements (like liberation theology and human rights discourse), human rights, and power that Stammers describes (1999). This chapter also raises an important question: universal human rights theory may advance advocacy for citizenship that reaches beyond national borders, providing some promise for non-citizens in the U.S. Even the notion of universal citizenship may not be enough to break down barriers to access and fill in the gaps between state-based services and the Latino immigrant. It is possible that Latino immigrants need something more from private actors—like faith-based organizations. This is one question that we will consider in the next, concluding chapter.

Conclusion

In the past seven chapters, we have seen how Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows contribute to the guarantee of Hartford low-income Latino immigrants' human rights to economic security, education, and mental health, through direct provision of services and the networking effect. These observations brought up difficult questions implicating a tension between a faith-based concept of social justice and the human rights discourse. Does the work of these FBOs present alternative ideals that *replaces* human rights discourse, or do they *respond to* gaps between human rights ideals and the realities of state-based services?

In human rights theory, the state is the ultimate bearer of the duty to guarantee individuals' human rights. But, in resource-scarce urban settings like Hartford, state philosophy dictates the expectation for an immigrant to resettle through his or her own means. So, faith-based organizations take on many of the activities that are part of accommodating Latino immigrants into a new country. Much of the FBOs' work, like ad-hoc financial assistance and referrals to services, responds to gaps between what human rights proposes as norms for education, economic security, and mental health, and what the state actually provides. But some aspects of the FBOs' efforts, especially those motivated by cultural resources like spirituality, actually replace state-based conceptions of services with more culturally-relevant models.

I propose that the type of faith-based social justice work that Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows perform is a culturally relevant means to the guarantee of human rights. It is work that is not necessarily in opposition to the human rights discourse, but rather a bottom-up, grassroots approach to solving problems of marginalization, exclusion, and xenophobia. Supporters of human rights theory and policy-makers alike would do well to learn from the

efforts of both staff and clients that advance the rights to education, economic security, and mental health. Critics of human rights often point to the discourse's roots in Anglo Christianity as evidence towards its lack of relevance to non-Western, marginalized cultures. However, equally important to consider are marginalized, largely Catholic groups of the "global South" in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Latinos in the U.S. Low-income Latino immigrants are absolutely a marginalized group in the U.S.; yet, they are also majority Christian, if not Catholic, as 68% of the nation's Latinos call themselves (Pew Hispanic Center 2007). Based on my case studies, this population actually demonstrates a reliance on Catholic FBOs as a means for advancing human rights in their lives. In this context, Catholic social teaching may, in fact, represent a contribution to human rights advocacy from the bottom-up, rather than perpetuating the concerns of cultural relativists. In the following pages, I will flesh out some complexities of my proposal that Latino immigrant resettlement through Catholic faith-based social justice should be seen as a culturally relevant form of human rights advocacy.

Responding to, or replacing, human rights?

In answering the question "does Catholic faith-based social justice for Latino immigrants respond to, or replace, human rights theory?" it is easy to point to the several ways in which Catholic faith-based social justice could conceivably conflict with human rights theory. Most of these conflicts are not directly relevant to my study. For example, both proponents of Catholic social teaching and champions of human rights value the security of the human body. Catholics express this value by opposing birth control and abortion, while human rights advocates emphasize a woman's right to control her body and to choose abortion if she wishes. A more relevant tension is the U.S. constitutional mandate for a separation between church and state.

One might question, for example, why Jubilee House receives federal funding by means of the trickle-down process of a Community Development Block Grant. The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships is the answer—federal policy-makers endorse, through funding, the work of community organizations like Jubilee House for neighborhood development.

In my case studies, I was interested in a different, particular aspect of the tension between Catholic social justice and human rights discourse: how FBOs contribute to accommodation of Latino immigrants, and what this work means for the guarantee of certain human rights. In answering the “replacing” versus “responding to” dilemma, the truly interesting complications surround *who* performs faith-based social justice work, and for *what reasons*.

In an ideal world, Jubilee House might not exist. Certainly it would cease to exist not because the adult education services they provide are inappropriate or inadequate, but rather because the need for adult education to which they respond might not exist. By providing ESOL and Esperanza courses, Jubilee House responds to a state-based model of immigrant incorporation that lacks in both resources and cultural relevancy. For example, many ESOL students came to Jubilee House when they found classes at Hartford Public Library too large and unable to meet individual needs. Because staff members are white, college-educated women, they do not share the same cultural background as their Latino immigrant clients (despite demonstrating a high degree of cultural competency). This does not, however, mean that the women religious of Jubilee House share the values of state actors who are influential in determining the allocation of resources (or rather, the lack of) towards adult education.

Rather, Jubilee House staff are a third-party actor, mediating the guarantee of rights between the state and the Latino immigrant. As I discussed in Chapter Seven, the sisters perform

their work largely by drawing upon their Latino clients' cultural strengths: personal networks and learning abilities. In this sense, the women religious of Jubilee House, motivated by compassionate interpretations of Catholic social teaching, and utilizing Latino cultural resources, *respond to* gaps in state-provided services for adult education and economic security.

Our Lady of Sorrows' version of faith-based social justice work is also nuanced when it comes to the "replacing versus responding to" debate, although in a different way. Our Lady of Sorrows operates through multiple models that are mixed on the spectrum of bottom-up to top-down approaches. For example, at the Parish Office, two Hispanic deacons work side-by-side with two Irish-American priests, both of whom operate with strong cultural competency, including Spanish language skills. Clergy serve mainly Latino visitors to the Parish Office who seek assistance towards their economic security, although not all help-seekers are immigrants or even members of the parish. Among the church community, Latino parishioners (many of whom, but not all, are immigrants) initiate and sustain many activities that are key to the rights to economic security and mental health (such as networking effects and groups that promote coping with stress). Some church activity, like ad-hoc financial and material aid in the Parish Office, responds to barriers to accessing state-provided services. However, other dynamics, like spiritual counseling and membership in parish groups, do not necessarily respond to the inadequacy of public mental health services. Rather, these culturally-based activities imagine and respond to needs based on the cultural resources of the Latino immigrant community. Overall, efforts at Our Lady of Sorrows that contribute to social justice are characterized by a high degree of Latino-initiated cultural citizenship.

At both FBOs, through their promotion of cultural citizenship, social justice work that "responds to" gaps in state-based services actually co-occurs with efforts that are strongly

bottom-up and ethno-centered. I propose not to consider the latter a *replacement* of human rights norms—although it is tempting, from the surface level, to consider low-income, Catholic, Latino immigrants’ efforts for social justice to be a phenomenon altogether different from that of human rights. Rather, what goes at on Jubilee House and Our Lady of Sorrows is a bottom-up struggle for human rights based on Latino cultural citizenship.

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A. Interview Transcription: Sister Catherine**Interviewed by Sarah Kacevich on 1 November, 2012 at Jubilee House**

[Catherine reads Oral Consent and agrees.]

First of all, I'm a part-time. I work in the morning for the Collaborative Center for Justice, which is an advocacy-educational group. I work for Jubilee House slash Esperanza, I'm an administrative assistant. I'm an administrative assistant for everybody. Okay, let's clear that up. And I also do some work for ESOL. So I work for everybody. And, on a daily basis, I check e-mails for all groups, I have two computers in my office, each one is for Collaborative and one of for Jubilee House (Esperanza). And, I check e-mails for both, I distribute mail on a daily basis, I do whatever it is I have on my desk to do that particular day, every day is not always the same, okay, there are various things to do, it sounds silly. Let's see, for example, today I did certificates for Saturday, and I also—on Saturday I teach for Jubilee House, which is Esperanza. I teach on Saturday mornings from 9-12 for Esperanza, so I work 6 days a week, and I teach computers. This semester, which is ending Saturday, I taught the Introduction to Word 7—too late, cus now it's Introduction to Word 8. However, we won't go there. I haven't got Word 8, and the computers don't got Word 8—I mean Windows 8, it's Windows 8—Windows 7—we just got Windows 7, so we'll stick with that for a while. Um, so we're in the process of winding down, so a lot of little reports to do, it's kinda hard, I do a lot of copying for people, on a daily basis, welcome people in in the morning when ESL—the student come in—we welcome them every morning, Monday through Thursday, and I open up and I close up, make sure al the doors are locked, windows are closed, curtains are drawn, I do this on a daily basis, every day. Morning, we open up, evening, we close up. And then I do whatever it is necessary that anyone asks of me, that needs to be done on that particular day. I guess that's pretty much whatever is called for for the day.

Me: “Awesome, so maybe I could ask you some more general questions about Jubilee House, and after that we'll talk more about Esperanza, since you also teach Esperanza. Could you tell me more about like your educational background, your training to be a Sister, and/or your secular education.”

Ok, what would you like to know. [Me: “Tell me everything!”]

Well, I've been a, I've been in the consecrated life, for 51 years, made me first vows in June 1961, um, I was educated at Amerst [?] College, which does not longer exist, um, I received my bachelor's degree in 1968. I received my master's degree in 1972 from Fairfield University. I have a master's degree in elementary education, with a concentration in psychology. Uh, let me see, I taught for 13 years, 3 of which I was principal of a school, and then the door opened and I vacated the teaching position. I did a lot of other things in between, I was an assistant to a Provincial secretary, and I went South, I worked with migrant farm workers, through a clinic, and through the Diocese of Wilmington, Delaware. I worked there for 15 years, among the migrant, and I felt like I was living in a third country—in a third-world country—because most migrants from 1980-1994, most migrants were Mexican, Haitian, Guatemalan, with a few blacks, and maybe one or two whites. But that was the migrant stream, from 1980 to 1994, when I left. Guatemalans being the newest members to the stream. On the Eastern shore of Maryland and Virginia, which is called the Del Mar peninsula, um, it was basically truck-farming, like cucumbers, tomatoes, potatoes, that kind of stuff. Each grower planted approximately 500 acres of tomatoes. I don't know how many—I don't think they planted that many cucumbers, but they

planted a huge crop of cucumbers, potatoes, they planted quite a few—but the tomatoes was the biggest crop. And um, so you had various groups, those you had the early migrants who came in in February-March, who got the fields ready, and you had those who plant, then they did the seedlings inside a hot house. And then the first or second week of April, they would plant the seedlings, and then there was another group. And, eventually, there were more and more people that came, and then in April after they planted them, and for about a week or two, once they got a little taller, they went around and they tied them all to stakes, and then um, that was pretty quite, but again, 500 acres is a *lot* of acres, so they did different fields at different times, and then there would be a break, and then in early end of June, beginning of July, it was tomato-picking season. And you knew it was, because the migrants would come in a their hands would be green, cus the tomatoes were picked green, and their hands would turn green, and the money would turn green, I mean the money is great, but you know what I mean—they got stained. And there would be tomatoes all along the road way, cus they would fall off these trucks. And we did health care. Worked in a health clinic. And we provided transportation, translation, to various services like the health department. The health department in the south is far more active than the health department up around here. [Me: So do you speak Spanish?] No, I don't speak Spanish, un poquito, but I speak French, and I was able to break up my French, and speak some Creole, and I was able to speak some Creole with the Haitians, my—most of my work was with Haitians. I did some with the Mexicans, but I was not a translator for the Mexicans. I was a translator—transporter-translator for Haitians during that time.

I came back, and I worked in the Province's finance office for four years, and then I um, I came to Hartford, I worked at Trust House which was down here on Wyllys Street, down at Good Sheppard Presbyterian, I worked there for two years, but because of where it was located, it was making me sick. So I left, and went to Waterbury for a year. That didn't prove out to be any better, so I came back here, and started working for Collaborative and Jubilee House, in 2011—no, 2001, I'm sorry—I've been here for 11 years. [

Me: wow. What brought you to Jubilee House, or how did you find out about it?]

Well, there was a notice in our news briefs. Uh, but then Sister Susan, was one of the directors, and she called me, cus they were looking for someone, and I said, well I saw it, but it's only part time, I needed to work full-time. So then, I came here, and I don't know how it all mushroomed, but someone else offered me a part-time job, and so it all came together. And so I stayed, so here I am.

[Me: You mentioned the Provincial office. What exactly is that?]

It's the main headquarters of the community that is in Putnam, Connecticut. [Me: okay.] I am not a Sister of St. Joseph, I am not a Sister of Mercy [me: ok], I am a Daughter of the Holy Spirit.

[me: Is that an official...] Yes, that's the title, and I'm—we are—the United States headquarters are in Putnam, Connecticut. [me: Okay, got it.] I worked there twice, for a total of 8 years, actually, 4 for the provincial secretary, at one time, and then four for the provincial treasurer, the second time around.

[Me: What made you want to be a Daughter of the Holy Spirit?]

Well, way back then, my choice was to be the nurse. And, in my parish, the sisters that were there—I was educated by the Sisters of Mercy—but, the Daughters of the Holy Spirit was in my parish, and they did what visiting nursing does today, they went house to house and took care of people. And that's what my desire was. But when I entered the community, they weren't looking for nurses, they were looking for teachers, cus they had made several commitments over the years to staff schools. So, nobody in my group, nobody who entered with me, went into nursing.

Everybody became a teacher. [me: gotcha] You know, whether you had the inclination, or whether you had the gift—cus not everyone is gifted with teaching [me: yes], so yes, that's what happened. The closest I got to nursing was well when I worked in the clinic, but also when I lived in Virginia, I became an EMT, for the local firehouse, cus everything in that part of the world was on a volunteer basis, there were no paid firefighters, there were no paid EMTs like around here. That didn't exist, it was all on a voluntary basis. So, but you had to take classes, and pass the classes before you got licensed by the state.

[Me: So the work that you do now at Jubilee House, why do you do it, why is it important to you?]

We, I am still serving a group of people, you know, that need services. We have at least 23 or 26 countries that are represented here. [me: I saw the map!] And so, I feel like *someone* has to service them, and provide some services, and so the paperwork that I do provides something, and you know, I don't get to know them, except for the people in my class on Saturday, the Saturday people I knew a little people then the ESL people, but I know them all by face, I don't necessarily know everybody's name, but I know everybody by face, and you know, greeting them, saying hello to them every morning, you know is a welcoming gesture. And I think it helps to set the tone of the day. And then all the paperwork that I do, whatever I do, that helps. So I'm providing some service to the group of people that need it, and that's what it's about, right?

[me: Yeah! Why do you think that they need your services?]

Well, first of all, to become acclimated to a country is very difficult. You know, I've been to Europe, I've been to France, and even though I can speak French, it's not the same French as the French speak, number one. Mine is Canadian French. [me: oh, ok] So you know it's like going from Mexico to Spain, the Spanish is not the same, or Mexico to Puerto Rico. [me: Were you born in Canada?] No, I am a, I was born here in the United States, but my family comes from Canada. [me: mhm] I am a second-generation American. So, the uh—what was I saying now—getting acclimated to a country is very difficult, it's not an easy job. And so they have a lot of things that they have to do—find a job—finding a job, being able to speak in English—most jobs, they have to be able to speak in English. It's just what it is, it is what it is, you know, you can't change that. And we know that culture, 90% of culture is based in the language of the people that speak it, and the country from which they come from. Cus every country has a different set of mores, a different set of cultural things, and, so, you know, it's not easy. And I admire the fact that they can take this time and do this. When I was working with the migrant farm-workers, many of the Haitians came here over, with the Mariel Boatlift, back in the 1980-81. Well they left family back in Haiti, it was incredible, so you know, I *know* there are needs that we provide—we don't provide all the needs—we don't meet all the needs, I should say—I shouldn't say provide—we don't meet all the needs, but we meet some of the needs, like ESL, the classes on Saturday. Writing in English, conversational English, public speaking for people who are learning English, those are all—and computer work, I have a couple of people who are here because their English is limited but I teach them computers because they need it for their job. You know, it's just like trying to meet *some* of the needs. Cus, there's no way any one agency can meet all of the needs. And there are lots of needs out there.

[Me: Do you consider your work to be inspired by your faith? Why or why not? And in what way, if you do consider it to be inspired by your faith?]

Yes. Because the adage is to live the gospel value. So, you know, in the gospel, a lawyer asks Jesus 'who is my neighbor,' and always, the neighbor is the person in need. So, I do live by that but also, Mathew 25. Do you know anything...? Mathew 25 is—provide a cup of water, if you

do this to the least of my brothers, you do it for me. That is what our rule is based on. So yes, definitely.

[Me: How do you personally approach your work at Jubilee House? Kind of what's your personal philosophy if you have one.]

Well always to be as helpful as you can. And every person is my neighbor, that walks through that door. Whether they live in the vicinity, or live in West Hartford, or East Hartford, every person is my neighbor. Also, every person is my brother and sister.

[Me: So do you know about other places in Hartford where the clients that come here could receive services?]

Well there's CREC, that has English classes. There the library, public library, downtown, also has English classes, also has I think a citizenship class. I can't speak for CCC, because at Capitol Community College, I don't know if they're going to be able to continue with that, because of the new regulations that are coming out. Because what they're doing is taking all the Pell money for all this remedial stuff, and when they're ready to take a class that has credits, they have no more money. So I think there's been some new regulations, and I don't know when they take place, but they're going to be doing *less* remedial stuff. So we might pick up more people here, cus we don't charge a whole lot, we charge everything on a sliding scale. And it is amazing to see people's tax returns, and how much—little—they earn. That is what flusters me: a family of 5 living on \$13,000 is like, sends me through the roof.

[Me: Me too, wow. So do you consider your approach here at Jubilee House to be different than that of other kind of similar locations?]

I think our approach is a little different. First of all, we all live the gospel value. And so, even though we don't speak it—you know, we don't talk about it, cus you know we're non, Jubilee House is non-denominational as far as what we do. But, who are, makes a difference. So, I'm not sure, I can't speak for them, I can't make a judgment, but I would think that we add something to the day, for the families of the individuals who come, that probably the Public Library wouldn't do. You know, big group, you're lost in the shuffle. Here, it's a one-on-one, and so everybody knows your name—reminds me of Cheers. And so everybody knows your name. I don't know everybody's name, but the groups do—they all know their names. I know some of them, if they've been here long enough. But I don't get to talk to them, so I don't really get to know their names, but I know their faces. And some of them, I pick up on the names. But you know, in the ESL classes, they get together, they know their names, they know their teachers' names, they know their names, and so there's a bonding that takes place. I'm not sure that they do that kind of thing at CREC, or at the Public Library, or even at CCC. It's more impersonal—that's what I guess is—it's impersonal, here's it's more personal.

[Me: Why do you think that might make a difference?]

We're small. We're small.

[Me: And so from the client's point of view, why might that kind of personal difference matter?]

They, for some of them, it is a big relief. Some of them have gone to like CREC or the Public Library, and then find that difficult because the class is so big that nobody really is meeting their needs. You know, so it's like hit or miss. The people who come here like to have the small group—one or two people with one tutor, or sometimes it's a one-on-one. Now the Saturday classes, that's different, there's groups, for the class, it's a whole different ballgame, but the same basic atmosphere and attitude does exist. And my classes are not *that* huge. If we get 10 per class, we're good. I would like to see the enrollment a little higher, but. We can't beat the bushes any more than we have. And you know, on Saturday, everybody says, well why is it on

Saturday, cus we've tried everything. We've done evenings, different evenings—you know, 'maybe a Monday night would be better'—we've done Wednesday night, that didn't do it. I mean, so, I don't know what the answer is. We've done mornings, on a Friday, cus that was the only day we didn't have ESL. It worked out for the first class, but the second class we had didn't work out. You know what I'm saying? It just...so Saturday is the best. First of all, we can teach, and have more of a variety of classes than we could on Friday. Cus on Friday, it's to find the people to teach—I mean, they are working someplace else. That was the difficult thing. We did provide one class and we had the tutor for that class. And he did fine the first semester, the second time around, class just petered out. It didn't have the same—again, different groups. It's like teaching. One group will respond very well to you, and the next year you get a different class, and they don't respond in the same way. So it's the personality of the group as well as the personality of the individuals in the group that makes a difference. [Me: That makes sense.] So, Saturday morning may not be the best, but it's the best we can do. Yet we do get people who come—we have people who come here, let me see, there are three or four of them that have been here for—well, since probably 2006. [Me: Wow.] They've taken writing over and over and over again. Cus it's not easy! They're now doing conversational English, and some of them have moved up to Public Speaking, because writing on paper is one thing, but speaking is another. And the other thing about non-English speaking people is that when their comfort zone is to speak in their own language. And I know that for a fact. I went to—I've been to France on several occasions, and when it came to lunch, we always found a table with all the English speakers. Only because it was so difficult to carry on a conversation with non-English speaking people. Not that we excluded anybody, but we would always find two or three of us together. A little moral support! Even though I could speak French, but it's not the same French as Parisian French. The vocabulary is different. And it's a living language, you know it keeps changing just like American English keeps changing. You know, so.

[Me: We just touched a little on this with the class sizes and stuff, but, how do clients find out about Jubilee House?]

Well, most of it is about word of mouth. I know that in the last summer, there are some, um, some announcements are put in church bulletins, for like ESL. Most of the time, for ESL, we don't need to put out anything for ESL, cus they come out of the word-work. And it's from one to another. You know, one family member to another family member. We sort of get, like, what can I say...all of a sudden, you get several people who come looking for English classes, and they're all new arrivals. They've been here maybe a couple weeks, or maybe a couple months, but they are looking for English. Now, Saturday classes, we do flyers. We have a huge mailing list. We do flyers for all the individuals who ever come. And we do flyers to other agencies, and we announcements in church bulletins. We do Channel 5 or Hartford Public Announcements on Channel 5. Of course, the students also provide some...

["You need another pen?" Me: "I got one thank you though. My trusty pen is running out!" "Ok."]

Now, Esperanza, gets its word out. But ESL doesn't need to.

[Me: I'm not sure if you would've...I think you would've come across this. Do students ever mention to you similar agencies that they've interacted with in the past? What have you kind of heard about their experiences in comparison to coming here?]

Well, like I said, some have been to CREC. Some have been to the Public Library. Some have been to CCC. And some of their experiences have not always been on the positive. Only because groups are too big. And they get lost in the shuffle. Because of their handicap. I mean, they are

handicapped—not physically, but in language and communication. So that’s always been, that’s been my experience listening to some of the people speak. Some people, well you know they say...well, I hate to put down an agency, but the groups are so big that some students are ignored if they don’t make a whole lot of noise. You know how it is. [Me: Right, yeah.] The empty wagon makes the most noise! So, the students who are up front and much more vocal and assertive will get the attention of the teacher. The shy person who has less English will sit probably in the back and not make any noise, so they get ignored. So, it all depends on the person’s personality, for how they manage in the bigger groups.

[Me: So what about the element of faith, the Catholic faith, at Jubilee House in terms of how the client perceives that? Do you think it’s something that they are aware of? Do you think it matters to them, or, maybe they don’t even know about it, or?]

Well, that’s a mixed question. And the answer is mixed. I could say all of the above. Some do, some do know that this is a—well, most of the teachers—most of the staff—I can’t say all of the teachers—most of the staff are Catholic, and I would venture to guess that many of the tutors are also Catholic, because they came from church bulletin announcements. Not all of them, but I would venture to say. They’re all Christian, they all live by the same Gospel. And probably some of the students probably haven’t got a clue, because they come from a whole different faith—a part of the life that Christianity is not at the top, but probably at the bottom. So it’s mixed, I would say, mixed. You know, those who do, it’s fine. It probably does make a difference to some. It probably doesn’t make any difference to the others, but they find the atmosphere good. They’re very grateful, I have to tell you that many of them will say goodbye and thank you.

Every day! That they come. So, I don’t know, I’m sure that some of them our Christian attitude does prevail. I know that we’ve had several people who have come here. Now, there’s basically just two or three of us in the building, and they’ve walked in and said, ‘what a peaceful place!’

[Me: I definitely get that feeling here.] I definitely think that many of the students find this place safe, peaceful, and welcoming. I would—but I would, to say that our faith—I think our faith shows, in some ways. How, I can’t make it real—I can’t make it so that you can touch it—but I think it’s there. It pervades us, it pervades who we are. And so it does spill out into the atmosphere, I would think. But again, how the students respond—kinda hard to tell. Cus like I said, some may know about sisters, cus in Third World Countries, not everybody has an encounter with women religious of any kind, so, they may not even know, but they know there’s something here. And then there are those that are not of Christian religion, but, you know, like, we had a wedding here. [Me: I heard!] And one was a gentleman—the groom was from, I want to say, Mexico, but maybe not. It might have been Peru. And she was from Burma. Or, a tribe out of Burma, somewhere. So, talk about the continuum. But being the bride, she brought in all her religious traditions, which were very different than any Christian tradition. And yet, we had a minister who came, Christian, who did the ceremony. So, you know, it was like, very mixed.

[Me: Right, I can imagine.] Right, she was dressed in her tribal outfit, what they would wear in their tribal rituals—ceremonies—and he wore a suit and tie. I mean, you know. How they met—they met here—but how they communicated, I don’t know, neither one of them speak the others’ language, and yet, they managed. So, you know, that’s just one little proof that I don’t know, that anything can happen. So, I think it shows. I could be naïve about that, but I don’t think so.

[Me: So what about your Latino clients that come here. I know you said that many of them are Spanish-speaking.]

I would say the majority of them are Spanish-speaking. They come from Colombia, Peru, Puerto Rico. There’s been a few from Brazil, but they don’t speak Spanish, basically, they speak

Portuguese. So, we've had a few from some of the Central American countries, but not too many. And a few from Mexico. But not that many. Even though there's a large—my understanding is—that there's a large Mexican group in and around Park St. From what used to be Frog Hollow. I worked there. That's where I started to teach. [Me: Oh, ok.] That's where I began way back. [Me: At a school?] Yes, St.—what is now the María Sánchez School. [Me: Yeah, I know where that is!] On Babcock St. Alright, that used to be called St. Anne's. I taught there. [Me: Oh wow, ok.] My first year of teaching. I taught there four years. Second grade, first grade, fourth grade. So, then, shortly after that, if we had had a different pastor, I don't know, but maybe, the school would have survived. Because the pastor was there for some—he was like in his 90s when he left. We had a large Portuguese contingency, Our Lady of Fatima was on the corner of Russ and Babcock—they have a beautiful little church. And he wouldn't allow anyone in the school who did not have *some* French in their background. You know, they didn't have to be 100% French, but they had to be *some*. And then you had, we, even in the early 60s, we saw a lot of Puerto Rican people arriving. And again, if we hadn't had some of that, then I think the school might have survived. But, he didn't. So, about five years after I left, the school closed, because of a lack of enrollment. That made a difference. You know, we had full classes. I mean, my first year, I was there from '63-'67, I had 45 kids. That's a lot of kids. [Me: Yeah! That's quite a few.] In second grade, when I taught first grade, I had 45 again. But then the enrollment started dropping down, and dropping down. And then, like I said, Puerto Ricans were moving in, and we had a large group of Portuguese from Portugal, not necessarily from Brazil, a large group of students from Portugal, and he wouldn't let them in, so you know, history has it's way of... But I think that that would have had a different turnout, had he opened the school to both. [Me: Gotcha, gotcha.] Anyway, or maybe money would have closed it eventually, but who's to say? I mean, St. Augustine's, St. Cyril and Methodius, that's still in operation. They're the only two Catholic elementary schools in the city. [Me: Oh really? Ok.] And when I was here back in the 60s, there was a Catholic school on every corner. You know, there was St. Anne's, there was Immaculate, and then there was St. Peter's. Our Lady of Sorrows, that was just within a mile, mile and a half of each other. And there's not one of those still standing. I mean, the schools are there, the buildings are there, but there's no school.

[Me: So, in terms of being a female service provider, how might your identity as a female affect the way in which you approach your work, especially as faith is part of your work?]

I am white, and am educated. That's all I want to say about that. Um, it does open a few doors, more than a non-white woman, or an un-educated woman.

