

Called to Hope: Some Characteristics of a Holy Cross Educator

Brother Stephen Walsh, CSC, Executive Director, Holy Cross Institute
Los Altos, CA
February 15-17, 2001

Where do we begin in defining the characteristics of a Holy Cross educator? Let us begin in 1849 with the following joyful announcement by an elated Basil Moreau:

God has heard your prayers and mine. You have already guessed my meaning! Full teaching rights have been decreed for our institution [Notre Dame de Sainte Croix]. ... Complete teaching liberty which we had coveted so long and so fervently. Consequently, we may henceforth take our beloved students from the elementary courses through the profound studies of philosophy which complete their education and which, if well directed, can exercise such a great influence on the rest of life. (1)

This was equivalent to full accreditation: Notre Dame de Sainte Croix was one of the first non-state sponsored educational establishments to be so recognized. But note: why was “complete teaching liberty” so important for Notre Dame de Sainte Croix? Because we can now “exercise such a great influence on the rest of [a student’s] life.”

For Moreau professional competence is a given. There is every expectation that the highest secular standards will be met. Most Catholic schools pride themselves on meeting recognized secular standards—but there’s got to be something more. You know there is not really much difference among schools when one compares what they do. One late evening I was listening to the classical music station and at 9:30 PM it was announced that the past hour had been sponsored by Archbishop Whatever High School

- where they had computers (so do we, I said),
- where they had honors classes,
- where they had comprehensive athletics,
- where 43% of the faculty had a Master’s degree and
- when they finished their litany, I waited expectantly AND...

The difference is intrinsic and comes with the why, the how, the who and the for whom. The distinction must be found in us if we are to be true to the mission and legacy of Basil Moreau.

There has been considerable work done with regard to heritage and mission of Holy Cross schools. The first institutes had a lot to do with conveying the history of the Congregation and focused on heritage and legacy. As one person said, “We’re lucky: we’ve got the gazebo, the bell, the tradition.” This is not about things – about icons. This is a step beyond information: this is about formation.

I was asked to take this work a step further and translate it into the characteristics of the Holy Cross educator. It is a basic assumption of this paper that a Holy Cross educator is someone beyond the generic Catholic school teacher: we are an identifiable brand of Catholic educator.

These reflections are based on my understanding and my lived experience of the Holy Cross legacy at both secondary schools and in higher education as a student, teacher, administrator and board member. I will focus on four defining characteristics:

- zeal for mission,

- hospitality and compassion of the Holy Cross Family,
- integrity and wholeness particularly related to teaching and learning,
- hope.

I do not propose that these are the only characteristics of the Holy Cross educator but they do define a modest agenda by which we might direct our energies for formation.

Zeal for Mission

Moreau often speaks of zeal. For him zeal is the “primary apostolic quality.” (2)
 Zeal is a word out of fashion today. In today’s parlance we may better understand urgency or fervor for mission. In the plain language of Moreau the mission is

While we prepare useful citizens for society, we shall likewise do our utmost to prepare citizens for heaven. . . .I have long believed that the world has a greater need for persons of value than for scholars. Education is the art of helping young people to completeness; for the Christian, this means education is helping a young person to be more like Christ, the model of all Christians. Zeal is the great desire to make God known, loved, and served, and thus to bring knowledge of salvation to others. (3)

This is the legacy of Moreau: the mission is one with that of Jesus and the Church.

Zeal (fervor) is inspired by faith. Ah, faith! Now there’s the rub.

After twenty-five years standing before one or another faculty, I am aware that faith-talk causes some to fidget. Aware that I am invading the comfort zone of these fidgeters, I usually waffle. No more. For Moreau if competence is a given, then Christian witness is an imperative.

Then there are others who sit with a glazed expression beguiling themselves with the notion that this is the stuff for campus ministry, the religious studies department, and the retreat staff. We excuse ourselves: I teach chemistry. I’m only a football coach. I just take attendance. I’m the Principal’s secretary.

Oh, no. Welcome to the 21st Century and the age of Lay Ecclesial Ministry. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops has spoken

Lay ecclesial ministry, is in many ways, a new phenomenon for our Church An appreciation of the mission of the Church is essential when speaking about all ministry, The Church, as sign and instrument, continues the mission of Christ, which is directed toward the salvation of humanity and transformation of the world. Mission is accomplished in communion (communio) which recognizes an equality of persons and a differentiation of roles.