[Me: Alright, well, we only have like 15 minutes left, so maybe if we could talk about Esperanza a little bit more. If you don't mind just explaining to me the basics—what it is, what its objectives are.]

Okay, Esperanza was initially, from the very beginning, initially, for women only. Women who needed—what wanted to go to college. Where English was not their first language. Not that we excluded anybody. But, it was to meet the needs of women in the city of Hartford who wanted to educate themselves and couldn't get to base one. Couldn't even get to bat. For whatever reasons. That was the initial, it was really, initially, that was what we did. We formed a partnership with Capitol Community College. And when the, most of, we had 25 the first semester, and we had only one class. Then we went all day. We had a morning class, and an afternoon class. And we went for 15 weeks, like a normal semester at college. So, we went from September to December. [Me: And when did that begin?] In 2002. January 2002. They had to take their placement test, so that I could place them. The group was like split in half. There was all those who needed

remedial, then those who met the criteria for English 101. [Me: At Capitol Community College?] So after they took their Accu-placer, those who met English 101, the criteria to get into a credit class, they went to—in the morning, then went to community college in the morning, took the class on Saturday morning. From Community. At lunch time, they'd come back, we'd serve them some lunch. The group that did remedial work, they had a different class, they'd do it here. And then in the afternoon, we had all of them together for another class. But, the professor was hired by Community College, and was supposed to be on a college level. But, those who were remedial, were still remedial. Well, it was difficult, we did that for two semesters. Second semester, they decided to teach Psychology 101. Well, they could barely read the vocabulary in a psychology book. They couldn't understand all of the terms. I mean, it would be different if it was in their own natural language, but this was in English, and many of them, their vocabulary in English had not been developed. They had some knowledge of English, but their English wasn't developed. So, they found the classes very difficult. So, very few actually passed. So, by the third semester, we decided something different. Oh, we did many things. But, today, the basic tenants are: we're offering these classes for people to either get ready to go to college, and/or to get a job promotion, or get a better paying job. So their work skills would help them to get a better job. And we don't limit it to women. It's both men and women. But we have very few men, mostly women. But there are a few men. But that's basically what we're about. We're about helping people who want to go to college with this remedial—cus it is remedial English. And, some people want to go to college and get a better paying job. 99 percent of it! But also to help them in their job skills, work skills, work-related skills. Also if they don't know how to read and write in English, and not translate from Spanish into English. You know when you read their papers, you know that this was—they don't have...my experience...and I experience this myself, so I know what they're experiencing...when I go, I don't speak French around here. So when I go to France, I have to struggle to find my words in French. So, I think in English. And then translate it into French. So the Spanish do the same. They—those who have limited English. They think in Spanish, and then they translate it into English. But when it comes down on paper, it's a sentence written in probably the way the Spanish grammar would call for it. Rather than the English grammar. You follow what I'm saying? And you can tell that they do that because when you read the essays, this all was translated from the Spanish, so it doesn't flow. [Me: I actually learned Spanish, so I experienced the exact same thing.] So, you teach in English, you think about what you want to say in English, *then* you translate it into the language that you want to learn.

[Me: That makes sense. Could you tell me about the demographics of your current students—like, where do they live? What are kind of their ages, occupations, stuff like that?]

Occupations, I don't know. Several of them work at Wiremold, someplace in Bloomfield I think. Cus I've heard that—Wiremold—several times. Some that work in restaurants. Some that do housekeeping. Among the women, many of them do housekeeping. We have one gentleman who works for a Spanish newspaper. I think he works in the advertising department. Mostly women. Peppered with some men. For example, I had seven people in my computers class. I only have nine computers. So, I had seven, and two dropped out. A man and a woman. And of the class, I had two men and a woman. So, it's about the same ratio. Let's see...in English, in the public speaking...there are two men, and all the rest are women, and there are seven in the class. So, two men, five women. In the conversational English, I think there were all women. I don't think there were any...oh no, Walter was there, there was at least one man. And, in English, writing, five people, there were all women, and now there are only three.

[Me: Why do you think that is, that there are sometimes more women?]

Well Saturday morning is easier for them then during the week. And the men...in some families, the man stays home to babysit. Finding a babysitter is a major issue. When we first, when we first started, we used to provide monies to hire a babysitter. And we paid five dollars an hour for a babysitter. If they had not other person—you know, if they couldn't find any...cus daycares don't open on Saturdays. So someone in the family, they would pay, either the mother-in-law—the grandmother—or an uncle, or an aunt, to babysit. And we provided monies for that. But there was all kinds of paperwork to go with that. And we just didn't keep the funding. But then that source of funding dried up, so we had to stop that. And I think that had a lot to do with the enrollment. Having young children and having a babysitter on a Saturday morning is difficult because classes go from nine to twelve, but the babysitter has to be there before nine, because Mom has to leave to get here. So, you know what I'm saying? On a Saturday morning, a babysitter from 8-12 or 8-1, by the time you get home. So, when we were providing some monies, we had a better enrollment. And when the monies dried up and we didn't provide it anymore, our enrollment dropped.

[Me: How does a student become part of Esperanza? Do they have to apply, or?]

Yes, there's a registration process. And then they have to take a pre-survey, and then at the end of the semester there's a post-survey. And then they have been here for at least 5 classes out of the 8, and they have taken both the pre- and post-survey, they get a certificate of participation.

[Me: Okay. And you said they pay on a sliding scale? What is that like?]

It's the same as food stamps. You know, it's a federally- and federal sliding scale. The smallest they pay is 50. The largest they could pay, depending on earnings—it's earnings and number in the family, it's two things together. And usually, we try to take that from their 10-40s when they come to register. And, to say that, I would say that 98% of our students come from the City of Hartford. Mostly from zip code 06114 or zip code 06106. We haven't gotten as many lately from the North End. We used to get several people from the North End, but we haven't gotten many in a while. I mean, it's rare that we get 112, and 120—06120 and 06112. Most of them, I'd say, come from 114 and 106. But there are a few, we have a few from East Hartford, a couple from East Hartford, and I think we have one from Rocky Hill. [Me: 06114, is that Barry Square area, right around here?] I know that you guys are, Trinity is, 106. But, all the other streets are 114—like Campfield Avenue, Maple Avenue, Maple Avenue, Campfield, Wethersfield, is all 114. And all the streets—all the perpendicular streets are the same.

[Me: So, how do students typically get here? To Esperanza?]

Some have their own vehicles. Some come by bus. Some walk. If they live in the vicinity, some walk. It's amazing the number of people who have their own vehicle, because a vehicle—if you don't have a vehicle, depending on where your job is, the buses aren't going to help you.

[Me: Well, I don't want to run over our promised hour. Is there anything else you'd like to add about Esperanza? I did have some other questions, but I don't want to take up too much time...so maybe if there's one or two more things that you think would be helpful for be to know about the program, I would love to hear them.]

Well, I don't really know, I could say a lot about the program. I don't want to...beat the bushes...I think the people who come here benefit from the classes. And we have a lot of repeaters who will come. It's very rare that someone will come only for one semester of 8 weeks. Usually, someone will come for 2 or 3, and then they will come back in the following Fall, but it's rare that we will have someone who only comes for the one semester. Because everything is on-going. Everything flows into the next—you know I did Introduction to Windows 7, but next

semester in January, I'll be doing Introduction to Microsoft Word. Which is a really continuation of what they've learned. And then, in the Spring, I'll do an in-depth of Microsoft Word. But it's a continuation, so they all want to come. So I usually end up with the same students for three semesters. [Me: And those semester are...] Eight weeks. They are all in modules of eight weeks. We call them—I call them semesters—somebody else calls them modules, but it all comes down to the same things. The other thing is that you have a break in the middle of the semester, you will have a drop-off in the attendance. For example, in the Spring semester, we have Easter, so that Saturday, Easter Saturday, we have Easter Vigil, we don't have a class on that Saturday, because many of us are gone. So, we don't have class, it's on break. So, come the following Saturday, we have less people who come. Even though we have people who come, and we talk it up, and you know--'this is just an interlude! We're gonna be here!' And we make a lot of noise about it, we still have a number of people who stop coming for whatever reason. [Me: What might the reasons be?] Some of them might get a job—that's a big thing—even in ESL, there's some drop-offs, cus if they get a job, a day job, they gotta stop coming. Or, they, a family member is sick, or any number of reasons. There's no general reason, everyone has their own particular one. Like if they have a child that's sick, they'll stay home. If they have a member in their family that is sick, they'll stay home. And they have to go away. Like, we had someone who registered and dropped out before classes even started. Because she had to go out of the country to be with a family member. As far as ages are concerned, 20s, to at least 75. I've had a few people do computers who are in their 70s. [Me: Wow!] But I would the general is between their 20s and 60s, although I don't really pay attention, it's not something we ask. [Me: Well I learned so much, I really appreciate it. I had a good time talking with you.] Okay, well, anytime....

B. Focus Group Transcription: English for Speakers of Other Languages Program, Jubilee House**Conducted by Sarah Kacevich on 6 November 2012 at Jubilee House**Participants (Pseudonyms):

Martín

Luz

Fatima

Diana

Alejandra

Marisol

Ishmael

Magdalena

Olga

Ignacio

[I read the oral consent form in Spanish, then repeat it in English. All are Spanish-speakers except for Ishmael, a refugee from Somalia, who preferred English. All signaled their agreement with the oral consent by saying their names, one by one.]

[For most questions, I read the question in English, then repeat it in Spanish.]

Start of questions:

Me: Alright, well let's start talking. I got all of these questions, so I'm hoping that we can kind of start with just some basic information to get to know each other a little bit more. And then we will move onto more specific questions. *Repeats in Spanish.* Please, one at a time, describe to me, *no tiene que ser todos estos datos, pero algunos. ¿Dónde naciste, hace cuánto llegaste a los Estados Unidos, hace cuanto llegaste a Hartford, vivías en otro lugar estadounidense antes que venir acá, vives en Hartford, en qué barrio, o vives afuera de Hartford? Tienes familia acá, o dónde vive el resto de tu familia—acá en Hartford, en otro lado estadounidense, o en el país dónde naciste? Uno por uno por favor, algunas cosas. Son muchos!*

Ignacio: My name is Ignacio Chávez, I was born in Mexico City, especially [inaudible]. I came in this country at least 20 years ago. And when I had like 17, 18 years old, and I'm live in California for four years, after that I move to Connecticut. And I live in Hartford for 2 years and after that move to Wethersfield. Since that time I live in Wethersfield at leave 10 years ago, 9 years ago. I have 4 childrens, my wife, she's Luz [points to Luz at table]. And my hobby is watch TV, sports, and football.

Me: Cool, thank you.

Olga: My name is Olga, I was born in Peru. I live here in Hartford for 10 years ago. I married, two, three children, two married, three grandson. I job temporary [?]. My hobby is listen to music.

Me: *Listo.* Okay, thank you.

Marisol Gonzalez: Okay, Marisol Gonzalez. I was born in Cali, Colombia. I have been in this country for 9 years. The first place I was was Florida, after that I came to New York. I have six siblings here, one boy, the others are sisters. Now I live in Newington.

Me: *Gracias*. Okay, Ishmael, the questions were: where were you born, how long ago did you come to the United States, how long have you been in Hartford, and did you live anywhere else in the United States before you came to Hartford, and do you have family here, where do they live?

Ishmael: Okay. My name is Ishmael Barry. I born in West Africa, Sierra Leone. We were have a war in Sierra Leone. Then we ran from the war, came to Guinea [?] country. I stay there three years, and my mom was here, she the one who fight for me as a refugee. I came to this country. And since I entered into this country, United States, I always, I live in Hartford, Connecticut. Never move to another state. I love Connecticut. First, when I came here, 2003, I live on Wethersfield Avenue, I think, I forget the number, 283, I think. Then I move, I don't live there for long, I move there with my brothers. We moved to 101 Maple Avenue, we stay there til 2010. I brought my family from Africa, my wife and my kids. I brought five kids. I move from 101 Maple Avenue to 294 Maple Avenue, same street. So, I still living there with my family for now. Yes, and I'm coming to school here, Jubilee House. Because I really want to understand English better. Yeah. Thank you.

Martín: My name is Martín Vasquéz. I'm born in Puerto Rico. I move to the United States in '94. Since today, I'm the only one, you know, in Hartford. I don't got no family around here. Like drawing, like listen music, carving wood. Since I move to United States, I start to get classes at Jubilee House and improve my English. And, being a different person. And I like.

Me: Thank you.

Marisol: My name is Marisol. I from the Dominican Republic. I am, I got into the United States in 1988. I came from New Jersey. So, I live in New Jersey for about 7 year, and later to move to Hartford, Connecticut. I am married, I have two children. Now, I study in Jubilee House. My hobby is dancing. My two children, they study. My daughter, she study in high school. My son, he study in community college in Manchester.

Me: Thank you.

Aliana: I was from Colombia. I live in Hartford, Connecticut, for fourteen years, with my husband and my kids. My mom and my sister live in New York. I am in Jubilee House for two years and a half. That's it.

Me: Thank you.

Diana: My name's Diana, I am from Honduras. I have been here for six years. And I live with my brothers, and I always live in Hartford, too. And I come here around three years ago.

Fatima: My name is Fatima. And I from, too, Dominican Republic. I move from Dominican Republic to Hartford 11 years ago. I have two daughters. My both daughter is teacher. She teach a class. I live in Hartford, all the time. I have three sister, and one brother. They live USA, too. I work as hairdresser.

Me: Thank you.

Luz: My name is Luz. I was born in Mexico. I live here in Connecticut for 11 years ago, with my husband and my children. *Soy la esposa de él.* [I am his wife.]

Me: Okay, thank you. Now just one more question, kind of basic. If we can go around and say if you work, and if you do work, what your job is. Some of you might have already mentioned it.

Ignacio: I work in a restaurant for 14 years. Before that, I work in the field. Pick apples, peaches, tomatoes. Before that, I work in construction, when I quit from the high school. When I had 14 years old, I quit from the high school, in my town, when I come to this country. And I never studied again, since I come there. Jubilee House, that's study.

Olga: I job temporary in the apartment. When I coming to United States in 2001, I job for 8 years in laundry. And no more job in the laundry because accident in the elbow. Now, only temporary. I job in different jobs. Maybe cleaning. *¿Cómo se dice?* [How do you say?] Temporary.

Me: Thank you.

Marisol G: When I start to work, I clean houses. But now I have housekeeping. When I have good time, I do something like fix beds, sewing clothes. Carpets.

Me: Thank you.

Ishmael: In the beginning when I came here in 2003, I do construction for two year, here for 2 months in [inaudible] company. But, I don't used to the cold, and quit over there. I find other job in Dunkin Donuts, where the in the factory. Where they bake in Hartford, CPN [?]. I work for them for seven years. At that time my family was Africa. Again, they a responsibility, supporting them, supporting myself here and support them over there. I see, I was do two job to able to support myself. Then I apply for this place, and Home Good. White house [?]. I work there for 7 months. At that time, in 2007, I was, I really want to go visit my family, see them. Then I work there for 7 months, I get a little money with to buy a ticket, visit my family. I went there for visit in 2007. Then I come back. And I still continue working in CPN, Dunkin Donut. I still continue working til 2010. Then when my family get in to come here, but you know, some of those kids, I adopted from the war. Because they don't have parents. So I was adopting them still with my wife, supporting them. Well, when they come for interview, the person who interview them wants it—the kids are too many, they're too much with my wife, so you got little bit for all those kids. They want stop the kids. I request from my job places. At 2010, I was working in Whole Foods Market and CPN, I request from them to go to find my family in Africa, where they're doing interview. So they give me, okay, I went there. When I went there I have them explain myself to the Embassy that give the okay to come. By the time I come back, so, you know, I used

to work in Whole Foods Market, closing. I open Dunkin Donuts. By when I working at Dunkin Donuts, CPN told me I need to close that. But I not able to close three jobs at the same time, so I close at Whole Foods, so that's it, they let me off. So I say, okay, that's it, I'll stay with Whole Food. But I can't request to Whole Food recently to let them change my schedule. Okay, no, they say, okay, they let me off. I still stay in Whole Food. So still, for now, I work in Whole Food. I taking care of my family.

Me: Thank you.

Martín: I'm in carpentry. Now, I'm unemployed. My passion is drawing and work with wood.

Me: Thank you.

Marisol: Years ago, I was working different jobs. But, in this moment, I was, I'm job in One Mini Market for eleven years, cleaning office. I that moment, I'm unemployed.

Me: Thank you.

Aliana: I have three different jobs in this country. My first job, I bus in a restaurant. And second, I work in a factory products. And now I'm working in a supermarket as a cashier. That's all. Good work.

Diana: I began a job in a barber shop for two years. Now for 10 year, I do the hairdresser in my house under table.

Fatima: I don't work.

Luz: I take care of my four childrens. [All: *Es un trabajo, mucho trabajo*. It's a job, it's a lot of work.]

Me: Thank you all, no? Alright so now we're going to talk about Jubilee House, and the class here. So I'll ask maybe like 6 questions, there are 5-6 questions for this topic, and not everybody has to respond to them. We won't go around in a circle anymore, but rather if maybe a couple people want to answer each one if it particularly interests you, or you think you have something good to say. So, the first question is: how long ago did you begin coming to Jubilee House, and why did you want to come? [Repeat in Spanish.]

X: I have about one month and half in Jubilee House. I coming here because somebody tell me, one friend, she is here, she is Fatima. And she tell me how is Jubilee House. I like it, I like it here because everyone have one teacher for one people, you know? In the other place, you have for, about twenty or fifteen student, one teacher. When, so the teacher can't help all the students. So here, it's nice. The teacher are—I don't know say—*son con disposición. Mucha disposición*. [They have the right disposition.] This place is nice.

Me: Thank you.

Ignacio: I came to Jubilee House because one of my friends came before over here. And teach me come here, how teaching over here. And I'm interested in coming because of my first daughter. She's ten years old, and sometimes she comes back with the homework, and I can't help her. So that's why I am interested in to learn English, and teach about homework, and help her. And because she is interested in for a student like a doctor, or lawyer. So that's why I'm focus to learn English hard. And this place so nice, because we have one teacher, like she explained. And we focus, and the teacher focus on us, about try to learn, and explain very well.

Me: Maybe one more person.

Ishmael: Yeah. Alright. I like Jubilee House because I'm getting a lot of help here. Since I came to America, in 2003, I, my mom introduce me to Sister Anne. At that time, she was at Trust House, I forget that street name. The register gave me somebody who will tutor me. And this place is very nice because it's one-to-one. And I so much like that because I never go to school in my country, then they help me a lot here. Now, I know how to read most of the letters and I'm doing math. Then, I'm doing English as Second Language. I'm really happy for the teachers. They're doing good job for me.

Me: Thank you. So, the next question is, how did you learn about Jubilee House? *Cómo supiste de Jubilee House?* So maybe if a few people can say quickly, you know, how they found out. [I Look at Ignacio.] You said somebody told you?

Ignacio: Yeah, somebody across the street. That's when.

X: When 2003, when I go in the job, coming in here, working in here, in this street, I let me see at the house. I look at the sign. I think Jubilee House, for me, the place is nice. The teacher is nice, very patient. Is *voluntario* [volunteer]. That person's good. Different student, different cultures, is nice. It's *personalizado* [personalized], one teacher, one student. And I love Jubilee House. Yeah.

Me: Thank you.

X: I know about this place *por* [from] my sister. Because [inaudible]. She told me, she teach me, she told me this place. Now I coming and this place, Jubilee House, three days a week. Sometimes on weekend, Saturday, cus they teach a something more about writing and read. [Me: Esperanza?] Yeah. Esperanza, the same thing. I want to learn more about that thing. Want to speak more slowly.

Me: Thank you. I got you...How did you find out about Jubilee House? [Look at Martín]

Martín: I find it cus in the place where I live, it's a group home. The language is English, you know, for talk, and they send me to Jubilee House for improve my English. And improve, and write, and talk English.

Me: Thank you.

X: Somebody, one friend, work in...sorry I'm confused...somebody study in CREC program, tell me about this place, but I never take the idea, but my friend Fatima, she, the second time, tell me about this place, I think "Okay, maybe I try now." So, I say thank you Fatima, because here is nice place.

Me: So were you doing the CREC program already, or you had just heard of it?

X: No, somebody take the CREC program.

X: A friend told me and I came to speak to Sister Anne, and I register and begin the classes.

Aliana: I know here about my friend. She study here too. My reason for come here because I want to learn English because I want to get another job.

Me: Thank you.

X: My customer told me about Jubilee House.

X: I learn about Jubilee House because of interest in speak English for my children. Sometimes, they give me a work or reading. And I feel upset, I say, I can't read it. So, that's the reason I come to Jubilee House, for learn English, for talk and read English.

Me: Okay, so some of you already told me how you feel about the English classes, what you like about it. But, maybe just a couple more people could say what they think about the English class here. *¿Qué te parece la clase de ingles?*

X: Interesting. The class here is everything interesting because Jubilee House has different teacher. One help, and one, you know, maybe the other teacher help you in the other way. So, I like it, I like it.

X: The good thing is the patience they have for every students. It takes a lot to come here with no paying, no salary. Every day, to come here, very punctual. And sometimes the students, the students, sometimes, they are absent. And then, they love here, to teach us, to share, to have patience, to teach everyone hopeful, to be...for me, interesting.

Ishmael: Jubilee House is a very good place. I get interest here because I come to America, I don't speak no English, I don't read. But here, I have help. I got my driving license, and they help me, I become a citizen. And today, I got my driver's license. I able to drive from my house to work. I know how to read the signs. And that's because I love Jubilee House. It's very good help place.

Ignacio: I think Jubilee House is interesting because they proud to help us to learn their language to this country. And we interested in learning about all the English class. And they teach us to focus and us to learning their writing, so I think this is very nice place. And all the teachers, they have interview with us, and they explain that if you say the wrong words. It's very nice place.

Me: So, have any of you heard about other places in Hartford where you can get English classes? And if you have been there, what was your experience like in comparison to your experience at Jubilee House? Or maybe if you never went to the other place, but you just heard about it, what were your perceptions?

X: *Es raro* [it's strange] because I remember when I go to the "adult program" in the Washington. And so it's here, I had a pick. [Me: What was it called?] It's Adult Program. It's in Washington Street in Hartford. [Others: Program for Hartford Adult Education.] Over there, when the people goes to take a class over there, they put it together a student coming from high school, no complete the high school, the people no speak English, together. Here, it's different, because when the people...it's for study English... [Ignacio: You start zero and you go up] Uh-huh...you go for example, Book 1, Book 2. Over there, no, everybody together. Here, it's better.

X: I think that Jubilee House is the better place for English for adult. It's relaxed, everybody's nice. The people have the, *disposición*—how you say—[Martín: Disposition] for help the other person.

Ignacio: I think we have great time. [All laugh.]

X: When you tired for study English, you have the coffee time.

X: When the finish of the course, the party, everybody bring some food from his, their country. It's very nice. In May, and Christmas, Christmas time, it's very nice.

X: I love it when the [inaudible] of the class, and they have the party. The people in the front is some student. The front, speak in English. And I say, next time, we going to front.

Me: Anybody else have an experience to compare?

Martín: It's a different experience, cus they have different cultures to compare. They speak to each other like a human being. You say something wrong, nobody laugh. [All agree]. Definitely. Another thing is, everybody feel comfortable. The environment is a safe environment. And, the people are nice. All the staff, give it a better understanding if you don't know, they will take the time for explain you, til you understand what you're learning. You know, it's a different experience, not like other places. Like, everybody when you say something wrong, it's not they starting laughing. You know, sometimes, we know, we're adult, and sometimes we laugh together. I don't laugh about myself cus I'm being better. Or, I'm less than the other one. You know, it's a good place.

Me: What other places had you been to that gave you that feeling?

Martín: I never been in other places. I been in school when I was incarcerated, and that's things like this happen. Cus we got [inaudible], and when you say something wrong, they start to laugh in it, and it makes you uncomfortable. Here, that doesn't happen.

Me: Anybody else? Maybe one more person?

Ignacio: I think I have good experience here because since I quit the high school in my town. And I have for at least 25 years, I never tried to come back to the school. So now, I have good spirits, I am a good person, good friendships, nice teachers. It's a good spirit for me, so that's why I try to learn English very well, and I'm gonna try to get a better job than the one I have.

Me: Thank you, so I think we'll talk a little bit more about your experiences in Hartford and with other agencies. You know, as we call Jubilee House an agency. [*Repeat in Spanish.*] Can you talk to me please about your satisfaction of your daily needs. Do you feel like everything that you need, you have—why or why not? [*Repeat in Spanish*] And what are you missing, if you are missing something?

X: Necessities about what?

X: For live in Hartford, or for Jubilee House?

Me: Sorry, for life in Hartford. So like, your home, your health, your Fatima, having food for yourself and your family, your education, your job. Things like that. It can be anything.

X: For me. For me I personally am embarrassed because I no like talking. *Pero* [but], I think now is the moment, this year is the moment I need more talking. That, my for *experiencia* in here that learn English, for me, different experience. When coming in here, coming in nicest place, nothing English, only hello and goodbye. Now, it's better. For me, in here, I'm embarrassed, *pero*, for me, it's better, I grow. I know I grow because talking in the doctor, in appointment, in other job, I explain better.

Me: What do you attribute that change to? ...like, what would be the reason for that change?

X: That change? Now?

X: [translating] ¿Qué fue la razon para que se cambió?

X: Oh. My son. I need, my children, the school, nothing, understand only English. Other reason is because in the job, the program, the job not in English. Now, I remember, I think maybe, I go and in the job now, understand is better for this place. It's necessary learn English.

Me: Thank you.

Ambrahim: For me, about Hartford, and just like how I said, I said so much love for Connecticut. And like, for now, this present time, I know for now, I having a lot of struggling. My, with my future at this time, because, you know, I got a lot of family, and it's me alone working for now. My wife want to work but you know, she's home and taking care of the kids. And it's me alone running alone for their appointment, my own appointment, and we need a lot of stuff in the house. No matter how I try, it's hard, but I'm getting very good people from this, good help you need, talking care of us. All my friends do that, in this building they know about me. And the teachers know that everybody helping a lot, what they can. But Hartford is very good for me,

because it's, I came here, I have no problem. My goal, I'm getting it little by little. Education, and have job. I feel so good.

Me: Thank you.

X: For me, in Hartford, maybe the problem is the education for the kids is not the best. [*Others indicate agreement*] The education in the other towns is better than Hartford. And I need to improve the education for the kids—for our kids, because the in Hartford, I feel in Hartford, many Latin...Latinos...immigrants...it's not as good for us.

Me: Why do you think it's not as good for Latinos and immigrants compared to other people?

X: Maybe because we are minority. And the *politica*, the government, is not interested in the minority. They think we have, we don't need, good education for our kids. Because we are "others," but maybe they think the kids only need the basics. But no, a good education.

Me: Thank you. So, let's say if for example, you feel like one of your needs is not satisfied, where do you go to get help? Or who helps you? [*Repeat in Spanish.*]

Various: En Jubilee House? In Hartford?

Me: In general.

Aliana: I think church.

X: The church.

X: *La iglesia*. [The church]

Me: Which church do you go to?

Aliana: I think that St. Augustine's church, right?

X: *Es católica, no?* [It's Catholic, right?]

X: The Catholic Church have the good program for people who no insurance care. The Church *católica* have the *cómo se llama* [what's it called]...Malta House. It's this insurance program. The people, when sick, go to Malta House. Malta House help with the *examen* [exam].

Various: Médico [doctor]...medical.

Me: What else?

X: For women, it's...Malta House help for mammogram free. And *examen* for woman free. It's good help, the people.

Me: Thank you. So, you said the church, *¿qué iglesia asistes?* [Which church do you go to?]

Aliana: Sometimes they help to write the paper, they have the food. Clothes.

Various: St. Augustine's. Sacred Heart. *Sacrada Corazón*. St. Joseph.

Me: Thank you. So, for those of you that mentioned church, getting help there, do you also go to Mass there? Or, is it both that you know you can get help there, and you also go to Mass? Or only that you would go to help there, but maybe you don't go to Mass?

X: Mass.

Martín: Mass. I go to Mass in *Nueva Dimensión*, New Dimension in Washington St. They help, too. It's Protestant.

Me: So like the church service. Or if not the church, some other house of worship, for some other religion.

Ishmael: Well the help, where I used to get helped, number one from here, Jubilee House. And I know one place, they called Gift of Love, it's in another town. I used to go there and they help me for clothes, and for stuff, and food. And because I'm a Muslim, that mosque where I go to, to help me for me and my kids, and bags, school bags, and pencils.

Me: Thank you. What about your friends, and your family, and your neighbors? Do they help you get things that you need? Or what is that relationship like?

Ignacio: Me, I have something. Praise for Hartford Hospital. Because, we have a trouble with one of my family. So, he help me when he's very, he got sick. So, the Medicare helped me for about five years. When my son had treatment for doctor stuff.

Me: Thank you. So, what about the services that the government in the U.S. or in the City of Hartford offers to you? What do you think about them? [*Repeat in Hartford*]

Martín: To me, the City of Hartford, has many programs. Like a methadone program. [Me: Like a what?] Methadone. Transportation: bus pass monthly.

X: They have the program, but *la gente* [the people] no know that.

Martín: Latino Services, they have the service, they help me too.

Me: Latino Community Services?

Martín: Mmhm, in Broad St. Broad and Park. [Me: Yeah, I've seen it.] I participate in the groups, in things over there, also.

Me: So...

Martín: [inaudible]

Me: Oh, sorry, keep going.

Various: *Qué le siga...* [keep going]. ...oh, no *ya terminaste* [you already finished].

Me: Sorry! My bad.

Ishmael: For me, the government as helped me for my kids. For get medicals, and we get food stamp, for food. And that's help me so much, a lot. They got one program here, CFT [?], that, yes, that used to help me in wintertime for gas. They give me gas assistance. CFT. [Others look at each other, indicating desire to get that themselves.] The medical, too, is very important for me and my family.

X: Yes, very important.

Me: So, Fatima, why do you think that people don't know about the services?

Fatima: Well, maybe you have the *necesidad*? [Me: Necessity.]...*no, más fácil en Español...a veces uno tiene una necesidad, no sabe dónde hay muchas programas para ayudar...y uno no conoce los lugares.* [No, it's easier in Spanish...sometimes, you have a need, you don't know where they are many programs to help...you don't know the places.]

X: *Hay que usar español!* [We have to speak in Spanish!]

Me: *¿Qué sería una manera para que aprendan la gente de lo que hay para ayudarles?* [What would be a way so that people learn what there is to help them?]

Various. *Comercio. Televisión. Publicidad.* [Comercial. Televison. Advertisement.]

X: *Todo el mundo ve television. Pone en la television, en el channel local, pone necesidades...* "si usted tiene esta necesidad, ir a aquel sitio, ir a nuestro sitio, la localización." [Everybody watches television. Put it on television, on the local channel, put necessities..."if you have a need, go to this place, to our place, the location."]

X: *Y las escuelas también.*

X: *Y las escuelas.*

Me: Does anybody else have thoughts on why people might now know about services? Or, a recommendation for how they could learn about services?

Martín: If you're looking for help, you can find it. If you interested in get some help, you find it. But, if you wanna lay down, watch TV, you know, sit in your chair, no put in effort. [Ignacio: No work.] You, what you can get, you know, choices, opportunities. They serve you.

Me: Okay, thank you. So, not too much longer, cus I promised it would only be an hour. So just a little bit more about Fatima and Jubilee House. How do you understand that vision and the mission of Jubilee House? [*Repeat in Spanish.*]

X: For me, it's the best place I've found because they know English I can't speak. I love it here.

X: For me, the key word is *help* the people. That's the main thing. They used to the culture, the language, it's good that everyone knows who can help them.

Me: Thank you. So, do you have, do you recognize an element of Catholic Fatima in Jubilee House? Could you describe it to me? [*Repeat in Spanish.*]

Various: [point to the stained-glass windows of the room.]

Martín: ¿*Qué?* [What?]

Me: [Repeat question in Spanish.]

Ignacio: Can you explain in English for him please? [Refers to Ishmael.]

Me: Do you have an understanding of an understanding of Catholic Fatima in Jubilee House? Can you describe it to me? If you do have a recognition of it.

X: Only that [points to windows]. Because they no talk about religion, nothing about that. [Martín: They don't talk about that.] Only the environment.

Martín: The environment, you know that they are sisters. That, you know, the Catholic Fatima.

X: You know Jubilee House Catholic.

Martín: See pictures, see crosses.

Ignacio: I think it's Catholic, but they live free. Totally free with us about what can I...Free, we can have the decision about...

X: You know the teachers *son* [are] Sisters. *Es, no es, la person común.* [She's not a common person.] A common person. *Una persona común. Y, maybe, cuando una persona tiene problema...yo digo todo en espaõl más fácil...osea, te llegas acá, y...tienen, osea, tienen esta facilidad de ser católicas y ser hermanas, al servicio, y tiene un apoyo, gratis.* [And maybe, when a person has a problem...I'll say everything in Spanish, as it's easier...that is to say, you come here and, they have...that is to say...they have this ease of being Catholic, and being Sisters, to service, and one has a service, for free.]

Ishmael: And here, the difference is, cus this building, the people who help you here, they don't have choice. They're equal, everybody. They don't choose your ideas. You're adults. You're black, you're white, you're Latino, your ideas...as long as you don't know nothing, you need

help, then, ready to help you. [Other indicate agreement.] They don't help only this one, they don't go by color, they don't go by....

Ignacio: No discrimination. [Others indicate agreement.]

Me: In other places in Hartford, or in your lives, do you think that there has been discrimination, compared to Jubilee House?

Martín: Maybe.

Ignacio: I think in... I don't know the name of the schools... last few years ago, I wanna try to introduce myself at that school, but they told me, when I had the interview, because I don't speak English, so they told me, "you need to speak English a little bit so that when you come in this school..." I don't know the name, I forget the name. And, that was with the UPS [?], cus over there, you wanna go for the college, college program. But at least you need to know a lot of English. You know, maybe you don't write, but need English over there, it's discrimination, because you need to learn, start from zero. Not like here, if you start like Book 1, 2, 3, start reading.

Me: Thank you.

Martín: *Creo que se siente la discriminación todavía. Especialmente si este color, hispano.* [I think one stills feels discrimination. Especially if you are this color, Hispanic.]

Me: *¿Cuando veniste acá por la primera vez, sabías que este lugar era católico, y te influyó la probabilidad de que vengas acá?* [When you acme here for the first time, did you know that this place was Catholic, and did it influence the likelihood that you would come here?]

Various: No.

X: *No me importaba que era católico.* [It didn't matter to me that it was Catholic.]

Ishmael: For me, yes. Because, I came to America, it's Catholic people who help we. We came to America, it's Catholic Charity, Catholic Charities, yes, they are the one who support, our help from the war. When we came to this country. Catholic people is... I'm a Muslim, but Catholic people always try to help people. They are very good people, you know. Me and my mom, going to this school, although she already stop long time, but she is the one who introduce me to this country. And since I came here, they help me a lot. I see a lot of changes for my life.

Me: Well, that's all I have. That's all I have for questions. Does anybody feel like there's something that they want to say that is important, or that would help me understand you better, or what we talked about better?

Martín: *Yo ya hablé bastante. Creo que ya discutimos bastante. Me interesa de los que pasó en el grupo, el focus, la preguntas que te querías hacer, que querías aprender de nosotros, la reunión.* [I already talked a lot. I think that we have discussed a lot. I was interested in what

happened in the group, the focus group, the questions that you wanted to do, what you wanted to learn about us, the meeting.

Me: That you very much, I learned so much, really, I appreciate that you opened up to me. And I hope that you enjoyed hearing from one another, cus I really did. So this will help me a lot for my project.....[In final minutes of recording, Martín recognizes me from Trinfo CaFatima. The others ask what Trinfo CaFatima is, and ask me for the phone number and about the schedule.]

**C. Focus Group Transcription: Sister Loretta and Margaret
Conducted by Sarah Kacevich on 7 November 2012 at Jubilee House**

[Oral Consent form. Both consent.]

Me: Alright, so, if you want to start off one by one, could you tell me about your role and your work at Jubilee House. What do you do here?

Margaret: I'm the development director, so I'm involved with fundraising for Jubilee House. So in my role, I'm mostly involved with coordination of events, like our Garden Party. And now we're working on a concert, we're going to be beneficiaries of a concert being held in the cathedral in Hartford. And so I deal with personal outreach to our donors, dealing with any kind of corporations who might want to provide sponsorship, getting advertising support, for events like that, and the like.

Me: And how many days a week are you here?

Margaret: I'm rarely in the office, actually, I work mostly from home. So I work ten hours a week. Mostly from home.

Me: Gotcha. Do you have another position in addition?

Margaret: No, this is, I only...my other work is volunteer work.

Me: Awesome. Thanks.

Loretta: And I'm director of the Esperanza program, and that requires that we, that I would design and coordinate the Saturday programs for remedial work, for career opportunities, for opportunities for jobs, and whatever adult clientele would like to study for. I do some tutoring on the side for remedial work, which is done during the daytime. But the Saturday program is from 9-12 in periods of 8-week semesters. We got 3 semesters a year.

Me: Thanks. Could you both tell me about your educational backgrounds, please, and whatever you did prior to coming to Jubilee House.

Margaret: So, I...you want me to go back all the way to my college education, or what works?

Me: Yes, please! Whatever works for you.

Margaret: I was educated at Fairfield University. I have a degree in History from Fairfield. And, initially went to work as a teacher out of Fairfield, at a private school. I worked for a brief period of time in insurance, but that wasn't for me, so I went into teaching. And while I was teaching at the private school, got my Master's degree in Education from the University of Bridgeport. And then worked in public schools for three years, here in Wethersfield. I taught Social Studies in Wethersfield, til my children were born. Then I took a child-rearing leave of about ten years, and mostly during...why I was home with my children, I did a lot of volunteer work, which in terms

of school, school advocacy...I was the PTO president, I am the co-chair of the Parent Council in town, I was the chairperson of political action committee that successfully won a referendum to renovate Wethersfield High School—a \$75 million referendum. So I ran the whole election campaign, and through that work, I decided I was little more interested in non-profit work. And so, I entered a program at the University of Connecticut called “Encore Hartford,” which is helping people transition from one career into non-profit work. And it’s a lot of older people, like people who are maybe retired and looking to do something else, but for me it was an encore from teaching, and my volunteer work. Through that program, I went through the studies at Encore Hartford. As part of that, I did a fellowship at Hartford Public Library, I did there...my main project was their Gala, which is like an 800-person gala, at the Convention Center. We had Joe Scarborough and Mika Przinski [?] as our guests, and the Governor was the chairperson—the honorary chairman of it. And so through that, and then I started looking for work, and landed here at Jubilee House. That’s it.

Me: Thanks.

Loretta: Well, I have a Bachelors’ in Education, and then I went on to University of Michigan, and I got a Masters in Adult Education, with a specialization in Gerontology. I also have a nursing degree from the University of Bridgeport. From there, I worked at St. Joseph College and developed educational programs, and an undergraduate and graduate degree in gerontology at St. Joseph *University*, now. And, from there I have worked in rural America, with adults that are in need of education. I worked in McDell County, West Virginia, and in the West Virginia area for over 25 years, in the coalfields. When I returned, I was looking for a job, and I heard that someone was retiring from this position, so I became the director of Esperanza program here, on a part-time position.

Me: Thanks. So what about your secular training? Do you have secular training?

Loretta: I entered the Sisters of Mercy when I was 18 years old. And I got my first degree, and I worked at parochial schools for about ten years. So, that was my secular training.

Me: I know, such a formal term. So you do not have secular background [looks at Margaret]?

Margaret: No, I’m not a religious. You’re talking about...I think you’re talking about religious background...secular is non-religious.

Me: Oh! Sorry, non-secular. Right.

Margaret: Yeah, non-religious, so you’re religious...yeah.

Me: Yeah, sorry, I’m mixing up my terms, yeah.

Margaret: No, no no, I’m not...

Me: Okay. So, why would you say that your work is important to you, at Jubilee House?

Margaret: Well, I mean, you know, it's amazing when you work for, when you can impact people's lives. I think that's what it basically comes down to. And you know, we, especially in a small organization like this, where you see the clients coming in, and you can see the work you're doing, and how that's gonna directly benefit the clients of the organization. And so, there's, the fulfillment of the work comes from the...it sounds kind of trite...it's just knowing you're helping people out. Which is important to me. And I think in the other work that I've done, when you can see you're making an impact, it is very fulfilling.

Me: What about the specific populations that Jubilee House works with, was that part of your decision to work here?

Margaret: I mean yeah, my background is in education, and so I think working for a group that...working for a group that supports education, that supports workforce development, is important to me. And I feel like that my background kind of helps me to understand the work of it. Which also makes it easier if you kind of...you know the nuts and bolts of how something works, that's helpful. I think just in general, you know, from a personal point of view philosophy maybe, the idea of the refugee, and helping somebody who is really, and has had to escape a home country, that just touches me maybe more in my heart. So, I think that that's, I respond in different ways.

Me: [Looks at Loretta] What about you, why is your work at Jubilee House important to you?

Loretta: Well, as a Sister of Mercy, I've been a Sister of Mercy for over 40, 55 years actually, since I entered. And I've always worked in an educational field, and have been very committed to the poor. Working in West Virginia, and interested in working with, at the time that I started working with women, particularly getting off of welfare, and the changes in the 80s and 90s, moving them off of the dependent children, and family support. Then we had a program, Survivor Skills for Women, and that really touched my heart. We would try to enable them to get job opportunities, to finish high school work, to get training as to employee responsibilities, to get on their feet. And so when I came back to Connecticut, I thought that this program here at Jubilee House, working with the immigrants, and like Margaret said, working with the refugees, and immigrants. Giving them a chance to get settled in a new country—was very apropos to what I was working with and I *want* to work.

Me: Thank you. So, would you consider your work to be inspired by your faith? And, if so, in what way might that be the case?

Margaret: Well, you know I'm a Catholic, and I always attended Catholic schools, had good training. You know, I think a big part of my upbringing, whether it was in family or in education, was in social responsibility, and social...and a feeling of, that the plight of the poor, and the plight of, especially, I think, the poor, and I think it's something...I don't know, I guess it is close to my heart, in that, when we were...when I can think back to college, and the things that interested me most, it was a time we were reading about liberation theology, and Central America, and how that was a big issue that was going on when I was in college. I definitely felt like that was something I was responding to at the time. And I think when I came out of college, I probably wished I, I was a little bit wishing to go into some kind of non-profit work, even at

that point, if I have to think back on it, as you are causing me to do. And there were no jobs, it was a very bad time to get a job, and so we were just, I remember trying to apply to the Red Cross, and different organizations, and it just didn't happen. And so I took a job in insurance, which I did not like. And so it was interesting because I sort of went into teaching to get away from the job in insurance, and that worked out, it was a good match for me for a long time. But I think if I had to go back, doing that more direct work for people who are struggling with something was more along the lines of what I always wanted to do.

Me: Thanks. And what about you? [Look at Loretta] So, do you consider your work..you just touched on this a little, but, do you consider your work to be inspired by your faith, and if you do, in what way?

Loretta: Well definitely. I think from the charism of the Sister of Mercy really lead me to want to work with the poor, and those that are in need. And my love for education, my, I have an aunt, and my mother, and sister, that are in education. And even though I went into nursing for a while, even my nursing background took on the educational field. I did very little direct nursing help. That health background has really helped me to work with families, and things like that.

Me: Alright, so if we were gonna think about...changing gears a little bit...if we were gonna think about Jubilee House, putting it on the map compared to other agencies in Hartford that offer comparable, or education-related services, thinking about factors like the size, or target population, their mission, their sources of funding...where would you kind of put Jubilee House on the map?

Margaret: How would we, or how would we go about it, or?

Me: Maybe both.

Margaret: Or, is it on the map?

Me: Sure. That's part of the answer, maybe.

Margaret: That actually is very much in line with what my responsibilities are here. And, I'm fairly new to the organization, I've only been here a few months, but that definitely is a difficulty that we have here—is that I keep saying to people, “we’ve worked so hard doing the good job for the clients, but we do very little of raising our hand and saying ‘hey, look at us!’” And so, we have a very low profile. Too low a profile in this community, which is hard because maybe people who need our services could be a little more aware, but I think the worse threat is that when your profile is so low, you’re not tapping into funding resources that can keep the program going. And so, it’s a difficulty that we face here, that we have a low profile, and it’s something that we need to address. That’s—like, this concert that’s coming up, as we look at it as a fundraising opportunity, we also are at the same time looking at it just as an opportunity for people to find out about Jubilee House. Whatever publicity we do to draw in an audience has the effect of also just saying, “oh, Jubilee House, I didn’t know about that,” so maybe they don’t come to the concert, but they know about us a little more, maybe would come and volunteer.

Maybe would tell somebody, maybe would respond to some of our fundraising thing down the line.

Me: What was the date for the concert?

Margaret: It's February 1st.

Me: February 1st. I'll put it on my calendar.

Margaret: Please do! Tell your friends.

Me: And so how would you respond to the same question? [Look at Loretta]

Loretta: I totally agree, that if I was not connected with the Sisters of Mercy and other people that work here at Jubilee House, I probably, just living in Hartford, would not know about the wonderful things they do here. I recently was asked to be part of an adult education survey of opportunities offered in the Greater Hartford area. And members of the community are people like the director of CREC, and the library, and many of them are very concerned with the immigrant population, their inability to be able to get substantial jobs, be able to support family life. And much of it is because of their lack of understanding of our culture, and English, and writing. They may have been professionally educated in their own country, or early beginnings, and they are not recognized for that basic education for the most part. So I have found that these very capable adults are taking housekeeping, and maintenance jobs, and just to support themselves and their families. And, they need to be able to interview for jobs, and be competent in speaking and writing English. There's no opportunity for promotion, because a supervisor's expected to write reports, in English, on those that they are supervising. To give them hope, and I think Esperanza means "hope," that there is a place for them, that they can be respected for what they stand for, their beliefs, they can express their beliefs to people, and encourage them to be more outgoing and not be shy about the opportunities and the life that they have for others.

Me: Thank you. So, expanding just a little on this topic, in your awareness of other places in Hartford where immigrants can receive the services that Jubilee House provides, could you maybe talk about some of those places, and what makes your approach different than other locations? Or, what makes it similar, if that's the case, too.

Margaret: You know better about this, Sister Loretta, but I would say Catholic Charities is one of the biggest organizations that deals with the refugee population. And they, apparently, deal with the people first coming into the country, as opposed to we're post-resettlement, and we take it from there. Although, my understanding is that they are looking to get into our business. And so that's, I do also know from having worked at the library that they do a lot with the immigrant population there in terms of English language classes, and the like. I think what we do differently where, and I can appreciate this from a teaching point of view, is the intensive one-on-one instruction. It's amazing that we have fifty volunteers here, for our ESOL classes, it's crazy. I can't get fifty volunteers, I can't get *twenty* volunteers, to work at a Halloween party at my kids' school, never mind week after week after week. So you know, it's that...that's the major difference, is that direct, personalized instruction, from a teaching point of view, is much more in

line with the way that we understand that people learn well. That, you have to have that individualized instruction, that you need, and when you go into your children's classes, you know what kind of learner *they* are. So, we're able to provide that. So, we're ahead of the...other organizations on that.

Loretta: I also think that what attracted me to want to work here at Jubilee House, I came and visited and just observed for about a month before I actually put in my resume for the job. And, the spirit that's here—people *want* to be here. And, for the most part, I don't think it's because of the salary that they're getting. Because most people are part-time paid, and I knew that, it was right up-forward, that I would be part-time. But, most of the people working here will extend themselves to their client, and to far beyond the hours that they receive a paycheck for. Bend of backwards, and saying, "oh well you don't, can't get out of work til 5:30, well I'll meet you then." Or on a Saturday morning. And, I think we attract the students that are really anxious, and are really committed to want to get ahead, and to use their gifts in the community. Those that want to come on Saturday morning, get up out of bed on their day off, and at 9 o'clock, til 12 o'clock, they really have to be committed. And, I think the teachers that we have, where we don't have in our Esperanza program one-on-one, we have about 6 to 1. And we...[Margaret: That's great.] And most of them are very... informal setting, but the knowledge they get is not informal. They really have to work for what they get, they have to work, and can be compared very closely with what you get at Trinity. You know, I'm thinking of the public speaking class, the students there, there were 7, that just terminated, finished up and got their certificates on Saturday. They had homework every week, and it was mostly to read the newspaper, or articles, and write their commentary on what they *think*, so that they would feel more competent to get up to the City Council and give their views. In English. And find out—how is that expression? And how do people say it in English?

Me: Did anybody go and speak to City Council?

Loretta: I had my students go to—a group of students go—when we were going to be awarded the CDBG, the Community Development Block Grant. And, they had a meeting with the City Council. And seven of our student went and "what does education mean to them?" What does it mean to come? And, broken English, and, inappropriate words, and things like that, but they got there, and they let them know what it meant to them to be able to come to education. For, if you went to a course in other educational facilities in Hartford, you'd have to pay several hundred dollars, but most of them get a fifty-dollar registration fee, you get an eight-week course, that is taught by a professional that has educational background, and teachers, and experience.

Me: Thanks. That's really good. So maybe now I'll ask some questions that are more...oh, actually, I had a quick follow-up...the thing you mentioned before with Hartford Public Library, was that the Action Group? You were contacted about...

Loretta: Yes, we would meet tonight, but I don't believe we're gonna meet tonight. Or, I'm not going tonight. [There was a snowstorm that day.]

Margaret: They'll be canceled, everything's cancelled.

Me: So that is the Action Group at Hartford Public Library?

Margaret: Right.

Me: Oh, ok, I was just curious, I've attended that before.

Loretta: Yes, it is working on adult education programs—what they need is in Hartford, and how we would address it, and we are coming to focus in on work keys, and different programs that we would use to address the needs of 30,000 people in Hartford. To be able to integrate technology with professional education, and to look more critically at how it is being done in the present, and how we could do it better.

Me: Yeah, my thesis advisor is part of that group, so I've attended with her, if you were to go you would probably meet her. Anyways, I have a couple questions that are maybe more specific to Margaret's work. Could you please describe the current funding structure of Jubilee House—where do the funds come from, currently?

Margaret: Most of the funding comes from grants, which is really Jen's area. And it is a small percentage of our funding that comes from direct fundraising, like annual appeal events, things like that. Which is an area of opportunity for us, to grow that.

Me: And so what about the grants? What are some grants that you've had recently or in the past?

Margaret: I don't really remember, but I can tell you that we have major funding from the Hartford Foundation for Giving. And they will...when grants sometimes, a lot of the time, that will be for specific programs, so they might fund one thing versus another thing. And that's a major...the Hartford Foundation for Giving is a major one for us. I know Lincoln Financial is a sponsor of the Esperanza program. [Loretta: And CDBG.] Yeah. So, I wish I could give you a list, I don't have it. But that's really where, that's the backbone of where the operation is, the grant funding.

Me: Alright, thank you. So I know you recently came onto Jubilee House, right? Okay, do you have knowledge of how the funding has changed over the years, before you were here?

Margaret: Um, no, I think like I said, the line share of the money has come from grants, and I think the development, and trying to work in that area is a newer thing. Part of me being here, and the focus of my work, is to see how that can be expanded. Whether we change the...we talked about low-profile, sometimes our events are low-profile, so like we have a Garden Party here, that's a lovely event that's for our volunteers and our supporters, but we need to look at higher-profile events, such as something not here—a larger...a gala's the wrong word, cus it would never be 800 people at the Convention Center, it might be 200 people at Elizabeth Park, or at some sort of larger party, that would be a fundraiser, where you'd have silent auction. And that's the sort of event that can connect corporate sponsorship, whereas Travelers is not gonna be the major sponsor of our event here in our garden. But you take it out of there, you kinda fancy it up a bit, and you suddenly can tap into corporate sponsorship, you can tap into an ad-book. I'll give you the example of...we're going to be doing an ad-book for our concert. This is something

we haven't done before. The potential income from the ad-book is something like \$6,000, so it's a good fundraiser. That in and of itself would be a good piece. But those are avenues we haven't explored yet, to try and tap into local merchants, and see if you buy a \$150 ad or a \$300 ad, something like that. So there's a lot of opportunities. We haven't benefited a lot from United Way funding. So that was something we had an initiative here this Fall, where just within our own walls, there are people, our Board members for example, who work for corporations give to the United Way, but might not have realized that they could just write down Jubilee House as the beneficiary of that. So, you can not only do that—I'll use the example of my husband, because I recruited him, he put Jubilee House down as his person, get's it matched by Travelers, and suddenly we have more than double the amount of money we've ever made on United Way. And that's one person, so times twenty, times thirty, however many people we get to recruit through that, those are things that we need to be pursuing that we haven't.

Me: Were you ever able to get in touch with Jason Rojas?

Margaret: I haven't reached out—I have something all set to go. I was just getting set up with some email, my real email account. So it was just around the corner, and I said "let me wait til I get my email account hooked up, my Jubilee House." So I am, so for instance, it's probably, what we've found as I've gotten in touch with people, is it might be too close to the concert for sponsorship. But Trinity, for example, would be a wonderful partner to ask for an ad. So, especially with Board members from Trinity, that are on our Board, that would... Trinity is so supportive of the community, and the neighborhood, that I would think that they would be a good candidate for buying an ad. So, then sometimes, something like that, when we have our gala, maybe they would wanna come to our gala, you know, and it grows. So it's about growing, really, relationships.

Me: So I wonder if you could speak about, given your history in non-profits and development kind of stuff, I wonder if you could speak about how funding for things in the Hartford area, in a broader sense, has changed over the years. Have you seen a rise or a fall in the kind of public funds versus the private funds, or any sort of trends going on?

Margaret: Well I think in general, that's it—it's become much more competitive. The down economy has affected a lot of funders and personal giving. Personal giving is always, sound, actually, from a fundraising point of view, is actually...usually makes up the big chunk of the sort of work I do. And in general, people are just giving less. There's more competition for those dollars. From an overriding statement about the whole area of non-profits, the competition and the down economy has created difficulties for a lot of non-profits. So in general, non-profits have had to find ways to be more creative in their funding, and a lot of non-profits have turned to entrepreneur methods of raising money. So, for example, anything fee-based that we have, if there's something else that we could sell to a client base that would raise money for us, that's a lot of ways that people are making money now. As opposed to just the direct ask. So, if you have something of value to offer—which we do here—if we can expand those programs and draw more people in, or draw more funders that are willing to support it, that becomes another way to support an organization. And that's sort of the way that this—if we want to call it an industry—the industry is moving, towards being more entrepreneurial. Increasing partnerships between, trying to partnership with other agencies is a big one. And just doing everything within here, we

need to work on just collaboration. If we have a funder who's a funder like Lincoln Financial who loves Esperanza, so maybe they would be willing to support us with a gala. And trying to find ways to encourage that support from our funders.

Me: So what about...so that has to do with more the private funding. What about more public sources of funding? Like, you mentioned the Hartford Foundation for Giving. Is that public?

Margaret: That's a private foundation, where if I were a millionaire, and I didn't want to come up with my own foundation, I would give it to the Hartford Foundation for Giving, and they would give it out. So, they're kind of a co-op for millionaires? So it's a way that people give their money and pool their money in order to make a bigger difference. It's a major resource within this area for funding of a lot of different things.

Me: And so, at Jubilee House do you seek any funds from the State of Connecticut, federal funds, or from the City of Hartford?

Margaret: You know, honestly, I know we have had funding through that, but I don't know...Gen or Sister of Kathleen would know better about that.

Me: Thanks. Alright, so now I'm going to ask some questions that are more for you [look at Loretta] about Esperanza. I already interviewed Sister Claire, so I figured out some of the basics. But I was wondering if you could tell me, just in your own words, just the objective of the Esperanza program.

Loretta: Can I...I'd like to add just a little thing to what...[Me: Yeah! Absolutely.] To actually build on what Margaret said. My experience is that small, non-profit organizations, many of which were originally started by religious, and various...whether Catholic, or non-Catholic, Baptist, or whatever, from a religious root...they're probably are the pearl that is not seen in a larger scale in the public. They feel as if they're doing it from a scriptural basis, and they don't need to be rewarded for the good they do. At least from a religious point of view. It's the best thing that happened that no one knows about. So, sisters in general, I speak from my point of view, they're reluctant to blow their horn. And this was an organization started—administrated—by the Sister of St. Joseph, and although I'm a Sister of Mercy, we have been with the organization, kind of partnering, for over 10 years. And I would say that it's very comparable. They may have some favorite places to go for money, but they don't blow their horn enough.

Margaret: I think a lot of non-profits do that. When you have these smaller groups, and they were founded...maybe there was a founder like Sister Mary Stella who was important. Like, she has a personal mission that she saw to create. But, there's lot's of organizations that are driven like that, that are kind of ground-level entry...they sprung out of somebody's vision. And, always, the challenge for an organization like that is "what happens next?" If Sister Mary Stella steps down, or the founder steps down. I'll give the example of the House of Bread, who are the founders, and they've gotta be there for 30 years now. [Loretta: At least.] Well, you know, they're eventually going to have to...what's next...you have to have a plan. Like, because I mean, I think religious communities have found this as a challenge, too, because your population, and you want to mission to continue, and you've always been about the hard work.

So then it's like, okay, well what's next? We want to make sure we have a lasting impact here. So if it's just about the personality, if it's all driven by the personality of the people in charge—I'll go back to the House of Bread, if it's just about Sister Maureen [?] and Theresa, and it can't be, that they're removed, the whole thing collapses. And so, you have to have—that's the challenge, because it has to be that vision of "how do we sustain the mission when that group is gone?" And that's where...I agree it's with religious, but I think it's a lot of organizations that sprung up here and there...in my town, there's something called the Keane Foundation, and it's a sports center. And there's one woman, Judy Keane, who runs it. Well what happens if Judy was, you know, retired? Does it go away? Does their good go away? Well, you can't, there has to be an exit strategy for the founding group, in order to sustain the good work.

Loretta: I was really amazed when I joined the group at the library, that they'd say "Jubilee House? What's Jubilee House?" Nobody knew what it was!

Margaret: But if they know what it is, they love it. Well, now they'll turn to me, and say "well you work with the immigrants, what do you, how do you feel about that?" And, we're starting to look at funders and things like that for different directions. And very often, they'll ask my input on it, even though I'm a new kid of the block there, also. I have not worked in Hartford, per se, on a large scale. But I can translate my experience from West Virginia, and they would say the same thing. We used to have groups come in from Washington, D.C., and build houses, and things like that. And people didn't really know about us. We didn't spend a lot of time marketing, and blowing our horn.

Me: Now the people at HPL that didn't know about Jubilee House, were they members of the Action Group that were from outside of Hartford Public Library?

Loretta: Yes, yes.

Me: Okay, and so were there...were there any HPL staffers at this group? And did they know about Jubilee House?

Loretta: They heard about Jubilee House, but they didn't...most of....

Margaret: Is it Richard Frieder? Are you dealing with Richard Frieder?

Loretta: Yes, Richard comes to our group. And Andy, Andy from CREC.

Margaret: I don't know Andy. Is Andy the president of CREC?

Loretta: I asked and I think he is, he never really said...

Margaret: Why is that not a familiar name?

Loretta: I think his last name is something like Syncowitz, but it's not really Syncowitz...he's from Cyril Methodious church, you know he lived right down there in that area near St. Peter's. He does not live there now. But, his office is right there on Charter Oak. 111 Charter Oak.

Margaret: Oh, right around the corner from the library. Right across from Charter Oak Cultural Center.

Loretta: Right, right. It kind of backs up to that street, we have Charter Oak Place, and on the next street, he grew up on that street.

Margaret: Gotcha, hmm.

Loretta: But, so, we have gotten to our meeting a half hour early sometimes, when we thought it was 6, it was 6:30. So we sat there for a half hour talking about his background, and different things like that. So he keeps saying that he's going to come down the see us.

Margaret: Yeah, tell him!

Loretta: And Kathleen says, well, "invite him!"

Margaret: I know, this is the first time we...

Loretta: He's been all over the country studying all of these different adult education programs. And, which one would fit into our model that we're looking at. And he does hold the key for us getting some grant money.

Margaret: Right, that's the thing, and those partnerships...that spring out of personal relationships.

Loretta: He knows the program...right, he's looking for that. So, because of some of the work Sister Kathleen is doing, I haven't opened my mouth, to exactly, "well, we're thinking of doing that, too."

Margaret: Right, right.

Loretta: But, I have just about gotten from that far and saying "we'd like to be your pilot program!" But, I was trying to get Kathleen to go to the meeting with me. So, when I come back, I summarize everything, what I heard. I just sit there, listen, take notes.

Me: So, in what way...the pilot program, you mean...?

Loretta: Well, what the committee is really trying to develop, is with money that they have secured from the national organization, with work keys, and that other name that Andy has favored... We're going to see, go with him to Massachusetts to see a pilot program actually in works up there.

Margaret: And then it's possible that it would come here to Jubilee House. And we would get some money off of... see, that's the sort of...these are the more entrepreneurial opportunities

that...I mean, you don't have to open a shop, but it might be that you offer a class, or a service, or something that...

Loretta: Right, and if it goes well, well then...

Margaret: It works. And those are important opportunities, right. And this is how you grow your funds...

Loretta: They want to have a group of 15 students, and you could take one little segment and say, well we're going to educate these people that are interested in working in childcare or something. And link with CRT in the community, or with CREC families, and things like this. But they have to have *these* skills. Then, ultimately, they're trained in how to, just mundane things, cus this is for a job—how to write your resume, and go into, in addition to speaking and writing, and things like this, well they have to have tools of how to interview, and dress, and things like that. So, it's a whole series of classes, not only academic, some of them would require getting a certificate for. But you need to get your foot in the door, first. And you can't if...this gentleman I was talking with just the other day, he went on an interview, and he had a very nice looking resume, all typed and polished, but he was not considered for the job, because he could not speak to the clients well enough. And he is taking conversational English and public speaking here. But, they said, "come back when you can talk better."

Me: Yeah, it's a shame...well, maybe that can lead us back into Esperanza a little more. Right now, does Esperanza interact with any programs outside of Jubilee House—or, inside of Jubilee House, I mean?

Loretta: The only one that I personally interact with is this program at the library—focus group.

Me: Okay. Could you describe the objective of Esperanza?

Loretta: The objective of Esperanza is to be able to assist adult education that would either encourage them to pursue college opportunities...most of them would look at two-year colleges as a stepping-stone to a four-year because of economics, and most of them have families, and being the economics of Hartford in the area right now, is not available to them to be able to get four-year college. Some people do go over to Manchester, and some go down to New Haven for four-year college, but they...they really, I've been talking with a young student that is now going to Central, and used to be New Britain State Teacher's College when I was over there...

Margaret: Yes, I've heard of it called that.

Loretta: But, she is pursuing a four-year Masters program, it's a combination junior and senior year in college, and then Master program. But, she is in...working with handicap children, with disabilities.

Me: So, what do you think makes Esperanza work, why is it successful, especially if you can make a comparison to services available elsewhere in Hartford?

Loretta: Well, I don't want to speak specifically about some organizations, but the students have come back and told us that they can get free education places, especially if they're on financial aid. And they're advertising tutoring at some education places, but they go to the class, and there might be 20 people, and they go up to the teacher and ask if they, "could you help me with this algebra problem" or something, and "oh yes." But the hour that they're there, they never get any assistance at all. But they'd rather come here and be part of our Algebra class, but they had a tutor, a volunteer tutor. And she came every Saturday—she was not paid. And similar to what goes on in ESOL, but we have limited amount of...we now have three tutors working with the Esperanza program. And, one group is with Remedial Writing—they can't even write a sentence. Rather than, the other teacher is paid by the CDBG grant, is working with them with compositions, or how to do a paper for college, and things like that for college students that are right in the college program. And they come from immigrant background, but they graduated from high school here, but they've still been kind of left behind because they weren't up to the...they had very bright youngsters, but they...when they arrived from Peru, or Puerto Rico, or something, they were getting extra help, but they just weren't right in sync with their regular class, because they had to learn the English language first.

Margaret: Good enough to graduate, but not good enough to excel.

Loretta: They usually can read very well, but they can't write. Because in Spanish, they don't use any articles, or anything like that. So when they start to talk to you, they leave out all the prepositions, and the "thes" and their sentences will be very basic. They can identify a subject and a verb, but they wouldn't make it more interesting a gerund or an infinitive, or something like this to expand their sentences. "She walked down the street..." you know you have to make it a little but flavorful! So, I don't know if that answers your question....

Me: Yes, thank you. Are you students from Hartford in Esperanza? Are they from this neighborhood, or are from outside Barry Square?

Loretta: Two-thirds of our students are from...of the thirty that we just gave certificates to on Saturday, we had 22 that were from the Hartford area. And their money was paid for from the CDBG...they gave something up-front for registration, and then the rest was through the Community Development Block Grant. The rest, we had 8 people from West Hartford, East Hartford, Manchester, things like that, that came. We had English Writing, Conversational English, Public Speaking, Computers, Remedial English, and Remedial Math.

Me: And how do they get to the program? Transportation-wise?

Loretta: We don't have any kind of transportation assistance. So, by bus, if they're from Hartford, from downtown Hartford they take the bus, sometimes have to transfer at the Aisle of Safety [?] and come on down and...the day of the marathon it was awful [Margaret: You can't get anywhere!] because the buses were running in the other direction. And they were very innovative in finding another student who comes from that direction and saying "Hey, could you pick me up on this street corner."

Margaret: Did the marathon run down this street?

Loretta: No, it was in the center of Hartford. [Margaret: Center, yeah.] But they couldn't get their connectors. If you came from Albany Avenue, in the North End, you couldn't connect on the Broad St. bus. But I'd say the larger number of them came on their own, in their own wheels.

Me: Okay, so some of them drive as well?

Loretta: Yes. Some agencies sponsor them...they give them bus passes.

Me: Okay, that's interesting. So, it sounds like you took over the curriculum, or did you form it yourself?

Loretta: Oh no, the curriculum has been in operation for ten years now. And this is I think their tenth year. And, it was started by Sister Margaret Crowley who is from St. Joseph College. And, Norma Pellitier [?] worked with her in Esperanza particularly. It started as a strict academic stepping stone if you could not pass the SATs or ACTs or college entrance exam, or your nursing...you couldn't get into the program unless you brushed up on your math, or this and that...so it was really remedial courses to enable you to get into college. Or further...Now, because of our connection with ...Anne Brown moved over here with the ESOL program, then it really moved to looking at the immigrant population. So, I say again, two-thirds of our program are all immigrants. So, with the introduction of Conversational English and Public Speaking, we get a whole wide stream of people. Like, they might belong to whatever church, it doesn't have to be the Catholic church, or anything. Most people will ask for their parishioners to get up and read the scripture, or things like this at their worship service, and they can't. The other part of the population—the parish can't understand what they're saying, they can't understand the words and things like that. So, we're more aggressively going after them—people from St. Peter's and St. Augustine's, and uptown, Sacred Heart, and the different Spanish churches that we are connected with. And looking for those that train their lectors, and then also the Baptist church on Main St., things like that. So, try to get them into Public Speaking classes. But, the Public Speaking classes start with vowels—the short vowel, and the long vowel, homonyms and synonyms and things like that and... “read” and “reed,” R-E-A-D ...and they don't know the difference between the two. Expressions—“cheaper by the dozen”—they don't know what that means. Things that we are so familiar with. So you get all walks of life, and we did get three lectors from St. Peter's and St. Augustine's at the past class. We hope to get more. We advertise on Channel 5. I'm starting to...getting someone to translate our brochures into Spanish. So that when you send them to the parish, and ask the parish secretary to put them on the bulletin board, it doesn't do it in English. It might have a pretty picture on it, or colorful, but we need to get translators to be able to put something on the Spanish radio station. Or, get one of our students to be—how to speak...do a two-minute spot on the Spanish radio station. [Margaret: Yes! Raising our profile.] I can't do it.... ¡Hablo español un poquito solamente! [I only speak a little Spanish!] Few words, that's it. I have a student that comes from Capitol. And she works for me for ten hours a week, so she can translate. I've had to use her resources when she calls on the phone, and things like that.

Me: One more question. So, as a female doing that work, how might that identity affect what you're doing? And does faith have a role in that picture, too?

Loretta: Not just as a female, but as a female religious, I think it does. Yes. If I was a non-religious...well, I think from my background in home, and faith upbringing, and things....I don't know how I...I think I would still have the same beliefs and wanting to work with the poor, and those uneducated, or just need a hand out...not a "hand-out," ...hand up...[Margaret: A hand.] But that, I think mostly comes from my commitment to religious life. But, by no means...I work with all lay-people that have that same commitment, though. And have those same pores...it doesn't necessarily have to be church-related. Just, social beliefs. Justice. Your own philosophy that usually comes from your own education, or family background, or something, or some situation, that has influenced you. You might have been down and out someplace. Or, I know some very good friends that said that said she knew what it meant to be poor when she lost her funding and she had a college bill there. But she still wanted to keep up with college. And she worked at McDonald's flipping hamburgers just to be able to stay with it. Cus she didn't have a family that could support her. I don't know if that answers your question.

Me: No no it does, thank you. That's all the questions I have...do you guys think that there's anything we haven't covered that I should really know about, or?

Loretta: No, but as you move along, and you get your thesis going, I'd like to get...

Margaret: Yeah, just let us know. What's the...what's the theme?

[End of recording]

**D. Focus Group Transcription: Graciela and Jorge (Spanish language)
Conducted by Sarah Kacevich on 11 November 2012 at Our Lady of Sorrows**

[Reads oral consent in Spanish. Both agree. Then Sarah briefly describes her project in Spanish, and explains that they can discuss both their own experiences and those of other people that they know.]

Sarah: Primero, que me digas por favor unos datos básicos de su vida. Como tu familia— describeme tu familia, en qué parte de Hartford viven, dónde nacieron, hace cuanto llegaron acá, y de qué país vienen?

Jorge: Bueno pues somos una pareja... como te digo, estamos casados. Con relación a la iglesia, somos católicos, practicantes. Osea, católicos fervientes. Practicamos la fé católica, y estamos casados hace treintiseis años.

Graciela: Tenemos cuantos hijos...

Jorge: Tenemos dos hijas, y cuatro nietas. Venimos de Puerto Rico, estamos acá hace 36, cuando nos casamos. Regresamos nuevamente al Puerto Rico en el '75. Y luego, pues, regresamos acá a los Estados Unidos, al estado de Connecticut, en el '84, en el 1984. Buscando nueva oportunidades, buscando mejor forma de vida. Y cambiando la, cambiando la diferente temperatura del tiempo, ¿no? ¿Qué más podemos decir?

Graciela: Llegamos acá en el'84. Al lado de Connecticut.

Jorge: Oh, en el '84, sí. En el '84, regresamos acá, al Connecticut.

Graciela: Al Clinton, Connecticut. Y después nos trasladamos aquí a Hartford.

Me: ¿Así que nunca vivían en otro estado?

Jorge: No...sí. Osea, primeramente venimos a New Jersey. En el 1975.

Graciela: Cuando nos casamos.

Jorge: Cuando nos casamos. [Sarah: Entiendo.] Primeramente estuvimos en New Jersey, estuvimos un año.

Graciela: Y regresamos a Puerto Rico.

Jorge: Y regresamos a Puerto Rico, extrañado el ambiente, extrañado el calor, extrañado la familia. Osea, no nos acostumbra. Pues...estuvimos un año, aparentemente era que no nos acostumbramos, decidimos regresar, con nosotros queridos, los padres. Y durante estos años, pues, nacieron nosotros, nuestros hijos.

Graciela: Estaba la policía.

Jorge: Estuvo trabajando por la policía de Puerto Rico, sí.

Graciela: Un año.

Jorge: Con diferentes trabajos, buscando una mejor calidad de vida.

Graciela: Y antes que regresar acá, había trabajo cinco años con la policía.

Sarah: Así que acá, ¿tienen otra familia, además que las hijas y los nietos?

Graciela: No, tenemos ellas, nada más que ellas.

Jorge: Tengo unos hermanos en diferente estado...tengo un hermano en Florida. Familia en Ohio también. Familia en Ohio también, sí. Sabes que llegamos varios como, como buscando dónde...buscando raíces para establecernos. Diferente estados de los Estados Unidos. Y aquí era donde pasamos más tiempo.

Graciela: Veinte cinco años, sí.

Jorge: Tenemos como veinte cinco años....

Graciela: Más de veinte cinco años.

Sarah: ¿Así que piensan que se encontraron raíces acá?

Jorge: Sí, hemos establecido con nuestra...sí, raíces acá en Connecticut, yeah. Las minas crecieron, las hijas crecieron, están trabajando.

Sarah: Y ellos viven también en Hartford?

Graciela: Sí, una en East Hartford. Y la otro entre Newington y New Britain.

Jorge: Sabes que ya estamos solos, aparentemente. Pues...ellas se casaron, probaron su vida. Y pues, estamos en la iglesia, trabajando por muchos años y diferente ministerios de la iglesia, diferentes...

Sarah: ¿Viven en Parkville?

Graciela: Sí, ahora sí. En...cercatita...closet o here, Newington.

Sarah: Ah, que bueno.

Jorge: Cerca de la iglesia vivimos. Estuvimos cuatro años en East Hartford. Al cruzar el river, en East Hartford. Y regresamos otro vez por East Hartford.

Sarah: ¿Caminan acá? ¿A la iglesia?

Jorge: En caro...

Graciela: No mucho.

Jorge: Sí. Pues, tenemos ahora la parroquia de la iglesia, y todo más cerca.

Graciela: Nuestro encuentro.

Jorge: Pues, hemos asistido a diferentes...osea, pertenecemos a diferente grupos apostólicos en la iglesia. Grupos apostólicos donde nos hemos dedicado con más fervor. Con más dedicación. A la organización, pues. Para que otros conozcan lo que nosotros hemos conocido. Hace veinte, veinte cinco años que estamos en diferentes grupos apostólicos. En en Cursillo, también en la Carismática...son unos grupos apostólicos de nuestra iglesia católica, que nos ofrecen diferentes formas de oración, de convivir.

Graciela: De espiritualidad.

Jorge: De expresar nuestra fé, con nosotros hermanos, que son la comunidad. Y ahí, pues, estos años, hemos hecho una comunidad más cercana. Osea, la familia, como hemos hecho comunidad en esta área de Hartford.

Sarah: ¿En estos grupos, qué hacen?

Graciela: Se ora, pray. Se ora por los enfermos. Se evangeliza.

Jorge: Grupos de apoyo, grupos de apoyo primeramente por la comunidad. Apoyo en todos los estilos...

Graciela: Espiritualidad, materialmente.

Jorge: Espiritual, material también, así pues ahora, con los hermanos. Cuando hay dificultades.

Graciela: Se ayuda que la persona cambie su...que tengan un encuentro con el Señor. Que su vida espiritual le cambie. Que tengas encuentro, así es lo que sirve el grupo, para que te acercas más a la fé, a la iglesia, la persona. Eso es lo que hacen cada movimiento, cada grupo de la iglesia.

Sarah: ¿Porqué buscaron este tipo de apoyo? Por los grupos apostólicos.... O, siguen buscando, ¿no?

Graciela: Por nuestra experiencia, tuvimos la experiencia cuando conocimos este movimiento, este grupo, pues, nada, el Señor nos llevó, nos atrajo, y tuvimos esta experiencia, este encuentro con el Señor. La iglesia, primeramente, y al mismo grupo. Y hemos ido formándolo, y conociendo más de nuestra fe. Nuestra espiritualidad va creciendo. Nos sentimos alegres y contentos. Estamos haciendo lo que estamos haciendo. Acercando más cerca de Él...a dónde Él también.

Sarah: Así que, ¿trabajan en la iglesia, o no—tienen otro trabajo?

Jorge: Tenemos trabajos seculares. Trabajo aparte, sí.

Sarah: Okay, y ¿qué haces?

Jorge: Maquinista...operador de máquinas. Fábricas. Trabajo en la fábrica, fábrica de metales.

Sarah: ¿En Hartford?

Jorge: Sí, en Hartford, sí.

Sarah: Que bueno.

Graciela: ¿Cuántos años?

Jorge: Veinte-cuatro años.

Sarah: Wow! ¿Y trabajas? [looks at Graciela]

Graciela: Yo trabajé en un momento, en algún tiempo, y después me dediqué a cuidar a mi papá, y a mis nietas, las bebes.

Sarah: ¿Y hace cuanto empezaron a asistir a esta iglesia?

Jorge: ¿Aquí? Aquí comenzamos en el '89...en el '89, comenzamos a asistir aquí. Buscando apoyo, buscando como.

Graciela: Que conocer más.

Jorge: Que estuvo enfermo, su papa estuvo enfermo.

Graciela: Sí, sí buscando algo más cerca.

Jorge: Buscando más...en el camino.

Sarah: ¿Algún miembro de la familia estaba enfermo?

Graciela: Sí, mi papá estuvo enfermo.

Sarah: Y, ya me contaron un poquito, pero por favor que me cuenten sobre el sentimiento de comunidad entre la gente acá, cómo es?

Jorge: Entre toda la gente, la comunidad de afuera, o en general?

Sarah: Primero, de aquí, por favor.

Graciela: Pues, es una manera de llevarnos y con todo el mundo, conocer más íntimamente como una familia. Sentir lo que sentimos como una familia, como dijo Jorge...una familia que tiene uno que no tiene la iglesia. Porque el sentimiento, pues, se va uno más cerca de ellos, porque lo que ellos están viviendo es el mismo que estamos viviendo, y eso hace que se acerque más uno al otro. Nos sentimos bien. Sentimos bien como comunidad y como parroquia.

Jorge: Yo creo que están ellos de la familia de sangre, de los hermanos de los padres, de los tíos, viven cercana. Están, pues, buscamos en nuestra iglesia, nuestra comunidad parroquial, este apoyo también. Tal vez...esta...familizarnos...más cercanamente, más íntimamente. Yo creo que nuevamente buscamos eso...como estamos lejos de nuestra familia también, pues, buscamos apoyo de la comunidad, de la comunidad hispana, y después, del idioma de nosotros.

Graciela: Claro, se vayan como familia.

Jorge: Se vayan de familia.

Sarah: ¿Y cómo es la vida en Hartford, en general?

Graciela: A ver... cómo qué más o menos?

Sarah: ¿Te gusta vivir acá, o cómo es?

Graciela: Nosotros siempre hemos vivido acá cerca de West...estuvimos viviendo en West Hartford viviendo acá cerca también. Que me gusta mucho estar ahí de acá...y como nosotros estamos más afuera, como que nosotros siempre estamos como buen'—la casa, el trabajo, y la iglesia.

Sarah: Entiendo.

Graciela: Pues, para nosotros, veo una poco diferente que cuando uno no ve las noticias, estas cosas, que las personas que están ahí afuera de las cosas...pues, sube más de los problemas, de la

criminalidad, el desempleo, todo estas cosas están en la ciudad. Aunque en los pueblitos, está pasando todo eso también, por los pequeños. Pero nosotros sentimos seguros, no sé, nos sentimos...porque ya estamos acostumbrados. Pero es como te digo, más estamos acá...sí, vemos todo lo que está pasando y sabemos del hambre, de los problemas, de estas cosas que pasan allá afuera. Pero...nos sentimos bien, por mi parte, nos sentimos bien. Aunque pase lo que pase de allá...porque no estamos muertos de estas cosas...pero a veces me parece un poco duro, es fuerte, con las cosas que pasan afuera. Y como te digo, a mí me gusta el campo, a él le gusta el campo, como donde tu vives. Lo más que estuvimos fue ahí en West Hartford, por ahí. Pero a pesar de todo lo que nos pasa, estamos tranquilos. Y intentamos de enseñar a nuestra familia...estuvimos enseñando todas estas cosas que he dicho...y son unas muchachas buenas, son unas muchachas de su casa y del trabajo. Y buen', con la nietas estamos haciendo el mismo también. Tenemos una nieta de catorce años ya. Ella se va al colegio también. Así...estudia mucho. Ella estudia mucho, y está como...no sé si ha ido al magnet school? Está ahí desde chiquitita...ya tiene catorce años, y pinta, preciosa, tiene un arte bello. Y estamos, pues, la más grade, intentando de enseñarle cómo es la vida, cómo son las cosas, para que se tenga la vida...pero como comunidad, como pueblo, pasa las cosas como en todo el sitio...pero nosotros nos sentimos bien.

Jorge: La pregunta, ¿cómo era?

Graciela: Si nos sentimos bien en Hartford....

Jorge: ¿Cuál era, la pregunta?

Sarah: ¿Cómo es la vida en Hartford?

Jorge: ¿Cómo es la vida en Hartford? Bueno...es una ciudad grande, no, que...bueno, una ciudad Boston, Hartford, capitales que siempre hay incidencias...así pues criminalidad, sí, hay, no se puede negar nada de eso. Pero yo veo que después este...igual, para todos, cuanto empleos, cuanto a todo la...y, nosotros, como te dijo mi esposa, estamos...como más apartado de lo que se mueve en la ciudad, después del juicio. Osea, estamos como apartados, como yo...pues, practicando las cosas de la iglesia, compartiendo diferente actividades de la iglesia...y pues, haciendo eso, estamos un poquito alejado, pues, de las cosas que mayormente suceden en...

Graciela: Viviendo las realidades, pero, no...

Jorge: Como dice, en la ciudad, no.

Sarah: ¿Cómo son las interacciones que tienen con el personal de esta iglesia, como los sacerdotes, los diacones, los empleados? Digerían que buscan información o consejos de ellos a veces?

Graciela: Sí...

Jorge: Sí.

Graciela: Sí, ellos son muy buenos, acá estuvieron, ha sido cambiado el sacerdote, hubieron dos que estuvieron muchos años. Pero llegaron Padre Brian y Padre Jaime, Father Jim. Y son unas personas muy buenas, muy espirituales, y nos acercan a ellos. Y después con el diácono, son personas que para nosotros fueron muy espirituales, no ha mandado más cerca al Señor, para que espiritualmente, materialmente, la iglesia ha hecho adelante. Pero tenemos mucha confianza en ellos, como que ellos nos ofrecen ayuda espiritual.

Sarah: ¿Me pueden dar un ejemplo de alguna vez cuando alguien acá te dio un consejo, o ayuda espiritual, o ayuda material?

Graciela: Ayuda material, gracias a Dios, nosotros nunca tuvimos que...gracias al Señor, nunca tenemos que buscar algo más que ayuda espiritual.

Jorge: Sí, hay ayuda espiritual, en un momento que llega en nuestra vida, en el momento de enfermedad de familiares. Situaciones que ocurren en la familia también.

Graciela: Personales...

Jorge: Claro, ellos siempre dan el apoyo. El apoyo, pues, el espiritual. Se consideraría familia también. Hemos conocido...que siempre fue en otra familia también, el apoyo que ellos dan aparte de...apoyo económico también, se ha visto, esto, en el grupo también, que han compartido esta experiencia.

Sarah: ¿De otra persona?

Graciela: Sí, de otra persona. En el grupo, ayuda también. En el momento que muere alguien, se le ayuda también.

Jorge: Sabes que hay apoyo en la comunidad parroquial. Encontramos este apoyo. Económico también en diferentes experiencias que hemos visto...de otros hermanos, sí. Hay apoyo, se encuentra apoyo espiritual, el apoyo material. Consejo, si además, en nuestra iglesia, con nosotros sacerdotes y hermanos.

Sarah: Les voy a preguntar un poco más sobre la vida en Hartford ahora, para un rato. ¿Cuáles son las necesidades básicas que te importan más? Por ejemplo...tener una casa, la salud, la fe, tener comida, tener educación, la educación de los hijos, el trabajo.

Graciela: Vivienda, empleo. Vivienda, empleo. La educación también...tiene que ver mucho.

Jorge: Necesidades básicas...pues, tiene que ser trabajo, por que podamos salir adelante. El trabajo es esencial.

Graciela: Principal.

Jorge: Principalmente, hemos tendido la suerte de que siempre hemos tenido, hemos encontrado trabajo. Estamos trabajando, gracias al Señor. La necesidad, pues siempre...poco a poco, se consigue trabajo, todo parece...las necesidades...principalmente, que tienes trabajo. Yo diría que es lo más importante. Lo otro conseguimos después, poco a poco. Esta pregunta, si quieres...como ¿te quedó claro esta pregunta?

Sarah: No no, está perfecto, esto.

Jorge: El trabajo, esencial, y después...todo viene poco a poco. La necesidad de la casa después viene también la casa.

Sarah: ¿Qué les parecen los servicios disponibles en Hartford, como para la educación, el empleo, la salud, para ustedes, o para las hijas, los nietos, o los demás? ¿Qué les parecen?

Graciela: Para el empleo, la educación...

Jorge: ¿Cómo, si son favorables, o son flojos? ¿Cómo más o menos, dijiste?

Sarah: Sí, yeah. ¿Qué les parecen?

Graciela: Que puedo decir...yo creo que hace falta un poco más de...como le ayuda para lo de la educación, la ayuda porque a veces es un poco difícil para las muchachas seguir estudiando...principalmente. Después, por el dinero, se hace un poco difícil. Como que hace falta un poco más de ayuda para que ellos se motiven, y pueden llegar a cumplir su sueño.

Jorge: Bueno, eso ha sido un factor en la vida, hablando como padre de la familia, pues. En el desarrollo de nuestra hijas, especialmente a veces...[Graciela: Un poco difícil.] Es difícil, porque a veces no están los...no está el dinero. Y así no hay becas, y otras facilidades, para ser estudiantes, y así es difícil para que ellos sigan adelante. Y, digamos que...haría falta más programas, que ayudan a la juventud, para que saldrán adelante en carreras cortas...Sabes para que se preparan para conseguir un empleo. Es rápido, y bien pagado.

Sarah: ¿Conocen algunos servicios así, o agencias, que ayudan a la gente joven, o algo así?

Graciela: Lo que conoce nuestra hija, o las dos hijas de nosotros... ahí hay bastante ayuda... ha sido bastante años que ellas eran jóvenes... pero, pues, no sé, si las también quieras hacer la entrevista algún día de estos con ellas, este te va a ayudar mucho porque una estudió en la Universidad de Hartford, el Women's College, algo así. Estudió y sabe más de estas cosas. Pero tiene que haber ayuda, para los estudiantes, muchísimo, porque siempre en la televisión dice... tiene que ver mucho, pero no...

Sarah: Y para la gente acá en la iglesia, cuando... digamos que hay una situación donde hay una necesidad no satisfecha, ¿a dónde se va cuando necesita conseguir ayuda o consejos?

Graciela: Casi siempre cuando vienen buscando ayuda espiritual, pues depende en ellos.

Jorge: ¿Dice a nosotros?

Graciela: No, a otras personas, cualquier personas.

Sarah: Los dos, yeah.

Graciela: Pues, para nosotros, si necesitamos alguna ayuda espiritual, nos contamos con la parábola [¿] primeramente. Si la parábola no nos puede ayudar... pues, lo inmediato es el parábola, cuando es lo espiritual. Cuando venimos a dónde ellos están... porque la persona que ya no puede ayudar, nos habla, nos llega, tenemos que pensar en este consejo que le puede dar. Para mi, ahí son ellos, porque no veo otro sitio dónde puedo, a ver que sea algo psicológicamente, cuando uno tiene que ver un psicólogo.... que sé yo. Pero espiritualmente, sería así.

Sarah: ¿Y cuando alguien le falta algo material, piensas que se va acá primero, o se va a una agencia, algún servicio?

Graciela: Sí.

Jorge: Bueno, creo que depende... ¿cómo es la pregunta?

Graciela: Que si necesitan algo material, que siguen directamente acá.

Jorge: Bueno, el gobierno provee.

Graciela: Si van acá primero, o van a los otros. Algunos personas han venido.

Jorge: Hablo de la experiencia de nosotros. Bueno, el gobierno ha proveído en algunas circunstancias, alguna clase de apoyo, o ayuda económica.

Graciela: Y vienen acá, pero de aquí se puede ir a otro de estas agencias, oficina, que lo puede ayudar. Por eso hay diferentes agencias. Pero si, vienen acá primero.

Jorge: No no....

Graciela: Sí, así decía Sarah, que si vienen acá primero.

Jorge: Eso no fue la pregunta, no creo.

Graciela: ¿Eso fue la pregunta?

Sarah: No no, sí...

Graciela: Que le haga la pregunta otro vez.

Sarah: Les preguntaba si piensan que una persona, cuando le falta algo material, que vienen acá directamente, o primero se va a una agencia... o ¿cómo es la decisión que se hace?

Jorge: Bueno, depende por la situación.

Graciela: Por eso. Puede ser que vienen acá primero, y les mandan a una agencia, o van directamente a una agencia.

Jorge: Les refieren a algún lugar.

Graciela: Sí, les refieren. Ellos tienen lo que no sabe.

Jorge: La iglesia tiene caritas... [inaudible]... que ayuda a la persona.

Sarah: Claro. A mi me interesa mucho este fenómeno de que se refiere una persona a otra agencia que queda afuera de la iglesia. Porque yo estoy pensando que la iglesia puede ser un espacio de... no sé... una red, se dice, de información, de referencias.

Graciela: Uh-huh, de información. Porque yo veo casi todo eso.

Jorge: A las agencias a que te envían...depende a tus necesidades básicas, tú sabes. Pues, la carita es que la agencia es política [¿]. Sabes, la iglesia....diferentes agencias, seguro.

Graciela: Sí, sí, ellos tienen su oficina donde manda una persona que venga que necesita viviendo, una persona que necesita comida.

Jorge: En ese lado, pues, una persona que te puede ayudar, es Lucy.

Graciela: Sí, tiene que ver a Lucy.

Jorge: Que trabaja en la...directamente.

Graciela: Sabes que tienes que ver a Lucy Nuñez.

Sarah: Lucy?

Graciela: Nuñez.

Sarah: Oh, Lucy Nuñez...no, no la conozco.

Graciela: Sí, viene aquí a la misa. Ella trabaja en la pastora hispana.

Jorge: Sarah, tu la puedes ir con tus preguntas de que departamentos, de ayuda, todo especialidad de ayuda.

Sarah: Puede ser que la conocí.

Graciela: Sí, debe ser que la conociste.

Sarah: Y bueno, ¿pueden comparar la ayuda que recibe acá en la iglesia con lo que recibe en otro lugar? ¿Hay una diferencia, o cómo es?

Graciela: Tiene que ser una diferencia.

Jorge: ¿Compara la ayuda?

Graciela: ¿La ayuda monetaria, o ayuda...?

Sarah: Cosas así, por ejemplo, si yo tengo, por ejemplo...si estoy buscando una educación para mi hija, o algo así...

Jorge: Oh, en esta situación, con esta pregunta no podemos contestar.

Graciela: Sí...

Jorge: Porque no tenemos la formación. Pero si, yo sé que hay colegios católicos, es la misma. Pero si, puede dirigirle a oportunidades. Igual, hay becas que se ofrece a los miembros de la iglesia, que ayuda. Pero esa pregunta, ya no puedo decir mucho más.

Sarah: No, está bien.

Graciela: Sí, porque hay ayuda, en la misma iglesia. Porque si por ejemplo, yo quiero poner a mi hija al colegio, pues como soy miembro de muchos años, tiene que haber una ayuda o...

Jorge: Sí, te cuento...

Graciela: Si, les cuento que soy miembro de muchos años.

Sarah: ¿Tienen interacciones con alguna otra iglesia de Hartford?

Graciela: De católica. Si, conocemos casi todos las parroquias...

Sarah: ¿Cómo se conocen? ¿Por su grupo?

Graciela: Porque los visitamos con el grupo.

Jorge: Sí.

Graciela: Con el grupo. Nos conocen en toda la parroquia...

Sarah: ¿Qué hacen cuando se visita?

Graciela: Vamos y hacemos cosas, o vamos a la misa de la otra parroquia.

Jorge: Diferentes actividades. En la misa que se hace—misas, que se hace por ejemplo para diferentes parroquias.

Graciela: Retiro.

Jorge: Retiro, también. El retiro que son...

Graciela: Retiros son “retreats.”

Sarah: Oh, okay.

Jorge: Ahí compartimos con todo de diferentes parroquias.

Graciela: Somos una familia cuando nos vemos.

Jorge: Somos una familia grande. Sería la palabra.

Graciela: Bien grande.

Jorge: Y compartimos, pues...en esos eventos que se hacen.

Graciela: Compartimos en cómo estamos...

Jorge: Hoy tendremos un concierto. Y aquí, se va a compartir con otros amigos de otras parroquias. Ahí todo compartimos.

Graciela: Y hay música cristiana, Christina music.

Jorge: Después, nos inter-relacionamos, con los hermanos que vienen de otros pueblos.

Sarah: ¿Piensan que este sentimiento de familia, algo así, tiene que ver con que son todos latinos? O...¿no tiene que ver mucho?

Graciela: Bueno como somos...vamos a decir que sí...nosotros compartimos con todo americano.

Jorge: Pues, el idioma a veces...

Graciela: El idioma, no, igual un poquito, porque, sí, entendemos bastante, aunque queremos ser más fluidos, hablar más.

Jorge: Por eso, diría como un compartimiento, para compartir más actividades, en las cosas que se hacen.

Graciela: Pero aquí, en lo que está en la cocina, ellos tienen el desayuno que es café, donuts, para la misa en inglés, y para ellos también, ahí se encuentra uno, y ellos comparten con nosotros. Así se hace más íntimo con ellos. Porque el compartir. Pero sí, compartimos con todo, nos llevamos bien. Como podemos entender, o no, compartimos con ellos. Nos sentimos bien, y nos sentimos como familia—nosotros por acá, y ellos por allá, pero nos sentimos como familia. Por ya estamos aquí.

Sarah: Gracias. Y, ¿hay alguna otra cosa que piensan que me ayudaría más entender la comunidad, o, otra cosa que ya no les pregunté?

E. Focus Group: Father Joseph, Deacon Vincent, Deacon Miguel
Conducted by Sarah Kacevich on 14 November 2012 at Our Lady of Sorrows

[Sarah reads the oral consent form, and all three participants agree. She describes her project briefly.]

Sarah: If you don't mind, before we ask those questions, if you could one by one briefly describe to me basic things about your life, like where you grew up, where you were born, when you came to Hartford, what your family is like, where you live now, that kind of thing. You want to start? [Looks at Joseph.] He wants you to start.

Joseph: I...you already have my name. I was born here in this area. Of Irish immigrant parents. Have always have fought for my...from my seminary days, for the poor. I feel a very...option...I feel that we should have...the poor and Catholic service are equal. And I don't mean just poor in physical lack of food, lack of shelter, et cetra, but spiritually. And we would reach out to people. And I feel that my life has been extremely rewarding. I feel that I've had the cake, and I've been able to eat it, too.

Sarah: Thank you.

Vicente: My name's Vicente. I came here from Puerto Rico in 1969. I came to live in New York, and I from to New York in 1974, when I moved to Connecticut. I have three kids, one died in 1994, of leukemia, and in 1999, I have the call to be in the program for Deacon. And I was all my life involved in the church. In 2004 I be ordained to Deacon service in Hartford. Since then, I be involved with so many things in the church. When I was in [inaudible] session I was in Food Share program at St. Peter's to help people with their necessities. Help people to pay rent, pay bills. In 2009 they transferred me to Our Lady of Sorrows, where I've still been serving up til now. And I still be with the program Food Share—that program that helps the poor people with the food, with the need. And we have a blessing that we have a priest who works with us closely, and helps the poor, because it's one of the...because neither one is shorter, in their amount of commitment...if they want help, then our church is going to help people with their need.

Sarah: Thank you.

Miguel: I come from Puerto Rico in 1979. I come into member of Sacred Heart church in North End of Hartford. I got three children who baptized in the same church, Sacred Heart. And I come in as a teacher of CCD programs. My wife and myself, too. Then, in 1986, I back to Puerto Rico for only a couple months, and then I back in 1987. So, and then I start as member of Immaculate Conception church. And when I start as a member of the Immaculate church, I involved in some visits with the poor. Always to help people, to give the support. And, as a member, to be working in the CCD program, and coordinator of the CCD. And I was so happy, because I work with the missionary of La Salette. Their main mission is to help the other. And I said thank you to priest, Father Jeff, Jeffery Large [?], the pastor in Immaculate Conception church. So that's why, when I met Father Joseph, there, too. Then in 1988, I be coming to the program of the Deacon. In 1982, I ordained in St. Joseph's Cathedral. And, from there, I work to help the community. And then I went to Immaculate to St. Michael, and St. Michael to St. Augustine, and then St. Peter. And finally, I come into Our Lady of Sorrow, like almost 3 years ago, but assigned only this year. Thank you to Father Joseph, Father Brian, who open his hand to receive me to work in this community. So after...I no have no words to say...I'm happy...and not only me, but also my wife, Iris. I think that's my history. Of course, I'm working hard, too. I got my work, too! So that's it.

Sarah: Thank you... No, no ahead.

Miguel: See, I working so hard! And now...[points to sandwich.]

Sarah: That's your reward!

Miguel: Thank you, Sarah.

Sarah: Well, so now I have some questions, and I think that maybe if...not everybody has to respond to every question, because we might run out of time, but, maybe one or two, and if it's something that really interests you, maybe all three can respond...that would be nice. My first one—and you know, whoever wants to answer, you know if you feel like, “oh I really want to talk about that one”—the first one is just, “can you please describe to me the sense of community at Our Lady of Sorrows in a broad sense.”

Vicente: You want to open that?

Joseph: It's a...we've I think during the year, we have two communities. One English-speaking, who's been here for a thousand years. And a burgeoning Spanish community which has been here for a number of years also. But I think what we're trying to sow is a spirit of happiness, that we're glad to be here, as opposed to an obligation. And so, I think as time has gone on, there's a little more cooperation between the two communities. And part of it is age. I mean, a lot of the English-speaking are older. Whereas the Spanish-speaking are younger. And more numerous. But I think I'm impressed by the generosity. It's very difficult to give up. So the English are having a tough time seeing their church take over. And yet, I think the Spanish have been very welcoming as they...I think very considerate of the people. And we've got—most of our activities are Spanish.

Sarah: Alright. Would you guys want to add anything to that—the sense of community at Our Lady of Sorrows?

Vicente: Like Father's saying, it's a multi-cultural community. We have the Anglo, but we have a Hispanic community, we have a Peruvian, Colombian people. And we have the Mexican people. Dominican.

Miguel: Dominican.

Vicente: Dominican, Cuban. So we are...I think we have a variety of cultures in the church. But we also go for one thing, the faith that people have. And they're welcome to come to the church, because remember, many many years ago out Mass—it used to be in the basement of the church, in the Spanish, and now we got to...the Spanish community right now goes to the level, and we do it inside the church. But before, it was a little bit tough time. But now, people understand that faith...there's only one God. We have a good welcome to our church from the Hispanic community, for the Anglos.

Sarah: Thank you. So what about the parish office here? What does it do, how does it work? What are it's objectives?

Joseph: I think the office, what we deal with...every issue, from...it depends on what walks through the door. Some people are sacramental problems, marriage, baptism. And others need help financially. I feel blessed that we're able to help...like a family has been, for example, their utility was cut off for a long time. And, they had an \$1,800 bill, and was able to come up with \$1,500. And the excitement of watching as their utility was turned on yesterday. But there's other cases back...which we've all been involved in.

Sarah: Were they able to find assistance here at the parish office? Or how did they solve their problem?

Joseph: They found assistance here.

Sarah: So...you said some of the reasons why people might come to the parish office. Can someone kind of expand on that? I think I'm most interested in people that come for financial help, or other kinds of help, maybe spiritual help.

Vicente: Well, we have a, like last year, many people coming for food. This year, we tried to change the program, I think it's going to be better. It's going to be open soon, I hope in December. We gonna open the pantry again. A lot of people come in, especially for the hungry, they no have no food in the house. They got so many problems. Most people come because they're hungry. Some people don't have no place to sleep. We are here to help as much as we can. Sometimes they come in with that problem, and we don't have it, we give them another name, and we say, we can't help them, but we try to do the best we can with the knowledge we can do to help people. We never send away the people. We always try to help.

Sarah: So there's a food pantry here at the church?

Vicente: Yup.

Sarah: Oh, okay. Is it here in the office?

Vicente: No, we change to the next building, and right now, we're in progress to do it for next year. Right Father, we're doing it for December, for next year? We're cleaning it, we painting, and...

Joseph: That was the recommendation, Vicente.

Vicente: So we're doing the best we can. Try to open as soon as possible, but we have to wait for regulations, they got to come in and inspect everything, the room, and get the food and everything. But, I think, starting January, we should be open two days a week. And we welcome everybody, we don't send people away. You need a place to eat, or something to eat, we can give it to you.

Sarah: So it's in the old school building?

Vicente: Yeah, 139.

Sarah: I'll have to remember to bring my donations.

Vicente: 139.

Joseph: 39. Not 139.

Sarah: Thanks.

Joseph: It's...I hadn't thought about [inaudible].

Miguel: The church is, Our Lady of Sorrow, you have to be proud, the parishioner, to have two priests, and multiple—more than one deacon—but most of it, the priest look forward to seeing our community needed. And that's...like the priest go visit in the house, the hospital. Other issues...and to give the time to the parishioner. And that makes a difference, and that's why you see the family coming, and no be afraid. See, you need it...and that's why you're here, like what the priest and deacon say.

Sarah: So, are the people that come to the parish office or the food pantry, looking for help—are they the same people that also go to mass? And are those people registered members of the church?

Vicente: Oh, no.

Joseph: Some.

Miguel: Some.

Vicente: Some.

Sarah: Some are registered, or some go to mass?

Joseph: Both.

Vicente: Some...we have people that come from outside the church, sometimes they come from inside, sometimes they come from the North End. They come to this area, from different area.

Sarah: How do you think that they find out about the help they can get here?

Miguel: Hey, Our Lady of Sorrow! La Salette Missionary!

Vicente: We have a saying... "letting the poor come welcome to us."

Miguel: Yeah.

Vicente: That's why the church is...help.

Sarah: Do you think they might have found out just word of mouth, you know hearing from...

Vicente: Yeah, people talking, and if you come with the program the Food Share, they give you the church name and telephone where you can come and get the food.

Sarah: So Food Share sends them to the food pantry.

Miguel: And sometimes it's the parishioner coming to the church, coming from a different area. It could be the North, South, you know...and then, when they got, maybe in the family, they speak with one another, and say, "I go there."

Vicente: And you know, you were Sunday in the mass, when we gave the message to the people, that we are going to collect the food? For our pantry. So we offer it to the public, so people know that we have a pantry...I say, I know at the pantry, if you want something, you're wanting to go over there...so we ask people from the church to help us. For the lucky ones to bring food for the other ones.

Miguel: The Catholic church, there's only one, you know? It can be here, it can be there.

Vicente: No, my church is Puerto Rican. My church is not Roman. No, it's Puerto Rican.

Miguel: Puerto Rican? Oh, yeah...

Vicente: Catholic, and Apostolic, Puerto Rican.

Miguel: He do good.

Joseph: Part of the awareness, I think, is all three of us have worked in the corridor of Park Street. [Miguel: Oh yeah!] And up here...I'm very...I started...I found this person frozen to death on the street, and I started the shelter the Immaculate.

Sarah: Oh! I heard that story. Wow...[Father Brian walks into the room.] Hi, Father Brian, how are you?

Brian: Hi, Sarah. Good to see you.

Sarah: Good to see you. You, too.

Brian: Did you get all your answers?

Sarah: We're working on it. I'm drawing them out.

Joseph: She asked how to spell your name, and we couldn't do it.

Brian: I'll call Ireland, and see what the proper spelling is. You've got a nice...look at that, you've got a nice lunch.

Sarah: Yeah! You hungry? Have a sandwich.

Brian: Oh, no thank you. I ran over there....

Sarah: Okay.

Brian: I don't know if I really...I wasn't really in tune with what...I heard about it, but I didn't really mark it on my calendar.

Sarah: Yeah, that's okay. You're welcome to join if you're not busy, but it looks like you've got stuff to do.

Brian: I'm going to go upstairs. I have to get this bulletin done.

Sarah: Yeah, yeah, of course.

Brian: We're doing two, in time for Thanksgiving. [Leaves room.]

Sarah: So wow, I had heard that story about Immaculate Conception...quite a few times, actually, and I didn't realize that...

Miguel: And also, the parishioner...you know for, especially Thanksgiving, a different parishioner will give it to this person who need it.

Sarah: Wow.

Miguel: And this year, we want to expand it, right?

Vicente: Yeah. Thanksgiving Day, we go to the Food Share...to the shelter on Park St., the one with Father...

Miguel: Dennon? [?]

Vicente: Jim made it a long time ago. Every year, on Thanksgiving Day, every church has their turn giving food for the people, for the shelter.

Miguel: And also, the Anglo people come in to....to give the volunteer service. It's not only for the common...for the suburban. That's, to me, what makes us a family, we work together for the same cause. *Viste que ya está aprendiendo español ahora.* [Notice that she's already learning Spanish now.]

Vicente: Yeah, *hay que aprender.* [Yeah, you have to learn.]

Miguel: *Sarah ya habla en español.* [Sarah already speaks Spanish.]

Sarah: *Siempre hay que seguir aprendiendo.* [You always have to keep learning.]

Miguel: See!

Sarah: *Conversando, ¿no? Ya no me importa mucho escribir, todo eso...conversar.* [Conversing, no? It's not as important to me now to write, all of that...but conversing.] Alright, well, could you please describe the background of people that come speaking help. Like, their socioeconomic status, their age, their family structure, their ethnicity, where in Hartford they're from... those kinds of things.

Vicente: It's hard to tell you the background of the people because we have so many...they're coming from everywhere. And only we...we don't have...we don't like to go into the privacy of that people. We know...the names, and the situation, so when they leave, from there we help them. But sometimes people, they're afraid to give their information, their background, because they think...even though the church protects them, they think that something's...some information, they embarrassed to say it.

Miguel: It's private.

Sarah: How come you think that is?

Vicente: Because they got people, they come in, the immigrant. They no have a....green card to be in United States, and they afraid to...sometimes those people, they come in, and they afraid to give any information.

Sarah: Yeah. Do you think that might be maybe because of experiences they had getting help in other places?

Miguel: Well, see, remember, all the time they knew, they knew about immigrant...about people call the immigrant like it's someone who isn't supposed to be here. What do you call it? You got another...another name for immigrant...it's...I forgot...but... "alien."

Joseph: Alien.

Sarah: Yeah, alien.

Miguel: You think that's fair? You know, this is a child [?], too. But, in the same, way, I can't go in the house and say, "can you please give me all your information?" That's too much. But when I go to the house, and I say, "what you need?" And then I feel more proud. When you give, you

no ask, no, you give it. And because, question too much, is like...I don't want to give you my whole...¿cómo se dice, 'biografía?' [How do you say, 'story?']

Vicente: Biography.

Sarah: Life history, yeah.

Miguel: It's not...you have to be a nice person, you know, you come and you say...

Sarah: Do you go to people's houses?

Miguel: Oh yeah, everybody goes to the house, yeah.

Vicente: [Pointing to an envelope that Joseph has on the table.] Who give you that?

Joseph: Some guy just come to the door, and said...

Miguel: You know, the priest go to the house, the hospital, the church. Convalescent home. Like, Park Place, right here.

Sarah: What is Park Place? I've seen the building.

Joseph: Convalescent home.

Miguel: Right here.

Joseph: That's great. [Gesturing to the envelope.]

Vicente: Yeah. That's why it's important when we see them.

Joseph: Yeah, this guy, has come to the door, he wouldn't tell me his name, just Mike. He gave us four gift cards to Stop and Shop.

Sarah: Aww, just now?

Joseph: Well yeah, before.

Sarah: Recently. That's really nice. Does that happen a lot?

Joseph: Well, lately since we've been doing this...a guy last week came and gave about \$350. We gave it out. It came in, it went out quickly.

Vicente: I gotta have my turkey here...

Sarah: Yeah, feel free to have more sandwiches, there are two more if you're hungry.

Vicente: Okay, I'll give one to Rosa.

Sarah: Okay, so you told me a little bit, so tell me if—if somebody comes here asking for help, what kind of response do you give them? Do you give information, do you refer them to an agency, do you refer them to another person that could help them?

Vicente: First, we try to help from the church. And we...we can help, and then we transfer then to another agency. But we try to—95% we try to serve it in here. We no letting go...we never say "no, I cannot help you"—we try to help them as much as we can, to make a reference, or we get somebody to make some phone call and say, "Hey, I'm gonna send some people over there that needs help." We try to help as much as we can. We never send people away.

Joseph: Yeah, I mean there's always the con-man that comes. Where they have a different story every day, from their wife dying last night to she broke her arm today.

Miguel: Yeah, or two more people died. Two more people died, eh, Father?

Sarah: Why do you think people make up stories?

Joseph: Well they want...they want...to get out your sympathies that you give them. I have a hard time not giving, personally. And it's...but it doesn't do it very good for the pocket-book.

Sarah: If somebody were to come in here and you were to give—refer them to another person, who would that be? Would it be like a parishioner, would it be a leader within the church, or just somebody you know from outside the church?

Miguel: You have to know, for send the person, to who you gonna send them. And, the concern of the person, too. Because you don't want to send a person you don't know to someone, and then, someone receive, and maybe sometime he don't know my name, either.

Sarah: So you would send someone to a parishioner that you knew? Okay.

Miguel: To a parishioner, yes.

Sarah: Okay.

Miguel: And you know, call, call, because sometimes the person—I send this person there, and...

Sarah: Does that usually work?

Miguel: Sometimes when the person come in and...sometime when they need something, and then when you send it, of course, she go, but sometimes the person you know...come in and only...maybe gonna disappear along the way.

Joseph: Yeah, and we had someone for example who had an operation, and his conditions, his home condition was not supportive. He needed care, and would be by himself all the time.

Because his roommate worked. So he came and moved in here for...[Vicente: Three weeks.] ...three or four weeks. A parishioner, one particularly, came with breakfast, dinner, and supper, brought him three meals a day.

Sarah: Oh, wow. So you invited him to move in here?

Joseph: Right, and we might have other guests this weekend, who are being displaced because of paint.

Sarah: Cus of...?

Joseph: Some health thing on paint in their house.

Sarah: Oh, oh, lead paint, yeah.

Joseph: Lead paint, yeah. So a lot of that we're able to...I mean this house is too big. We have a bowling alley upstairs. But AA meets here every night.

Sarah: Yeah, I saw the sign.

Joseph: Yup. We have a cop who comes in here and uses an office downstairs to do his paperwork.

Sarah: How come he has his office here?

Joseph: How come he has his office here?

Sarah: Yeah.

Joseph: Cus he asked. I don't know why he did. Originally, they, before our time, the police had a presence here. And, then I got mugged in the backyard.

Vicente: But look at him now, he's Rocky Balboa now.

Joseph: Yeah, Rocky Balboa!

Sarah: Right, right, that will be his nickname in the essay.

Joseph: I fought back!

Miguel: He fought back!

Vicente: With the people outside.

Miguel: He say, look at me, I'm Rocky Balboa!

Sarah: So what do you mean, there were police around, just to be watching out?

Joseph: One person. He comes and does paperwork, a neighborhood kid.

Sarah: So if you were to refer somebody to an actual agency, or a service, what kinds of services might you refer someone to? Can you think of some names or examples?

Vicente: Well, Catholic Charities.

Sarah: Catholic Charities? Yeah, okay.

Joseph: 2-1-1.

Sarah: Is that new, or has that been around for a while now?

Vicente: It's been around for a good while. They'll give you all the information that you need, the 2-1-1.

Sarah: Like what? So it's like a directory?

Joseph, Vicente: Yeah.

Joseph: What shelters are available, where you get food.

Vicente: You need lawyer, whatever you need. You find there.

Sarah: So you would tell them, "call 2-1-1," and they'll tell you. Okay.

Vicente: Yeah, yeah.

Sarah: And so Catholic Charities, what specifically within Catholic Charities?

Vicente: They got so many offices, and they got so many programs. You send the person to the program they need.

Joseph: Yeah, counseling. They've dealt with—help rent assistance.

Miguel: It's much better when they can help families, you know, with their troubles, things like that.

Vicente: They've got their free programs.

Sarah: So that's within mostly the migration and refugee services at Catholic Charities?

Miguel: I think it's at the Center for...

Joseph: I don't think it's a specific one.

Sarah: Just all of them, okay. I went to visit there one time, the one kinda like downtown, that's in an old church? Can't remember what that street is called, though.

Joseph: Main? No I'm just kidding.

Vicente: Yeah they have different ones. We have one here, and then they have one in the North End, they got in Wethersfield, they got in different offices. Right now, this time, the people looking for heat. And the come over here, where they can find people to help, and we send them to CRT, because CRT's a program that help them.

Sarah: Oh, CRT's right in the school building, right?

Vicente: That's a one of the program, that's a child, daycare.

Sarah: So what's CRT, in general?

Joseph: They're a provider of a variety of services. And I think they're city-wide?

Vicente: City-wide, yeah.

Joseph: It's not region-wide, I don't know if they're outside of the region. Outside of the city, I don't know.

Miguel: It depends on the condition of the person. What need the person...because it's like YMCA.

Vicente: YMCA is more privacy.

Miguel: YMCA more privacy, but also it does something for women...

Vicente: It's a shelter.

Joseph: I find that there's great cooperation between agencies.

Vicente, Miguel: Yup, mhm.

Joseph: The problem is lack of communication. What's available, where is it available, et cetra. But 2-1-1 I have found has been a...if you can get through.

Miguel: Sometimes, too many calls.

Sarah: So, do people ever come in here describing questions, like issues that they had with services from other agencies? Do they ever have trouble understanding what that agency is telling them? Do they ever talk about that kind of stuff? And if they do, what do you respond, and how do you try to help them?

Joseph: I guess it raises the cackles of your...hair....because it's often times...I think it raises more questions about being used. I mean, we have a person that comes here every...maybe twice a week at night. And I've never heard so many stories of "my wife..."

Vicente: Miguel?

Joseph: No, George.

Vicente: And I have a girl coming every other week, "oh, I don't have no money for my medicine, but my check is coming in the mail, right now I need \$20 for my medicine, because my check coming \$20 to you." You find a lot of people's stories and...who to believe? If it's true or not true. I say, money, ok, we try to help if we have it, if it's 20, I give it to you.

Miguel: Sometimes, it's better give it, and then forget. Because...

Joseph: Oh yeah, you can't worry about them taking advantage.

Vicente: You can't think, \$20, you gonna go and buy drug, cheap. If you need \$20 for—what's the use, I don't care. We provide.

Joseph: I mean, I paid the rent for a family for 18 months. And the woman got married, then, to a Hartford cop. And I said, I don't feel justified in paying your rent anymore. And she didn't talk to me for a couple years. So then...but I wouldn't stop. I don't think you can take that case and apply it to the next person. And it's...you just gotta know that you might be taken, and you can't worry about it.

Miguel: And sometimes, people take advantage, of some...come in, and take advantage of.

Vicente: But you have to guess, that's the problem. Some people take advantage of what you're doing, but how can you adjust to something like that? You cannot say no to one person, and yes to the other one...cus then you make it a "how?"

Sarah: How to distinguish...

Vicente: How to distinguish the people.

Joseph: I think we're very blessed with Vicente and Miguel who have...who are part of the community, and are able to discern need more than we are [looks at Sarah] as rookies. Though we won't admit it.

Sarah: So, if you were able to compare the help that somebody could receive at an agency, versus what they could receive at the parish office, how would you compare?

Vicente: It's that you're coming to a church.

Joseph: I think there's a distinction in the moment. I think we...we can be able to compete with anybody. But in the long run, I don't think we can sustain that help. We just...

Miguel: And depends on the situation, too, you know. Sometimes, you can handle it, but sometimes you are too, unable to do it, too.

Vicente: And what happens sometimes with this program, you have to go, and you have to make a day, you have to make an appointment. By the time they give you the appointment and the day you gotta go, it's...if you're having a program with get something to eat, and the program doesn't have food supply, and you're waiting, so they come into the church who can supply in the moment, that moment.

Sarah: Right, so maybe the church sort of fills the gaps in for other...?

Joseph: We're the mortar, not the brick.

Miguel: And also you can see, La Salette is missionary. Alright, the mission to bring to the poor, to anyone who needs.

Joseph: Miguel, you're scoring points.

Vicente: Yeah, La Salette.

Miguel: What?

Joseph: I said you're scoring points!

Miguel: No no, but the...this is good because you know it's like...Father went to Argentina, well, he no go there to help the church, he go to...see the *people* need. It's...if I go to the rich, I go to the St. Joseph Cathedral.

Vicente: That's the rich?

Miguel: Well, most of the people say, well this is the cathedral, but sometimes it's not what the people are thinking...[Joseph: Expecting.] ...it's what the church, and especially, you come here with our Diocese, and you come here with La Salette. La Salette have to take care of everything, and it's a division, but it's also like, La Salette try to be there with the needs of people. And that's completely different when you go to somewhere in Hartford first. And what you need is what you need. It's now, it's not tomorrow. If you come into here, and don't see Father Jaime, Father Joseph, here, you won't be happy, understand? You go knock the door, and maybe come in the secretary, and the priest not there? So...where you feel more happy? When you open the door and you see the priest there? That's what you want, and that's one of the mission of La Salette, you know. I live by example, by the Word, and then go with the people. And not too many priests...lot of priests, but not too many people going inside with the people, especially with them suffering.

Joseph: You got a lot more?

Sarah: Like two more.

Miguel: No crying, Father, no crying.

Sarah: What about, what role do other parishioners play in helping people navigate their needs? I'm wondering if some of the groups like *Cursillo* or even religious ed., might be helpful to form relationships between parishioners? Especially the ones that are more established, versus the ones that recently came in here.

Vicente: We go two groups that are established. *Cursillo* and Prayer Group. They do a lot for the church, they meeting every week, and they bringing people from...to grow in faith...and growing in faith, they come more faithful to the church. And then they got the Movement, the *Cursillo* Movement, which is a group which is more, I would say, more sacramental, because to do a *Cursillo*, you have to live the sacraments. And Prayer Group is open to everybody to come. And then, when they come, we try to work with them, to work on a sacrament. Because a lot of the people come to the Prayer Group that they don't have this sacrament, a few sacraments they missing. So, with the Prayer Group and the *Cursillo* movement, what we try to do is to help those people to grow in faith, and to be more reactive to what the church does in here.

Miguel: For example, this Saturday.

Vicente: This past weekend.

Miguel: Or this Sunday, for our Lady of Providence. But this Saturday, no matter what cultural—Peruvian, Colombian, anyone—coming to this St. Joseph Cathedral, in Spanish, for Our Lady of Providence. Everybody coming together in the celebration. But in a different...our different parish...Our Lady of Sorrow, St. Augustine, St. Peter, you got a celebration each parish got a big celebration for Our Lady of Providence. So everybody coming together, bring food. That's one of the parts who make our community more strong. See, the faith of the community, when you coming together, is no matter what nationality, it's only one faith. So that's make a big difference. And when it's someone in need, like Father said, or Deacon Vicente said, when someone suffering...and then the family coming together, trying to make an activity, to make a funding for that person. So the communities coming more strong. And also, help the family, and

the family coming more close to us. I give you always, I'm sorry Father, this is my sermon for today!

Sarah: He's practicing!

Miguel: I can't believe that.

Joseph: That was good.

Sarah: Are people that are in *Cursillo* and Prayer Group and stuff, do they also come here looking for help, or are those kind of different sets of people?

Vicente: No.

Miguel: See that's different when the person...he believe what he doing...this is the person coming together to make possible to do it what need in the community. See, the group, for example, tomorrow, I mean tonight, we got the Parish Council. The meeting and discuss any activity or any need in the church. And Father Jim and Deacon Vicente can answer that more.

Vicente: I was gonna...for example...in another parish, the daughter have a transplant, a kidney transplant. You know that's very expensive. And in our church, our community, we made a dinner to raise money to help those people with the money. And it was successful. We got a \$1,000 to help her. And that's what the church is, we help each other, one to another. Love me like I love you. *Cursillo* Movement, and the Prayer, the people come to them, and they asking, and they don't take the position themselves...they have to bring to the table, in our meeting, then Father Jim, Father Brian, they said yes, they approve it, or don't approve it, or put a question mark. Cus sometimes, they come in with problem, but we have to dig for what the problem is, cus sometimes they just say they got a problem. Try and take advantage of the church, too. So it's something that we have to sometimes give a question mark. We can help everybody, but sometimes we have to question mark, because they take advantage of the church.

Miguel: Like me, see, I'm here...and Father, too. It's true, Father.

Vicente: Last year, we have the Food Share program here. You know how many people registered? For turkey, over 300 people. And Food Share only supply us with 240, and we had to run for money from the church, we had to run to Stop and Shop to complete the order, to give it to the people, to the people who need dinner. But sometimes, it's hard, to view...sometimes, money-wise, too tight...we cannot help everybody, we try to do something, but then the church needs it. They need. Maintain the church, it's not easy. Especially wintertime, with those big bills coming. But so far, we have a response from the people, so far.

Sarah: I have one more question, can you believe it?

Vicente: Goodnight!

Sarah: I'm getting out of here! Well I'm wondering about a sense of social justice. I think you've touched on it all, a little bit. But would you say that among those who work at the parish office, or are otherwise active in the church, that there's a sense, or an objective of social justice? If there is, how would you describe it to me?

Joseph: Yeah...I think it's...I think our philosophy is that every person is unique. And I feel very strongly if one person is discriminated against, then we all lose. So...we've tried to make people welcome...like the gay community. And I have a group that comes for confession, regularly, for the gay community. I probably, used to be the world's worst homophobic. But I've never seen...I think part of the...looking for ways that people can be exposed to faith by anybody...we're...we have people...for example, I think the other...we have a number of people come for community service for the courts. They come here and spend time, whatever their hours they have to work, for, like we have someone come in every Sunday, who has to put in six hours every Sunday. We have someone put in 30 hours in a limited period of time. But, you're

also hoping not only that they are exposed to other things of kindness, and greeting, and welcoming. Cus I think those are all things that are part of social justice...I think sometimes we become very myopic in what we think of as someone who...we someone in relationship to the church, but we don't see someone in relationship to themselves. And, every person is...my philosophy is, every day, you should get up, and say "I love you." Because God loves you. Sometimes, it's very difficult when you look back at that face...but, I think it gives...people have been...I know when I was pastor of the Immaculate, down on Park St., we used to have a philosophy, "Send us your poor, 24-7." Well, people would come at 3 o'clock on the morning, 2 o'clock in the morning, sometimes 5 or 6 times a night, the bell would ring, someone wanted food, or something. And we tried to serve it with a smile. Because it's easy to do it at noon time, but 3 o'clock in the morning? Who's there? But really to see that every person, it's Christ present, and how we serve that this person, whatever their needs may be, is Christ, and we're not just doing it for that person, but this person has value, and meaning, and is loved by somebody. And I think we see...sometimes the lack of social justice in families. They're not...like they were talking about, I think Father Brian was talking about someone who was anointed, in the hospital, and had 7 siblings, and no one comes to visit him. That's...we look at Petraeus [?], and Allen, and all those people. And yet, which is your greater atrocity? The cruelty that we do to one another. So, we have people with records, who come here, and do some volunteer work. So you're looking at the person, rather than the issue.

Sarah: How do you think your time in South America might have influenced your sense of social justice?

Joseph: When I look back, I remember in Argentina, in the *campo* [country], there was a young girl...attractive little, young, very small, and crippled. And we came upon her in some out-of-the-way place cus she was...and she was...I was so touched, cus she would talk to us...now this is way out the Boondocks, talk about...that we wouldn't talk to us without makeup. She had to go into the house, and make up her face, and...and it really brought out the value of people as people. I mean, she had nothing, I mean, a shack, and crippled, and yet she had a pride in herself. Which helped, and influenced me, in terms of saying, anytime I...belly-search...I'm doing a justice to me, as well as the people I serve. And I think of her often. And I think of...I think it was what caused me, personally, to live poor for a while, and take care of three children, raise three Puerto Rican children. And adopt one. And I don't think I would have been able to do it without my South American experience. And I got three great kids, so I have my cake and I eat it, too.

Sarah: How old are they now?

Joseph: The oldest is 40, who was a very angry young man...was angry at the world for years and years. The second is 33, and she's blind. And the third is 27, just got married.

Sarah: Wow.

Vicente: You know who...[inaudible]

Joseph: The what?

Vicente: Who come in like that.

Miguel: You say "I'm the master today," but also "I'm going to celebrate." Be so proud...*muy orgulloso* [very proud.]

Joseph: Of the kids? Oh, God yes, they're...I mean, I have no family...biological family...so, when the kid calls me last night, and she says...which she did a couple of months ago, she didn't say this last night...she said a couple months ago, "Everyone's calling you Father. Can I still call you Dad?"

Miguel: What she saying? Father?

Joseph: Well it's, there's a difference.

Vicente: Different language, "Dad," and "Father."

Joseph: Certainly a different meaning. Expressions of love...I mean I never thought I would say, "I love you!" to a 27-year-old beautiful girl. So it's...I'm proud I raise them.

Miguel: Father, oh yeah.

Joseph: But anyway, yeah, it had an influence, to talk about it in a roundabout way. But it's...I was up in the hills of Peru, by, in the Andes. And the dirt roads, and the...every priest was a kind of Paramore...it was great. But, a great experience. And, Brazil with the *favelas* [shanty-towns] touched me. Where someone would stop me and say, "Oh, *Padre* [Father], come and see my house!" and it was a tin wall, tin roof, and they were so proud of the fact that they had this. And the latrine was running down the hill, out in the middle. But they were so proud. The big thing it taught me, what comes, goes. I don't spend much money on myself. But I do give lots of money away. God has provided for me. So, your whole life I think, is a learning experience. Vicente and Miguel have taught me things...some things I'd like to forget, but...no, they've been...I'm very impressed...very wise. And I appreciate that greatly. Because I think when you go to the...I was on our Provincial Council, and I was the hatchet man, so when there was something wrong, it was my obligation to go and confront. I was the confronter. So it's...but, I think my whole life has been a learning experience. Grew up in a house with no heat or hot water. My mother died when I was 6, and my father was an immigrant from Ireland, who didn't know how to cook. And he would cook for me, and I had my aunt, my mother's sister, call every time it was the meal time, and he'd have to go in the other room to answer the phone, and I'd get rid of the food. Cus he would...he never knew what condiments were. So, fish was on a platter, on a pan. And the smell, oh God, I can still smell it, I can't eat it.

Sarah: Well, thank you.

Joseph: Sarah, it's been a pleasure.

Sarah: Thank you, are you kidding?

Miguel: *Muchas gracias*. [Thanks very much.]

Sarah: *No, a usted*. [No, thank you.]

Miguel: *Usted tiene que hablar español porque así se sigue aprendiendo, okay?* [You have to keep speaking Spanish, because that way you keep learning, okay?]

Sarah: *Por supuesto*. [Of course.]

Miguel: *Y entonces, eso, después lo transmites en español, y sales muy bien. Mucha suerte con tus entrevistas*. [And, then, after, you can write this in Spanish, and it will go very well. Best of luck with the interviews.]

Sarah: *No, muchas muchas gracias a ustedes, lo aprecio bastante. Me ayuda mucho, y aprendí bastante. Cualquier otra cosa que quieren decir, no duden en decirme. Voy a seguir viniendo a la misa, visitandoles, cosas así...no les dejo!* [No, many thanks to you guys, I appreciate it a lot. It helps me a lot, and I learned a lot. Whatever thing that you want to say, don't hesitate to tell me. I'm going to keep coming to the mass, visiting you guys, things like that...I'm not going to leave you alone!]

Joseph: *¡Bien!* [Good!]

Sarah: Thank you so much. And I know you guys are busy, I took up a lot of time.

Miguel: *Cualquier cosa, que tu necesites*. [Whatever you need.]

F. Interview Transcription: Sister Allison**Conducted by Sarah Kacevich on 15 November 2012 at Jubilee House**

[Allison reads the oral consent and agrees.]

Sarah: My first question is, could you tell me about your role and your work at Jubilee House? What is it that you do every day here?

Allison: Everything. No, basically, I organize the English as a Second Language program. I match students with teachers. So, there are some teachers that have one student; there are some teachers that have two. There's a few people who have little groups. And, if a student isn't here, then I try to make sure that I can match a person so that the person's not here uselessly doing nothing. Because I feel it's important that if somebody volunteers to help, then somebody be there to work with. Now if I know, that their student isn't going to be there, and they don't need them, then I call them. But usually something always works out where somebody doesn't come, and I am able to match people up. I have right now, about 50 tutors and about 55 students. Some students come just one day, there's just a few that come only one day. And a number of them will come two days, three days, and four days. Everybody...well, not everybody, would like to come four days. But, I don't have enough teachers to do that. And we have class from 9:30-11:30. I ask them that once they set their foot inside the Jubilee House doors, that only English is spoken. Unless they are explaining something to someone that doesn't understand, then they can explain in Spanish. And we have class everyday from 9:30-11:30, and at 10:30 we have a break where we have coffee and snacks, and the main purpose of the break is to have conversation. And, every...periodically we have to bring them back to English. Because if one person starts to speak in Spanish, then it's like a disease. It just runs through the room. But the majority of them are good about it. But, also, they have...they get a little card with my name, my Jubilee House number, and if they are not coming, they're supposed to call me. and they really need to call me by 8 o'clock in the morning, so that the tutor's not already on their way. And I explain to them, the importance of this is because of where tutors live, and the expense of gas. And then any time that I have too many students, and not enough tutors, I also teach. Like right now I'm teaching Wednesdays and Thursday's, because the regular teachers' husband is sick, so she hasn't been back this semester at all.

Sarah: I didn't realize you were teaching, too. Do you enjoy it?

Allison: Oh I do. But the difficulty in teaching too much is then, it's difficult for me to follow what's going on, and meeting the needs of the tutors.

Sarah: Cus you're focused...

Allison: Cus I'm in another room. And the other thing that they also receive is a storm policy notice. So that when we follow Hartford Public Schools—if Hartford Public Schools has no school, then we have no classes. And if Hartford Public Schools has a delay, then we have no classes, because by the time they get their children to school, it's...most of them have already missed class.

Sarah: Yeah, okay. Thanks. Could you tell me a little bit about your educational background? Your secular background and your training to be a Sister?

Allison: Yes, my...I got my B.A. when I was in the convent. We had a college at that time, and the college courses were given in West Hartford. So I got my BA there. I got my first Masters in Education, with a concentration in reading, at the University of Hartford. Many moons ago. And my second Masters degree with a concentration in Curriculum, I got at Boston College. And when I was in the convent, we had classes everyday, in spirituality, and history of the

congregation, and...we were what we called in the novicia [?], in training, for two years. First six months, we were trained as what apostolate, which is a very new person, and then two years in training. And then at the end of two years, I made my temporary profession, and then three years later, I made my final profession.

Sarah: What's the difference?

Allison: The difference is, temporary profession, you know it's temporary, it doesn't mean that I have committed myself forever, in what I do. Final profession, is I've chosen to be a Sister of St. Joseph for life.

Sarah: Oh okay, gotcha. So your Bachelor's was through the Sisters of St. Joseph?

Allison: It was through the college that we had, yes.

Sarah: Oh okay, in West Hartford.

Allison: In West Hartford, yes.

Sarah: Okay, so St. Joseph's is still in West Hartford right?

Allison: St. Joseph's college is run by the Sisters of Mercy...it's not...there were basically three colleges that were, like, together, but held in different places. It was a college at Mercy Center. Which was the novicia for the Sisters of Mercy. And then the Holy Spirit sisters.

Sarah: Oh, okay, it's kind of confusing.

Allison: Yes, it's very confusing.

Sarah: That helps, though.

Allison: So just, basically my training, my B.A. was in West Hartford. Basically in the convent, cus that's where the college classes were. And some of the teachers came in, but some of them were sisters that were already there.

Sarah: Oh, okay. So what made you want to become a Sister of St. Joseph?

Allison: I think just a desire to help people, to have more spirituality in my life.

Sarah: Why is that work important to you?

Allison: It's important to me because I just feel that there's so many people who don't have things that they need. Like, I've taught elementary school, not kindergarten, but the rest of the years through 8th grade. And I've been in different places. I've been in poor places, and I've been in well-to-do places. And like sometimes, when I was, I was also a principal.

Sarah: Oh, yeah, where?

Allison: In West Hartford, St. Thomas the Apostle. And like sometimes, I would say to the children there, "you have no idea what it means to not have your potato chips." And basically, that's why I left teaching. Was because I felt that I was being called to work with poor people who didn't have the education that they needed, or that they didn't have life skills, or they didn't have the necessities of life. So I was one of the founding women of Trust House, which was a family learning center.

Sarah: Oh, okay.

Allison: And that opened in 1995. And basically, it was for education for women. And then we had a program for children while the mothers were studying. And then expanded to include men and women.

Sarah: Is it still around today?

Allison: No.

Sarah: Aw, what happened?

Allison: Financial difficulties.

Sarah: And it was here in Hartford?

Allison: Yes, it was in the Church of the Good Sheppard. And it closed in 2008.

Sarah: Oh, that's too bad.

Allison: Yeah, it was a great, great place.

Sarah: Is that when you came to Jubilee House?

Allison: Well, what happened after that is I took some time off, and then I worked with Sister Allison Cane at Tabor House. In June of 2009, I got a call from Sister Paula that they needed someone in Development, so I said "no, I can't do that." And then the person who ran the English as a Second Language program left, and so that's when I took over.

Sarah: Oh, okay, so it was 2009.

Allison: Yeah.

Sarah: Okay. So when I came here, you hadn't been here too long.

Allison: No, I hadn't. When you came...

Sarah: Oh, I didn't realize that.

Allison: When you came here to tutor, I hadn't been here long.

Sarah: Well you're so experienced, I was like "oh, she's been here forever."

Allison: Yeah, well I have a lot of experience in my life. And I think with the people and the immigrants who come here, one of my gifts is that I've taught so many different grades. And especially like that I've taught first grade, second grade—right down where the basics are. Because there's some people who come from countries where they had no education. So, you really need to be able to start from basics.

Sarah: Would you consider your work here with ESOL to be inspired by your faith? And if you do, in what way?

Allison: I would say yes. Because I believe that I'm called. I'm called to be here. I'm called to meet the people's needs. And one of the things that's very, very pronounced here is there has never, ever been a single issue culturally, between any of the members that come here. And I think that my belief in God is a strength for me. And I think that I probably gain much more from them than I give them. They are most, most grateful for whatever you do for them.

Sarah: That's interesting, what you're saying about how there's never been an issue culturally.

Allison: Never. Because when I was at Trust House, when we were first starting it, it was the...the housing projects. And there was...

Sarah: It was located there?

Allison: It was, here was [gesturing on the table] the Church of the Good Sheppard. One housing project was here, there was a housing project here, there was a housing project across the street, there was a housing project down in the back. And they all had turf issues. So that one time, we were going to hold a meeting in Dutch Point, and we went for a walk around the neighborhood. And as we went from neighborhood to neighborhood, people would tell me that they couldn't come for different reasons. So then we held all our meetings in the Church of the Good Sheppard because it was a neutral site. So as long as it was a neutral site, it was fine.

Sarah: Do you think that those tensions were based on something ethnic? Or do you think that it was more based on people's affiliations with their housing project?

Allison: Well, I think it was probably both. Or also, at that point in time, Dutch Point was the worst one.

Sarah: Oh, okay. Where in Hartford is this—was this?

Allison: Wyllys Street.

Sarah: That's not too far from here.

Allison: No, it's not. And see like, Wyllys Street...this was Dutch Point, this was Martin Luther King. Martin Luther King was a little bit better. Twin Acres was a little bit better. The one across

the street was better, cus they were like co-ops. But, the worst homes to go in were Dutch Point. Not great in Martin Luther King, but they were a little bit better. And I think that....what people need here also is lots of affirmation. They feel like if they can't speak well, so they don't want to speak...so they need a lot of affirmation, they need a lot of encouragement, and they need to know that they're doing well...one of their habits is to say "sorry." So I say, "I don't want to hear 'sorry'." Like if they make a move—"sorry." If they can't come, "sorry." So I try to instill in them that you don't say you're sorry, you say, "I'm having a little difficulty." But you're coming, you're learning, you're doing better than you were last week. But they really need a lot of affirmation, and encouragement. Like, I'm presently working with the students from the Karen tribe. So they had no education, when they were there, because they were in camps. And so, one young women said to me, "this is very difficult." And I said, "I know, but we practice, practice, practice, so it won't be difficult." But it's...another thing that's very hard for them, for all of the student who come here, if they have children, the young children will speak to them, but the older children won't.

Sarah: Speak to them in English? Yeah.

Allison: Speak to them in English, yeah. And the reason I believe that they won't, is because they're teenagers, they're busy, they have their music, they have all their activities, and they don't have the patience to wait while their parents have to process before they can speak. And the other difficulty is that 9 times out of 10, at work, it's mostly all their same language. So it's not English.

Sarah: Right, because they're working with other people...

Allison: Other people of the same culture. So they don't have a lot of chance to speak English. That's why when we have our break at 10:30, it has to be English. Because I say to some of them, "this is the only place that you have to speak English, and you can't get better unless you practice speaking."

Sarah: Well, that actually leads me into what I was going to ask next. Is...I'm thinking about other places in Hartford where other immigrants can receive English classes. So, do you know about a lot of other places?

Allison: Literacy Volunteers. That's over on Arbor St. Hartford Adult Ed. But they don't really like Hartford Adult Ed.

Sarah: Oh, how come?

Allison: Because they tend to have larger clases. So I think they probably tend to cater to the ones that can do better. Also, the library does it. But they don't care too much for the library, either. And the reason that they give me for not caring for the library is because...I think they much have a policy of "come in anytime you want." So they kind of keep going back over things. So they don't get to...and I also think their classes are larger. Like...some of them go there for Citizenship on Saturday, but there's like 20 in the class.

Sarah: Yeah...I've been there. I've observed a couple classes. Not for this project, but in the past. How come you think the library has the policy of coming in whenever?

Allison: I don't know. I don't know that they have that. That's the impression that I get when...

Sarah: That's what you hear, yeah.

Allison: When they tell me.

Sarah: Well, what do you think....

Allison: See, the difference between here is...I think we cater to the needs of the individual person, as a whole person. Not just education.

Sarah: That's what I was gonna ask you, I was gonna ask, what do you think makes Jubilee House's approach different than the other places?

Allison: Smaller classes. One-to-one, for some people who need it. The ability to develop a relationship with your tutor. And I think smaller groups encourage more of a conversation.

Sarah: Do you see any connection between that kind of approach and your faith?

Allison: Um....yeah, I guess I would say it's more individualized. Not that my faith is individualized per se, but...it's something personal that you develop. And it's expanded through relationships with other people. And I think it's the relationships that are important. And I think that if a student has a good relationship, they can learn more easily. Because there's a certain comfort level. And I think it's the same thing in your personal faith. If you have good relationships, you're much more apt to share with somebody, than if they're strained, or you don't feel comfortable.

Sarah: Yeah, that makes sense. So you talked about it a little bit...but why do you think that a student might come to Jubilee House, rather than another place in Hartford?

Allison: Well, basically they are told that it's a very good place. One day, somebody came, and I said "how did you find out about it," and he said "the man in the store." But I think that what's different is the...having small groups. Being able to develop a personal relationship with the tutor. And it's two fold. They are willing to help the...for example, Abraham, who was in your group, he just recently in the past year, past two years, brought his family over here. And the tutors, I can't tell you the things they gave him, so that he would have it for the family. From furniture, to clothes, to books for the kids. They...and even students brought things in to him.

Sarah: Does something like that happen a lot?

Allison: If it's needed, yes.

Sarah: So like, from the tutors, and sometimes from the other students?

Allison: Mhmm.

Sarah: Wow. Can you think of any other examples?

Allison: Little things that they do for them. A lot...different people do a lot of things for the refugees.

Sarah: So, do you think that kind of thing happens for some of the refugees, or does it happen for some of the immigrants, too?

Allison: If somebody knew somebody needed something, yes.

Sarah: And they would kind of find that out just by their relationship with them, by conversing?

Allison: Right, right.

Sarah: Makes sense. When I was talking in the focus group to the students, they said that one of the things that they like is that they know that they can talk to their tutor, and to you, and to other staff about their needs outside of English class. Is that what you see happening?

Allison: Yeah, and so I think that that's important because if their needs are not taken, it's hard to learn. And they know that...I think another thing that's important is they know I will listen to them. And I think that's important because then...if you listen to them, just on a general level, then when they are having trouble studying, it's easy for them to share that. Then, because they already have an open relationship. And there's no tutor here who is here because they have to be here. They're only here because they want to be here. Now like I just got—one tutor just came back Monday, who's been here, but her daughter was having a baby, and so she needed to help out with the other children. And so she brought a friend with her who wants to tutor. And before the friend left, she said, "oh, this is wonderful." She said "I really needed something." So then they...they know that they're giving something, but they're getting much more back. They're

getting much more back. Just because they share with them about their children, and some of them...one family, the father took a couple of the children, and went back to his country to see his family. But the mother couldn't go, because she wouldn't be able to get back in. So it's....life is not easy for them. The other thing is jobs. It's very hard to get jobs, because there are so many people who are way more qualified than they are.

Sarah: I would also imagine that it's hard to *keep* a job.

Allison: Yes. And the other thing that effect their learning is, for some of them, and they never know when this is gonna happen, but they change their hours. So like...I had a couple people recently have their hours changes, but that means they can't come, cus they're not free in the morning. And we only have classes in the morning.

Sarah: So you said a little bit about how students find out about the classes here. But, what are some of the ways in which they hear about ESOL?

Allison: Mainly word of mouth. I never advertise.

Sarah: I wonder how they found out when it was first starting. Before you were here.

Allison: Probably flyers. Well also when I first started, I put it on the TV station. And I had flyers and all that. But I don't do that anymore, because there hardly goes a day by when somebody doesn't come.

Sarah: Really? Somebody new?

Allison: Yeah, I usually always have a waiting list.

Sarah: Are you trying to get more tutors, or do you prefer to keep it to the size you have it?

Allison: Yes. I need more tutors. But I do not want it to get so big that it gets unruly, and you lose your sense of mission.

Sarah: Yup, yeah that makes sense. When a student is first thinking about coming to Jubilee House, or maybe the first few times that they come, do you think that they're aware of the faith element? Do you think that's a reason why they would be more or less likely to come?

Allison: I don't know, to be honest with you. Because the majority of them are not my faith.

Sarah: Right.

Allison: But I think their own personal faith, and their own personal goals, and what they want, are combined together.

Sarah: That makes sense. What about...

Allison: And you know what, I think that they get the sense that people are not here out of a sense of having a "job." People are here because they want to help them. In some places, when you're getting paid, you're there for the sake of the money, and you do more because you're going to get more money, and if you don't get more money, you don't do it. Whereas here, people kicked in to help for the Garden Party. They would do things if they were needed to be done. And none of the tutors get paid. They are all totally volunteer.

Sarah: So you think the student know that.

Allison: Oh, I tell them. When I tell them that it's important that they call, I say, "these tutors don't get paid any money." I tell them that these tutors volunteer their time, and gas is very expensive. And so they're very...I do have to say that on the whole, they are very good about calling.

Sarah: That's good! So in thinking about being a female service provider, and doing this, do you think your identity as a female affects the way that you do work? Do you think that faith plays a role in that picture, too?

Allison: Yes. I think that I have a good level of sensitivity. And compassion. I'm also very organized. If somebody were not organized, they could not do what I do, because they would be

so frustrated. They'd walk out the door. And I think that if I don't take the time every day for prayer, I wouldn't be able to do this. Because I think that that's...my relationship with God is where I get my strength to get the things that need to be done. And somebody could call up and say they're not coming, and I could think, "Oh God, one more person." But as soon as people come, I'm fine, it just rolls. And I know it's not me. It's not personal. I know that it's gifts that God's given me. And also, the relationships that I have. If I weren't sensitive and compassionate, and kind, then people wouldn't share. They wouldn't feel comfortable here. And it's a very welcoming place, because it's...because of the sensitivity of people. And I think people know that I care about them. And if somebody wants to give me a hug, that's fine. Some of them do that...it's they're natural...and if I was like this [crosses arms across chest], they would know that.

Sarah: That's interesting. What about the Latinos specifically? Do you...maybe you do, maybe you don't...do you notice anything in their culture that specifically forms the kind of interactions they have with you and with one another, and with the tutors, or with the other students? Does anything kind of set their culture apart?

Allison: It's hard to answer that because most of the students are Latino. But what I said before was, and I say it again, is like, the majority of the students I have are from Peru and Colombia. That's the highest number. But then there's Spanish in all different countries. But they all...they all get along, they all are caring. And even from...like I do have people from Bosnia, and Albania, and different countries. Interestingly enough, I only have a couple people from Puerto Rico.

Sarah: Yeah, I was thinking that. What I've heard is that Puerto Ricans are a little bit more established here. And that maybe the Peruvians and the Colombians are more the new arrivals, these days. I don't know if you get that sense, but that's what I've heard.

Allison: Yeah, yeah. The newest arrivals are Iraqis. I don't have any yet, but Odetta has worked with them. See the other thing is...if I have someone who's in need of...having papers filled out, or a need around immigration, or something, then they go to Odetta, and Odetta helps them. We do it back and forth.

Sarah: So you refer them.

Allison: Yes.

Sarah: That's really good to know, actually.

Allison: Yeah, because she has helped some people over complications with trying to get their citizenship, trying to get their green cards. And also, sometimes they have complicated paperwork to fill out. And she helps them, or she puts them in touch with someone that they need. We also have lists of food pantries. So if people need food, we have places that we can...

Sarah: You would tell them.

Allison: Right, right.

Sarah: So does Odetta work with refugees—uh, immigrants—or just refugees?

Allison: Kind of both. Primarily refugees.

Sarah: Can you think of any other examples of ways in which you might give people information or referrals, besides teaching English?

Allison: Oh yes, yes, she gives people's referrals. Sometimes she might meet them at a Social Security office. Or she does a lot with them for DSS. She might give them information on what they need to do. She might meet them there to help them move through something. Because the...it's a very difficult system.

Sarah: What are some reasons why a student wants to take an English class? I know some of them. How would you describe it?

Allison: Okay. Well, I think that more and more, they're learning that they can't do too much without English. Mainly, they can't get jobs without English. They found out that when their children get in school, they can't help them with their homework. They can't talk with their teachers without an interpreter. They can't go to the doctor without having an interpreter. And gradually, after they've been here for a while, they are able to go to the doctor and ask some of the questions themselves. Which is important.

Sarah: Do you ever hear about children of the students acting as translators for their parents?

Allison: Yeah, and that's very hard, because you don't know what they're saying. I mean, they don't know...you don't know...it's a very dangerous thing, on one level. Especially if it's related to school, and it concerns them, the parent doesn't really know if they are telling the teacher what they just said.

Sarah: Yeah...it's an element of misinterpretation, or stretching the truth.

Allison: Yeah. But in other cases it...it's very helpful.

Sarah: What about it they were to go see the doctor?

Allison: I think that sometimes they use the children, but sometimes they have an interpreter, or a friend who can understand English will go with them. Like, when I was at Trust House, I used to go to PPT meetings with parents. Because it's a very intimidating, because you have all these professionals around. Because after they would talk, I would say to the parent, "now, what they're really saying to you is..." And I would tell it to them in their own language. Not in Spanish or whatever language it was, but in terms they would understand. So that they weren't so frightened.

Sarah: What does PPT mean?

Allison: Pupil-Parent Placement Team meeting.

Sarah: Okay. And that was at Trust House?

Allison: No, it was in the schools.

Sarah: Oh, in the children's schools.

Allison: I would go to the schools. And basically they are for children who are having children in some area.

Sarah: Right now, does the ESOL program interact with any programs outside of Jubilee House? I know you said you interact with Odetta's work.

Allison: Right. Not really at this point. I might refer somebody to another program if they can't come during our time.

Sarah: That makes sense.

Allison: Another program that I would refer them to would be Sophia's Place in West Hartford, in our Mother's House.

Sarah: Oh yeah. So you mean if there's a scheduling issue.

Allison: Right, right. Cus they have evening classes; we don't have evening classes.

Sarah: The students, where are they from? Are they from Hartford, are they from this neighborhood, other places in Hartford?

Allison: The only people that are outside Hartford are basically people that have gotten displaced. And had to go and live someplace else. Or there's some people, when they first began, it wasn't full, so they would take some people in. Like I have somebody from New Britain. But if somebody from New Britain comes now, I say, no. I take Hartford people. But Hartford can be extended...it's like, people from the North End, from the South End. I have people who—and

also they're kind of in groups, some of the ethnic groups. Like, there's a number of people who live around Franklin Avenue. And there's a...let me get my cards. Hang on one second. [Leaves room to get a set of cards with students' names, addresses, phone numbers, and home countries.]

Sarah: Okay!

Allison: I have cards for students. Now, I have several students from Mexico. And I have a couple people from Honduras.

Sarah: You're so organized!

Allison: Sierra Leone, Peru, Dominican Republic. And this year, I have for the first time a couple people from Cuba. I have a young person from...I also have a couple new people from Liberia.

And I have one young person from Africa—from Guinea. And she, because she was a woman, she couldn't go to school. And I have a number of them from Burma, which is now Myanmar.

Sarah: Wow, so organized. So you use these to get in touch with them.

Allison: Right.

Sarah: That's a good idea.

Allison: So if I need to call them, I can call them here. [Flipping through the cards.] Bosnia. Now, Mayco will only be coming til December. She's very, very, very pregnant.

Sarah: Aw.

Allison: And I have several people from the Dominican Republic. And there's some people who live right around here. There's Douglas Street, Mapleton. Mapleton is the street before Clifford. Freeman St., down there in the South End. South St., all down there in the South End. I think I have more people from the South End than from the North End of Hartford.

Sarah: Do a lot of students walk here?

Allison: Yes.

Sarah: Do a lot take the bus?

Allison: Yes. Some drive.

Sarah: Would you say it's the majority?

Allison: The majority is bus and walk. And there are a number who have cars. I have a couple people from West Hartford. But it's like, there were here when I came, so I couldn't put them out. When they first started, I think they took anybody. I mean the policy was, Hartford. And if there was space, they would take people. But now, there's so many Hartford people, that I don't take people...even when they say, "please, please, I need it!" And it's interesting, too, and they think...Yeah, it's definitely more from the South End of Hartford. I have one student from Tabor House.

Sarah: What is that again?

Allison: It's two houses for homeless men living with HIV-AIDS.

Sarah: Right, okay, okay. I wanted to ask you...I know that some of the sisters here have done a lot of traveling. Have you traveled?

Allison: No.

Sarah: Okay, so your education has been all here...

Allison: Yeah. And basically, I don't travel because I have a bad back.

Sarah: Oh, okay, I'm sorry.

Allison: Yeah, so I don't fly.

Sarah: Yeah, does that bother you a lot?

Allison: Yeah...Well what do you mean does that bother you a lot?

Sarah: Your back.

Allison: Yeah. I have good days and I have bad days. I got to a chiropractor three times a week.

Sarah: Well that's good.

Allison: You know, so it's under control, but I don't do things that I used to do when I was 40.

Sarah: Switching topics a little bit...only a couple more questions.

Allison: That's fine.

Sarah: I wanted to ask you, if you feel a sense of social justice in doing the work that you do. Would social justice be a part of your mission? Why or why not?

Allison: Yes. It's part of my mission because I feel that the students—the people who come here have the same rights as everybody else. And it's very hard for them to be having jobs, and getting the things they need. Moving through the DSS system, it's horrible. And they changed it now, and they can call their worker, call their worker, call their worker, and get no response.

Sarah: Their caseworker?

Allison: Yeah. And even Odetta has trouble getting through.

Sarah: Oh really? In what way did they change it?

Allison: I don't know...I guess they just don't take calls like they used to. I don't know, but I just know it's a mess.

Sarah: So it's just hard to get in touch with their caseworker?

Allison: Yeah, yeah.

Sarah: Do most students here have caseworkers?

Allison: Many of them do, yes.

Sarah: Oh they do. The refugees, or the immigrants, too?

Allison: Oh yeah.

Sarah: Yeah, huh.

Allison: The other thing that we also do is, if the Center for Collaborative Justice...if they get information about help programs, or information that will be helpful for our students to know to be able to participate in things, then Sister Lindsey gives it to me. And if I have trouble explaining it, she'll explain it.

Sarah: Oh, okay, and you pass it on to the students?

Allison: Mhmm. Like, she might come in at break time and explain something to them.

Especially like, we'll be talking about the energy assistance, and things like that, so that they know that they can apply for it. Or if there's money, and they need to do something right away, then Linda will tell me, and we'll get that to the students.

Sarah: So healthcare programs, energy assistance...can you think of anything else?

Allison: Yes. Money.

Sarah: Mhmm, like loans?

Allison: I'm trying to think of what the terminology is... Not so much loans as money that they might qualify for if they do certain things, if they fill certain things out. And if they don't know about it, they don't have any chance of getting it. And, letting them know when housing becomes available.

Sarah: Okay, that's all important stuff.

Allison: Basic needs.

Sarah: So, kind of thinking about the whole broader spectrum of different social services, where do you see the role of faith-based organizations falling? How would you describe the role of a faith-based organization, like Jubilee House? Compared to the whole map of social services.

Allison: What do you mean by the whole map of social services?

Sarah: Of agencies, and services, that are formed by or funded by anyone—private, state, faith.

Allison: Okay, I think that Jubilee House refers people to places where they can get help. And I think that Jubilee House also keeps people aware of situations that they need to deal with. And things that they might think aren't right, that they have an absolute right to. But somebody tells them that they don't.

Sarah: Makes sense. Do you think that the role of faith-based organizations can or will change in the future? Or would you like to see any kind of change?

Allison: I definitely think they'll change in the future. To probably be more proactive. Or, having more information available to them. Maybe bringing in people to explain things to them that they don't know.

Sarah: So more resources. What about funding?

Allison: Also, voting. Helping them to make sure that if they are a citizen, that they are registered to vote.

Sarah: Oh, okay, so is that something that you would like to see happen more? Or is it already happening?

Allison: It's...we need to be more attentive to it. Cus sometimes, they tell you that they're a citizen, but you don't realize that they never registered to vote. Because like, nobody told them where to go or what to do. Lack of information from people who should have given it to them.

Sarah: Yeah...people being like, who?

Allison: Like when they go to become a citizen and they are...congratulated and all that, and they say, "now don't forget to register," but they don't give them any information on how to go about doing it.

Sarah: Right. What kind of message do you receive from the Catholic Church about doing social justice at the local level, like you do here? Has that kind of message from the Church changed over the years at all?

Allison: I don't get much message from the church.

Sarah: Okay, yeah, so you feel like you're doing your own thing?

Allison: I guess I feel like I'm doing what is the right and just thing. And I don't think that the Church has a place in telling people what to do about their help. And I mean, I don't know whether you know it or not, but some of the churches put out letters and things about this election. And essentially told people that they should not be voting for Obama.

Sarah: Yeah, I heard a bit about that.

Allison: In Boston, some people were at masses where they said that if you were even thinking about voting for Obama, don't come to Communion. They don't...that's not their...politics is not...done well, in the Catholic Church. It shouldn't be...they don't have any right to tell people who to vote for. And they have such stress on abortion, or non-abortion, and for them, it's non-abortion—that they don't take anything else into consideration. You know like on the corner here, where they stand and hold plaques for—okay, do you think they ever held anything up for the death penalty? And it's just as...well, thank God we finally did it. It's...too one-sided. And also, a woman sometimes knows what she's gotta do for her own life, and for the life of her children. And the Church doesn't have a right to tell her what to do!

Sarah: That's interesting. Well, do you think there's anything else that would be really helpful for me to know, that I haven't asked you about?

Allison: I can't think of anything right at this moment. But if I do, I'll call you!

Sarah: Thanks. Well you know, I'll be around. You know how to get in touch with me. Yeah, that's all I got.

G. Focus Group Transcription: Jeannette and Jaime
Conducted by Sarah Kacevich on 18 November 2012 at Our Lady of Sorrows

[Sarah reads the oral consent to Jeannette and Jaime, and both agree.]

Sarah: So if you don't mind starting off and just telling me the basics of your life and your family. Where you were born, where you grew up, where you live now, what your family is like, that kind of thing.

Jaime: I was born and raised in Hartford, Connecticut, I lived here all my life. I was brought up in a homeless project [shelter?] here. I got married for like 15 years. I have four children. And I've been in touch with the church for 6 years. Me and my family now participate in the church activities, mainly with the youth.

Sarah: Thank you.

Jeannette: My name is Jeannette. I was actually born and raised in Puerto Rico. I came here when I was 17, in my last year of high school here. Pretty much went to nursing school. My home actually...my mother pretty much raised us, cus I lost my father when I was very young. So she had remained by herself all the way through. I became a nurse. I was a single mother at the time, then I met him. We had a beautiful son, so we have two kids together, that we raise together. Pretty much, it's been about since we been going to the church. Through my daughter, cus my daughter was always here with my mother. And the youth group—pretty much six years ago, we wanted to become more involved in our kids' life. And we thought that the best route was to get involved in the youth and the church, and with it. And although we're not the coordinators of the group, pretty much we are assistants to the woman, Migdalia's the coordinator. That's how we're here, the majority of the time.

Sarah: Thanks. Could you tell me about your work outside of the church? What do you do for work?

Jaime: I worked direct care staff. I've worked with adult that have mild retardation. I'm a residential counselor—they're residents. And I'm also a job coach. In Hartford.

Jeannette: I'm a registered nurse, but I'm currently a supervisor. And I pretty much—my team are the Hispanic nurses that work in Hartford.

Sarah: So you just told me a little bit, but, what made you initially come to church here? How did you hear about it, and...?

Jaime: Well she's been a member...

Jeannette: Well I was a member for a long time when I was a single mom. My mom, I was going with my mom. But then for a while, I stopped coming for a long time. And then just about six years ago...our marriage wasn't always as it is now. We had a lot of troubles. And pretty much, I would say, through my mom's persistence, and maybe her prayers, got us involved in the church.

And that's why we ended up back here again. We...like I said, I was a very, very active member back then. My daughter's already gonna be 21 in a couple weeks. So when she was little, she was 4 years old, I was really, really involved here. And then I stopped coming for a long time, and then just about six years ago, we returned, and that's why we're here.

Jaime: I've always been Catholic. I did my First Communion, was involved when I was younger. Like after the age of 14, I never came back to the church. And then like I said, I lived a lot of...I experienced a lot of the streets with drugs, gangs...I lived it all. I grew up in a project, a housing project. So I was involved with a lot of this stuff. And then I met her through—I was living in the projects, we got together, we lived together. But it was a rocky start, I wasn't used to having a stable home, cus I was raised by a single mother. So it was...like I said, I wasn't accustomed to a family setting. So it was hard...and then like I said, we had a rocky start. I had to decide what we were gonna do. She gave me an ultimatum, and, together, we decided that this was the place to come, and see if we could fix our marriage. And ever since then, we live here.

Sarah: So, how old are your children now?

Jeannette: Well my son will be 16 on the 6th of December, and then my daughter will be 21 on the 20th of December.

Jaime: And I have two other daughters from out of our marriage. One is 22, and the other one is 16.

Sarah: So could you tell me about the sense of community here at the church? What is it like?

Jeannette: The what? I'm sorry.

Sarah: The sense of community at the church.

Jeannette: The census of the community?

Sarah: The sense of community.

Jeannette: Oh, I mean the Hispanic is very close. The Hispanic community is very close. I mean, we are pretty much...I would say, always the ones that have the little different group things. The Prayer Group, the Ladies of the Providence. I mean we have all the...and we have—most of the activities we do. Including the Peruvians, and including all the others. So I think it's a Spanish thing, I guess the Spanish thing is close.

Jaime: You can see that the dominant—like the Latin community's dominant in this parish. And it's pretty good, everyone has it's different group. But each group is all faced towards God. There's sometimes—like every human, there's conflicts and stuff. But, at the end, it all comes to God as the main purpose of it.

Sarah: So there is a white community that comes here, but it's different?

Jaime: Yes.

Jeannette: They're very small. They usually have their...there's a 4 o'clock mass on Saturdays, and then they have the 8, 10...and it's clearly very...I don't see...I mean we come to the Mass sometimes, like if we have something else, we come later.

Sarah: Yeah. Why do you think there's so much unity among the Hispanics in the church?

Jeannette: Again, I think it's culture. I think it's culture.

Jaime: Yeah like everyone comes from different cultures, so, they find the warmth with each other. And their families all are separated, so you come to America, and you find poor people that speak your language, so you gather with them. We the same amount of people, same kind of people.

Sarah: Yeah, yeah. How would you describe life in Hartford, in a broad sense?

Jeannette: What do you mean?

Sarah: The good, the bad, what it's like to live here.

Jeannette: In Hartford itself?

Sarah: Do you live in Hartford, or in a suburb?

Jeannette: Yup.

Sarah: Okay.

Jaime: It's a tough place. It's a tough also to raise your children, because there is a lot of violence. But there's a lot of also good things in the community. You just gotta reach out and look. You gotta know. And a lot of people *don't* know about the programs that there are in the city.

Sarah: Right.

Jeannette: [Gestures to Migdalia, the youth group director, walking behind us] That's Migdalia, so I don't know if you want to grab her...

Sarah: That's ok, I'll meet her after. So you're saying that you think there are programs out there, but people don't know about them?

Jaime: Yeah.

Jeannette: Like right now, Father Jim worked really really hard to get this soup kitchen for Saturdays. And, unfortunately, I mean, it's there, and not that many people are coming. I think

it's a wonderful thing, that he did that. But, I don't know...and I don't think it's because there's a lot of stuff out there on Saturdays. It's just that hasn't spread out there yet enough. I don't know.

Sarah: How do you think that people find out about services like the soup kitchen, currently?

Jeannette: Well right now, I think it's more word of mouth. At least for this...like we have activities in the church, or something like that. Or we have drives. I have gone to the radio stations and put it in the announcements. I remember...a couple years ago, when we did "The Cold Hard Truth," I actually went to a radio station and announced it. There's some people that are nice about it. Others are not. There's always, even here when we did it in the church, there's still some people that had their reservations regarding the purpose of our activity. They see homeless, and they don't understand it. They see homelessness, and they just feel that they choose to be that way. And unfortunately, they have...us, being involved in the church, and realizing what we see in movies, we see people's stories, we know that it's not necessarily you choose to live on the streets, especially in the cold. In mean circumstances make that happen. You lose your job, and, the next thing you turn around, and you lose everything you have. And now in...nowadays, we live paycheck by paycheck as it is. And if one of us lose our job, we really gonna be in a very tough situation. So, I mean...but most of the time, like I said, we try, if we have something that's good for the community, we try to bring it out. But I'm not sure what it is, especially in this community, I don't understand...sometimes I tell my husband—we do like a dance or something, to get some funds for something. And some of them are always the same people that show up. Some of them don't. And we don't know why. We do present them, we say...but it's just not enough. I don't know why.

Sarah: What are your interactions like with the staff, the clergy, at Our Lady of Sorrows? Do you ever seek information or advice from them?

Jeannette: Regarding what, like social stuff?

Sarah: Kind of everything—spiritual, or social?

Jeannette: Spiritual, we do all the time. Victor is always open. Valentín, Father Brian.

Jaime: Yeah, they have an open door policy. Maybe us that know them...and especially at the time that we met them, we've liked worked like a beneficial [?] relationship. We feel that we can go to them anytime.

Sarah: What about with other parishioners, what are your interactions like in terms of exchanging advice and information?

Jaime: Well we work with a lot of people in the church, so we're involved in other groups and stuff.

Jeannette: We've been kinda involved in the prayer group. In the beginning, like a lot of people know us from there. Then we got involved more with the youth, very involved. So a lot of people

see us from different stuff in the church. Especially like I said, my mother was a very involved member in this church. We just lost her last year. This year, I'm sorry.

Sarah: Oh, I'm sorry.

Jeannette: Last February.

Jaime: We've also been in different communities. Cus we participate with other communities, also. With other communities.

Sarah: Like which ones?

Jaime: All of them. All around Hartford capital.

Sarah: All around Hartford?

Jaime: Yeah, capital churches in Hartford. We go to the prayer groups. We participate in them.

Sarah: Yeah. So could you tell me about what you do with the youth group, kind of in general?

Jeannette: Well, right now, for some reason. It's...I don't know, she hasn't met with us for a little bit. So after the summer, the last thing we did, we haven't really been in a group setting, really. But what we have done in the past is...for the main purpose of the youth group...is pretty much they do their Communion, most of them, Confirmation. We try to make sure that they feel that just because they're still a teenager, does not mean that you stop being part of the church. Cus that's, I think that's the part they feel is beautiful. Cus the things that they do, especially when you learn that your serving someone else, you're still serving the Lord. And they like that. That's my vision. My vision is that I feel like the kids, I they feel like they know that they're helping someone, and they know that by helping that person, they still serving the church community. Jesus is still God—that they want to be part of something. And if we don't keep them busy here, they'll find something else to do out there. Out there, it will be obviously, what? Partying, drinking, getting involved with the wrong people. And they'll find themselves too busy to be part of something good. And I know that these kids in this church, they have done a lot. They participate in pretty much everything they can do. They've done the dinners for the homeless, and they like doing that. They have done, like I said, the drives for the food for the homeless. One of the things that we go involved with in the Archdiocese of Hartford, she brought it in—social justice. Where it brings out knowledge about stuff that's out there, and makes them speak about it. And if something is bothering you, making sure you don't keep it bothering you—do something about it. And that's the way that they have been brought up. They want to retaliate because they know there's something wrong. And that's...that the main purpose of it.

Sarah: What exactly is the social justice program?

Jeannette: It was actually brought on from the Archdiocese of Hartford. And it started about two years ago. She...we were pretty much just a youth group here. But then she brought the person that was in charge of that group. And what it did is, it pretty much sends themes.

Jaime: Yeah, they work with different...

Jeannette: Organizations.

Jaime: Organizations such as immigration, water pollution. Anything that has to do with social, with the justice. Like the immigration, you know how they try to get the immigrants out. Like the thing that happened in West Haven.

Sarah: I don't know if I know about that.

Jaime: Or East Haven, you know the priest was recorded, cus they were being raided.

Sarah: Yeah, Yeah.

Jaime: And all that. Well that's part of justice. And through the social justice, we've also built a college fund for the kids here. So it helps them so it goes on not just here, but they can go out to the public, and...

Sarah: So for one of their own within the group? Is that the purpose of the college fund?

Jaime: Yes, yes. There's a scholarship for them.

Jeannette: It's not a lot of money, but it helps them with like books and stuff like that.

Sarah: Something. Yeah, yeah.

Jeannette: This year, she hasn't done it, but last year, and the year before that. These kids actually go to college.

Jaime: We do softball tournaments. We do concerts. We do talents shows, where we raise money for those events for that scholarship. And it also gives them a chance to know that there is another choice. There's other things that you can do in life besides being out on the streets. It's not about dressing up at the Sunday church board...we don't just meet upon Sundays, we get together on Saturdays, we go roller-skating, we have pizza parties. We have dances here where they dress up elegantly, and we serve them. Lot of different things just to show them that there is another alternative in life.

Sarah: That's cool. And so the ages involved are...

Jeannette: Thirteen to eighteen. My daughter's 21, she's still involved, but once they are after 18...well her goal was to make them kind of advisors.

Jaime: Junior advisors.

Sarah: Gotcha.

Jeannette: Junior advisors. Cus they'd have to go through some courses or some stuff to be advisors. But most of them start at work, and then that's the problem. Once they get to a certain age, they start doing other stuff. Which is important to them. In order to survive, they gotta start working, go to school. So they become a lot more busy, and less able to participate in the stuff here.

Jaime: But we still keep in touch with them, and they keep in touch with us. And they still participate. Like if we call them, like "we need you," they're like the first person who wants to say "yes."

Sarah: And about how many do you have involved?

Jaime: There's about 30. 24-30, right? Total youth.

Jeannette: Well there used to be 30, there's about 15 right now. When they started, I would say close to 25, maybe, but right now there's about 12. And most of them, like I said, they have the other things.

Jaime: College or work.

Sarah: And so the people that lead the youth group are you guys, Migdalia...

Jeannette: The coordinator is Migdalia. And pretty much, we help her. She delegates a lot of stuff on us.

Sarah: Are there other people who help, too?

Jaime: There's parents.

Jeannette: There's parents that volunteer, some of them do come. That's how we started.

Sarah: So what is the parent involvement like?

Jeannette: With the kids that we have, very involved. Because they pretty much are part of a certain group. Like the Prayer Group, or whatever, so they are involved and it's like a circle. They're always there. Like the kids that would have...that's what I'm saying that...it's very...my mission was—and again, it's still gotta be talked about—is that we gotta reach out to the other kids that are not involved with us. And that's the thing, I think that's been the hardest. I know that they have said it before. And they had opened it to other kids. But for some reason they come and go. And I think part of it is because the parent involvement is not there. I have seen, since we've been around, four kids that joined, and lasted maybe two times. And it's not only enough for us to be reaching out to them, it's...I think they see the support that the other

kids have. Like, I have two kids that are there. There's other parents that have two kids in it. So it's like, they're right there, all the time, and maybe they just don't do the same...

Sarah: Coming to the meetings...Okay.

Jeannette: And that's how it's gonna be, in any activity that we have. Or let's say we're gonna go roller skating, and we only have two cars. And we need people with vans that will drive us there. So....

Jaime: They've even driven us as far as Massachusetts for a retreat.

Sarah: Wow, that's awesome.

Jaime: Drive them there, pick us up.

Sarah: Wow.

Jaime: So there's a lot of support for the youth. And I think windows of opportunity for youth in this church.

Sarah: So if we were thinking about programs or other services that teenagers could get involved with outside of the church, like here in Hartford, how would you kind of compare? How is being involved in the church group different than doing something that's not through the church?

Jaime: I think there's spirituality. The focus that God is the center of everything. I think that's one of the main...Cus most of them are being brought up through the church. Like Father says, the fear of God's been with them since baptism. Not that's it's being scared, but the respect for others, the church, and the religion. I think that's what mostly...grants your attention to it. And yet they're giving back. I know these kids, especially around here, love to give back. It doesn't matter if it's not even within their own church. Cus we've gone out to shelters and met people. And we go to a race, give waters. So they like to be together, and just like to help.

Jeannette: And the nursing homes, they go to the nursing homes.

Sarah: Oh, wow. Would you say the same thing about making a comparison? [Looks at Jeannette.]

Jeannette: Yeah I would, ours is God-centered. Not to mean the groups out there are bad, it's just that, it just had a little bit of a different focus. Probably a different purpose, but a different way to get around, do it. Cus the bottom line is, the outside groups are still gonna help people. But not necessarily they have to...based it in God's ways of doing stuff, I don't know.

Sarah: Right, right. What are some kind of programs out in Hartford? Can you think of some? I'm not very familiar.

Jeannette: I only know...I've heard...of the U-Hartford, what is it that they have down there? But that's more for...that's another thing I have seen, a lot of the services that are out there for youth are for kids that are recovering from some type of issue. And I have seen them, like at Stop n Shop I have seen them, and it's not really for kids that are ok. The ones that remain ok. It's more for rehabbing type of thing. But that doesn't mean I haven't seen them, I do, have seen a lot of after-school programs. That...I even wanted my son to do at some point, but he just decided not to do it. But it's good to keep them involved. But I see most of the programs that I have seen are for kids that have some type of need, or some type of rehab. I don't know. Like Big Brother-Big Sister, for kids that don't have support. If you have a normal kid like my son, who don't want to...like if he didn't have a brother or sister who want to join that, I don't know if he would have felt comfortable doing it. Cus it's more for kids that are in need of something.

Sarah: Well maybe one more question. Going back to the social justice thing that you mentioned—why do you think that's part of the church's mission? Or, why do you think that's important?

Jaime: Cus we all want to fight for people's right. We're not just fighting for our own people. The immigration situation, part of it, it's everyone. It's every immigrant, not just immigrants that come to the church in find, like, rescue in the church. But it's in general, and, there's a problem for everyone. And in the church, people help, and it shows we're not just involved, we're looking out for each other. We are also each other's guardians. One part of the social justice thing is also to do with the water pollution, and the garbage thing.

Sarah: Yeah, that's interesting.

Jaime: I went...we didn't really get into that. But that's part of it. There's another one where they just kind of argue, and we collect food for homeless shelters. Cus we're not the—I know other groups do it, we're not the only church that does it, at least on Zion. They have these food drives, to also raise awareness.

Sarah: So that's at another group that's at a different church?

Jaime: Yeah. We're going to raise this stuff towards humanity itself.

Sarah: Alright, well, that's about all I got to ask you. Do you think there's anything else that I would—is really interesting, or I should really know?

Jeannette: I just want to thank you, for the time.

H. Interview Transcription: Sister Kelley**Conducted by Sarah Kacevich on 30 November, 2012 at Jubilee House**

[Kelley reads oral consent and agrees.]

Sarah: So if you could please start off by talking about your role and your work at Jubilee House. What you do on a daily basis here.

Kelley: Okay, my role presently is one of being the executive director. As the executive director, I'm responsible for the overview of the whole program. That includes English as a Second Language, Esperanza, and our Refugee Services. I also—I'm responsible for our fiscal management of Jubilee House.

Sarah: Could you tell me about your educational background? Your secular education and your training to become a sister?

Kelley: My educational background has been....well, I have a Bachelor's....*[her phone goes off.]*

Sarah: Oh, there you go. It's okay, I can pause it.

Kelley: I have a Bachelor's in history and elementary education. I have a Master's in special education. I have a professional diploma in educational leadership—church leadership and educational administration. I also have certifications as an elementary school teacher and grade six, school district administrator certification, school administrator certification. I'm also certified as a mandated reporter, and ongoing professional development has been in almost every area. Mission advancement, education, management.

Sarah: That's quite a bit.

Kelley: It is.

Sarah: So could you tell me about your training to become a sister? And also, why you wanted to do that?

Kelley: The training—there's a training period in religious life. Traditionally, that's called postulancy. And that's a period of trial, and then there's a more formal period called the novitiate, where you become a novice. And that period is more governed by canon of law. There's certain requirements that have to be fulfilled before you're allowed to make vows. Most of the time, you initially make temporary or first vows, before you make final vows. So, all of that training includes theology, spiritual development. Also, at the same time, we are getting our degrees, for professional training. And then part of the novitiate is a period of time when there's only a concentration on theology and spiritual development, spiritual life and religious life. For that period of time, you don't do the training for your professional life. You pick that up again later on. Why I wanted to become a sister is...initially, it was service. That was primarily service. But in time, I became much more aware that it was a call to a relationship with...as a Christina, Jesus Christ, and God.

Sarah: Thank you. How did you come to Jubilee House—what did you do before?

Kelley: What I did immediately before this, I was in the Superintendent of School's office for the Archdiocese of Hartford. I came to Jubilee House because I saw the fact that the executive directorship was open, they were looking for candidates. And it was something that really attracted me—the mission, the ministry. For me, it was a time...it was time to make a change out of a more formal educational setting. I have spent over twenty-something years, 22 years in different superintendent's positions, in three different Dioceses. So, it was time for me to make a change. I like the mission of Jubilee House.

Sarah: Yeah, I was gonna ask, what attracted you to—what did you like about the mission?

Kelley: It was the mission, it was working and supporting, directly, immigrants and refugees.

Sarah: Why is that kind of mission important to you?

Kelley: Because I think it speaks about who we are as a Catholic people, and as a church. And I think it also...it's important to me because it's a reminder that everybody needs some assistance and support in life. It's trying to walk with people as they try to make their own lives better.

Sarah: So I was gonna ask, do you consider your work here to be inspired by your faith, and in what way?

Kelley: Oh, absolutely, yeah. It's inspired by my faith because I think it's the...it's very close to the heart of the church. I think all education is close to the heart of the church. And this is a different form of education.

Sarah: I was actually asking Sister Anne, what kind of impressions you get from the Catholic Church about the work that you do here? And if that message has changed over the years.

Kelley: I don't know if the message has changed over the years. Probably the work that's done here gets...is not terribly noticed by the official church. But it's noticed by the local churches. But it's not probably terribly noticed by the official church.

Sarah: What do you think the local churches think about it?

Kelley: I think they're very supportive of it. All the churches in the South End, North End. All the churches in the City of Hartford are very supportive of the mission, because they know that it's serving their people.

Sarah: How do you personally approach your work here at Jubilee House?

Kelley: I'm not sure what you mean by the question.

Sarah: You talked about how it's influenced by your faith...do you have a personal approach?

Kelley: I'm still not clear about the question.

Sarah: Maybe compared to other people...do you approach your work in any kind of way that you would consider unique, or maybe based on your individual life experience?

Kelley: I'm still not clear about the question, Sarah.

Sarah: Ok, that's ok, we can move on. I'm also wondering if you know about other places in Hartford where immigrants can receive services that are similar or comparable to the ones here.

Kelley: There isn't any other organization in Hartford that offers comparable services. I won't say similar, but comparable services. There's no other organization that would be a benchmark to qualify. There is—the library offers English as a Second Language, but they don't offer what we offer in terms of the Esperanza program, and the Refugee Services. There is another small ESOL program, but they don't offer everything that we offer here at Jubilee House. So...I don't think there's something comparable in Hartford.

Sarah: What are some of the other similar ones? You mentioned the library...

Kelley: Yes, the library offers English as Second Language. Then there's another smaller organization that offers English as a Second Language. I think Sophia's Place is the name. I'm not 100% sure.

Sarah: So, compared to other places like the library, or other agencies that you've heard of, what might make the approach here at Jubilee House different?

Kelley: We are...it's the depth and the breadth of services at Jubilee House. That's why I said to you, to me it's not comparable. Because there's no other agency that offers what we done in terms of both the ESL, Esperanza, and Refugee Services.

Sarah: Make sense. So if a student or a client had awareness of other places—other agencies where they could go, or had been in the past—why do you think they would be more likely to come here?

Kelley: I do know that some of the ESOL students have said very clearly that they come here because in the library, the classes are all in the groups. And here, they get much more individual attention. And also, at the library, if somebody comes in late, they repeat everything again. So people have to sit through the same. And I also know that when they study for citizenship at the library, that's the same experience, that they have. So, that's the only comparison I have heard from people—the library programs. They're basically not satisfied with it.

Sarah: Yeah, that makes sense. So when they come here, what do they notice?

Kelley: They get individual attention. They...it's a supportive environment. It's warm and hospitable. They get a sense of community. They realize their own progress. They realize that if need assistance in some other areas, we can also help them with that.

Sarah: How do they find out about Jubilee House in the first place?

Kelley: Most of the time, it's word of mouth. Or through the churches. A number of people I've noticed, even in the short while I've been here, the sign outside is attracting people.

Sarah: Oh really? They're walking by?

Kelley: They're stopping to read it, or, yeah, walk by. Come in. But a lot of it is word of mouth.

Sarah: Yeah, makes sense. So you said that they might find out through the church?

Kelley: Through the churches, right, cus the announcements are put in the bulletins.

Sarah: [Looks at recorder.] I just like to look at the time cus then I can look at my notes when I'm going back, it's helpful. So do you think a lot of the clients are members of local churches, then?

Kelley: Some are. Probably...be hard to estimate, but I'd say probably 80% of the people who come here have some church affiliation.

Sarah: That's actually more than I would have assumed.

Kelley: *Some* church affiliation.

Sarah: Doesn't mean they go to Mass every Sunday.

Kelley: Yeah, and it may not be a Catholic church, either. It may be a Pentecostal church, or.... But I would estimate that 80% have some church affiliation.

Sarah: How do you kind of know that? Do you talk with them about their church life?

Kelley: No, I really don't talk to them directly with them directly about their church life unless they bring it up. It's kind of an intuitive thing, my experience working with people. Especially Hispanic and Latino groups over the years. Like those folks from the non-Christian countries, like some of them are Muslim—to me that's a church affiliation. A religious affiliation. It's an affiliation with some established religion.

Sarah: So you've seen with all of your experience with the schools, and all of your leadership, that a lot of the Latino do have a faith affiliation?

Kelley: Right. Of some sort.

Sarah: How would you describe that presence of faith in their lives? Is it strong, is it weak, what is it like?

Kelley: I think it depends on the individual. I don't think there's any one way to quantify it for a whole group of people.

Sarah: Yeah, that makes sense. So what about when I client is hearing about Jubilee House, thinking about coming here, when they do initially come here—do you think they're aware of the faith element here? Do you think it would influence or not influence their likelihood of coming?

Kelley: For some people, it would influence their likelihood of coming. But for other people, they're probably almost indifferent to it.

Sarah: So, I asked this question of...when I was talking to Libby and Martha—I said, where would you put Jubilee House on the map in Hartford, compared to other agencies and services? What do you think?

Kelley: Where would I put it on the map? I'm not...I'm not quite sure of the meaning of that question, either. Where I would put it on the map. How would I rank it, is that what you're asking?

Sarah: I guess, what do you see it's relationship being with other agencies? Or, how do you think other people perceive Jubilee House?

Kelley: Oh, okay. Jubilee House has, in terms of other agencies, there are some strong relationships. There are also some agencies that are probably not aware of Jubilee House, nor what Jubilee House does. Like the Hartford Foundation for Giving is very aware of Jubilee House. The...probably the mayor's office is aware of Jubilee House.

Sarah: Oh yeah? How come?

Kelley: Because...when Mayor Segarra first got elected, he was invited here for the annual Garden Party, and came, and attended. Mayor Perez, before him, was a graduate of St. Augustine's School, so was very aware of what Jubilee House and the Sisters of St. Joseph. And it was Mayor Mike that was actually, and Sister Mary Stella, facilitated the transfer of Jubilee House again from the State to the sisters. So, I think they mayor's office is very, very aware of Jubilee House. The mayors are. And also the people in the city government are aware, because part of our funding is a Community Development Grant.

Sarah: Ok. What exactly is that? The Community Development Grant?

Kelley: Oh. Community Development Grant, it's called CDBG, they're Block Grants. That come basically from the federal government, to the cities, to the agencies, for different purposes.

Sarah: So it's funding from the state, initially?

Kelley: Federal government. It starts out big, and it becomes Block Grants, on the local level. For different community—community development.

Sarah: And so, the Hartford Foundation for Giving, is that private?

Kelley: Oh yeah.

Sarah: Okay, so you said that under Sister Mary Stella, Jubilee House was transferred from the State to the sisters? Could you tell me more about that—what happened?

Kelley: Sure, the state vacated the building. Maybe 1995. '96, something like that. And it was just lying vacant...and then, it somehow wound up in the hands of the city. And once it wound up in the hands of the city, the Mayor at the time—Mayor Mike, that's how he was known—he had gone to school at St. Augustine's, the sister had taught him, so he contacted the sisters to see if they would like to re-claim the convent. And they were interested in doing that, and then decided to conduct focus groups for...to see what would be the best purpose here in the South End. So that's how they came up with the adult education needs, ESOL.

Sarah: That's interesting.

Kelley: Yup. And then the mayor gave Sister Mary Stella the keys to the convent again, and renovations took place. And that's how Jubilee House was founded.

Sarah: So when were those focus groups taking place?

Kelley: Probably between '97, '97.

Sarah: So, it was initially a convent, and then the state took it over?

Kelley: It was initially a convent, for the sisters, and then after the sisters were no longer living in here, the state...I believe they bought...yes, they did, the parish sold the building to the state. The state used it as a residential home for adult-challenged—challenged adults would be the...and when the state vacated it, it reverted back to the city.

Sarah: That's interesting. Well, changing subjects a little bit. As a female service provider, how do you think that your identity might affect the ways in which you do your work? And is faith part of that picture?

Kelley: Yeah...I think the way women go about a lot of things is very different than the way men go about a number of things. I don't know that faith is as much a part of it. But I do think that women approach some things very differently than men.

Sarah: How so?

Kelley: I just think, in how we view service, and some of the... I just think it's different.

Sarah: What do you think it would be like if a man were to run Jubilee House, for example.

Kelley: I don't know. I truly don't.

Sarah: That'd be pretty different, wouldn't it?

Kelley: I think it might be different, yeah.

Sarah: Yeah well I mean, obviously, he would not be a sister, that would be a very obvious difference. That's an interesting question. So I know that some of the other sisters have traveled quite a bit. Has that been part of your life at all?

Kelley: Travel, like international travel?

Sarah: Yeah.

Kelley: I haven't done a lot of international travel.

Sarah: What about within the U.S.?

Kelley: Well, I've lived and worked in six different parts of the country.

Sarah: Oh yeah? Like where?

Kelley: New York City. Boston. The mid-West, Chicago, that general area. Here now in Connecticut. That's pretty much it, yeah.

Sarah: Were you always doing education-related work?

Kelley: Yes.

Sarah: Did you ever work with immigrants in another part of the country?

Kelley: I've always had a finger in the pie, in different...and actually, every place I was, there were always immigrant groups.

Sarah: So New York, and then Chicago?

Kelley: Yeah.

Sarah: Were you working with a lot of Latinos? Or was it all kinds of different populations?

Kelley: A large number were Latinos. And in certain areas, Jamaicans, Portuguese. Polish. So depending upon the area, it would depend upon where the concentration fell.

Sarah: So what about a sense of social justice? Do you feel like that's part of the work that you do? Is social justice part of your mission? Why or why might it not be?

Kelley: Well, I think social justice is definitely part of the mission. I think it's why you educate. It's not explicate in the mission, but I think it's part of the mission. Education is the way to build a more just society, so.

Sarah: How did you form your sense of social justice?

Kelley: I think part of it was formed by living in the family I lived in, growing up. There's a spiritual imagination that gets developed inside people. There's always some—there was always a concern for the less fortunate. My father was a great supporter of the Native American and African-American home missions, which is very interesting.

Sarah: That is interesting.

Kelley: So I think that from the very beginning, there was something that was formed in me. And I think as I grew and developed and matured, I just grew and developed and matured into it inside of me.

Sarah: You grew up in New York, right?

Kelley: Yes.

Sarah: In which neighborhood?

Kelley: The Bronx.

Sarah: Wow. And when did you move out of New York?

Kelley: My first move out of New York...well, I moved into a suburb of New York, does that count?

Sarah: Sure.

Kelley: So I was out of New York City proper. That was '78, I guess. Yeah, '78.

Sarah: And your family's Irish, right?

Kelley: Irish-American, yes.

Sarah: I remember a long time ago—no, maybe a month ago, when we first met—two months ago, three months ago...

Kelley: Yeah, the time flies.

Sarah: Yeah, I know. Well, I was asking you about liberation theology. Can you talk about that again, maybe? I know you said it's something you had studied.

Kelley: Well I did a lot of reading. It wasn't something I formally studied. In that field.

Sarah: Do you think that that theology is something you see present in your work, in a direct, or indirect way? Or is it not something you really think about?

Kelley: In my day-to-day life, I don't think in theological terms, at all. I don't think in theological terms. I think it forms your imagination and your conscience. Maybe a theologian walks around thinking in theological terms, but it's not something, for the most part, the rest of us do.

Sarah: No, I understand. I was asking Sister Anne today about where she sees the place of faith-based organizations, like Jubilee House, in this whole spectrum of all these agencies, social services. What do you think their role is?

Kelley: I think a faith-based organization is very, very important. Because a faith-based organization brings hope. Not just optimism, hope. Not just humanism. I think it brings a deeper reality.

Sarah: What about in Hartford, specifically?

Kelley: What do you mean?

Sarah: If you were thinking about Jubilee House, and all the places listed up there [points to bulletin board with flyers of other faith-based services], what do you think their roles is in the city?

Kelley: I think everybody has something to contribute. And everybody does it from a different perspective. But everybody has something to contribute. For the betterment of people.

Sarah: So what form do their contributions take?

Kelley: Well, there's food banks, and shelters, job placements. Elizabeth House is transitional housing for people. When they get on their feet. Tabor House is for those people with AIDS and HIV. So they...I think everybody has a place and a contribution.

Sarah: Would you say that faith-based organizations are more likely to focus on certain topics? Rather than other agencies?

Kelley: Not necessarily. Well, maybe like a Catholic faith-based organization, they would be more likely to focus on providing support for, let's say, pregnant women. For whom...because of the ethic of human life.

Sarah: I see what you're saying. One of the things I've been reading about a little bit is about how the attitudes and the funding from the state has changed over the years. In terms of funding, all sorts of services, but also yours, what have you noticed about those changes?

Kelley: I probably don't have enough of a history, Sarah, to answer that question honestly for you. Cus I've only in Connecticut five years, and only here six months. So I don't have enough history, I think.

Sarah: So talking about just faith-based organizations in general, do you think that their role can or will change in the future? Would you like to see it change at all?

Kelley: Well, I would always like more support for a faith-based organization, yeah. But I have to say, from my experience here, the other agencies, the other organizations and private agencies, in the City of Hartford, I think are very supportive.

Sarah: So, in terms of meeting the needs of immigrants in Hartford, I think we all know that there are a lot of needs out there. And we can't meet all of them. So what do you think would move us closer to meeting needs? Do you think it would be an expansion of resources, or? Obviously Jubilee House can't do it all.

Kelley: Right. I think what...funding the director positions are always difficult. So, absent those directors, we're not gonna be able to meet needs. So, I think that's...

Sarah: Do you have any thoughts on expansion of Jubilee House, or are you satisfied with how it is right now?

Kelley: What I'd first like to do is strengthen our resources. Our present resources. Before we would look to expand. I think we can expand. But I think we need to strengthen the present first.

Sarah: Are you saying financial resources?

Kelley: Financial, and also the programming...and then we can talk about expansion. Because there is room for expansion.

Sarah: Well, right now, how do you see the scope of Jubilee House being? I know that you try to serve residents of Hartford, mainly.

Kelley: I think that will remain. Priority is given to residents of Hartford, let me put it that way. Priority that will remain a priority. Again, because we can only do so much. And even with that expansion, still would probably have to be a priority.

Sarah: Compared to just how many immigrants are out there in Hartford, what fraction of the needs do you think Jubilee House wants to meet? Or sees itself as realistically meeting?

Kelley: Well, I can only answer that by going back to the mission. The mission is primarily education. The mission is primarily adult education. That's the primary focus of Jubilee House—

it's not caring for children, it's not support services, it's not family services. I think that you always need to go back to your mission when you're looking at something like that. Now, the mission expanded about eight years ago to include Refugee Assistance Services. But again, you have to go back to the mission.

Sarah: Well, believe it or not, that's all the questions I have for you.

Kelley: Really, Sarah? All finished?

Sarah: You got off easy! Well, do you think there's anything else—I'm just yelling over the vacuum—that you think I should really know? Or that you think I would be interested in knowing?

Kelley: I don't think at the present moment. I think you have a very good handle on Jubilee House.

Sarah: Thank you, yeah, I think I do, too.

Kelley: Yeah, I think you do.

Sarah: I've been really grateful to talk to everybody. You've certainly informed me. Oh, I do actually have one more question. I lied. I'm just thinking of it now. I haven't talked to anyone at the Collaborative Center of Justice, you know I've met them. I don't think I'm planning on interview them at this point. Could you kind of describe Jubilee House's relationship with them?

Kelley: Well, basically, the Collaborative Center for Justice rents space from Jubilee House. It's certainly something consistent with both missions. The fact that they would rent space in Jubilee House is consistent with their mission of building a more just society, and making sure people have information. The fact that we lease space to them, is consistent with our mission. In terms of daily interaction, or work is different. Our work is significantly different, yeah.

Sarah: Could you describe their work, from your perspective? Obviously you don't work for them, so you don't know everything. What's kind of their objective?

Kelley: Their objective is to be able to present the...to do advocacy, first of all, they interact frequently with elected officials. They advise people on bills that are in front of...whether it be the state, city, state, federal government. In preparation for the elections, they prepared as much as they could an analysis of all the proposals put forth by the two major parties. So...that's a lot of their work. They spend time in dialogue and conversation with elected officials. They have a governing board, their own governing board. And they have representatives from the religious communities that support them. That they meet with on a regular basis.

Sarah: That sounds very interesting.

Kelley: It is. They do good work, they do very good work. Very thorough work.

Sarah: I always like our conversations. But I think I wanted to focus on Jubilee House. There's so much to learn here.

Kelley: Yeah, they're two very distinct organizations.

Sarah: Alright, cool. Anything else you think I should know?

Kelley: I don't think so, Sarah.

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