All ministry serves this mission. The baptized serve this mission and share in Christ’s priestly, prophetic, and royal office. . . .Lay ecclesial ministry is rooted in and flows from the sacraments of initiation, which incorporate individuals into the body of Christ and calls them to mission. Special charisms of the Holy Spirit, which follow from the sacraments of initiation, equip lay ministers for these special tasks. (4)

In his April 2000 pastoral letter on lay ministry, Cardinal Roger Mahoney, Archbishop of Los Angeles asserts:

It is in the Church at this time and in this place, that the presence of Christ—the one who witnessed, worshipped and above all, served—continues. And it is through witness, worship, and service that the Church continually expresses and receives its identity as the Body of Christ. These are the hallmarks of Christian living. (5)

Mission is not about doing so much as being. It is not about what I do but why and how I do what I do. It is essentially about who I am.

Mere chemists, coaches, attendance officers and secretaries will never create citizens for heaven. Men and women of faith will touch eternity by transforming the lives of the young people they teach. Competence ensures the creditability of Christian witness. Grace builds on nature. I must be a knowledgeable and able chemist, an effective coach, a just attendance officer and an efficient secretary. Moreau says, "We shall never forget that virtue is, as Bacon puts it, the 'spice which preserves science.'"

It seems to me that even the best of us is a reluctant witness. In discussing this reluctance with a friend, she suggested that our very competence could become a stumbling block. How so? I recall the cost of time and energy it took to achieve my professional competence and I know the cost of exercising that competence—doing my job. And I think, "Now you want me to do more. I'm not sure I'm up to the cost involved. I'm not sure what I believe. I don't pray very much."

Where does the courage come from to be that Christian witness? In order to encourage you I must share with you my own faith journey. The older I get the simpler things get.

Lacking faith? Be gentle on yourself. Believe the yoke you are assuming is easy and the burden light. Consider this: Jesus likened faith to a mustard seed. You can't get much smaller than that.

Maybe it is time to draw on the untapped inner reserves--charisms of the Holy Spirit-- that our bishops assure Baptism and Confirmation have provided.

"Mission is done in communion," so say the American bishops. As Brother Charles Andersen was fond of saying: "all we have is each other". Mission is done with others and for others. Mission is not about me. The point I wish to make about community in relationship to mission effectiveness is that I can find support in the presence of others of similar conviction. I can overcome my preoccupation that somehow zeal and its attendant faith mean perfection. Community provides for a diversity of gifts--for the strength of another to compensate my momentary lapses. Neither Jesus, nor those with whom I serve, nor especially those I serve expect perfection. It is the struggle that authenticates my worship, my witness, and my service.

And what of those we serve? Considering some of the characteristics which define Generation Y, it seems to me that the young people we serve may be more ready than we imagined:

- They are very spiritual: 92% believe religion is important, 93% express belief in God and are seeking a deeper experience of God.
- They fear community breakdown and seek a sense of belonging. They are optimistic about their impact on the world and seek the opportunity to make a difference
- They fulfill required community service.
- They see suffering as spiritual

We are told that for young Catholics of Generation Y ambiguity is central to their faith: they embrace doubt. (Their prayer might be, Lord I believe; help my unbelief.) Nevertheless, they

- recognize and embrace Jesus and the sacraments
- believe and participate in outreach to the poor
- express a devotion to Mary, who has new significance for X and Y generations

Where do I -- Stephen -- find God in my life? For me there is no coincidence or chance, that is God in my life. While others may find God in nature, I am more likely to be touched by people or to find God in art or a good film.

Several years ago I was working on retreat with juvenile delinquents. I met Benny, a car thief, who told me, "I see God when I look in the mirror because I believe God is in me."

I was inspired to put together a prayer book for students from the remarks of a student.

This summer I was in Santiago de Compostela – the remarkable pilgrimage site in northwestern Spain. I suppose technically I too was pilgrim but in the presence of the real pilgrims who had backpacked across the northern coast of Spain I knew I was a mere tourist. At the daily noon mass for pilgrims I sat next to a middle aged backpacker with tears streaming down his cheeks and at the greeting of peace he turned to me and simply said, “I am so happy to be here.” I was so dumbstruck by the simplicity of his faith that I reached out and hugged him.

I suppose I could say my theology is more incarnational than speculative. I believe in the Incarnation – the fact that God became man in the person of Jesus –and because of this belief it seems to me that anything is possible.

I have come to understand that praying is “being myself with God.”(6) If there is any message in the 17th century classic *The Practice of the Presence of God* (7) it is that nurturing a faith life is not about doing but about being.

“We should establish ourselves in a sense of God’s presence by continually conversing with HimIt is lamentable that we have so little [faith] and that instead of taking faith for the rule of conduct, people amuse themselves with trivial devotions that change daily.”

From my experience, I have learned that piety does not always correspond to faith. In a crisis, I have seen the pious become frenzied, manipulative, and judgmental.

Observing my mother who raised my brothers and me in the absence of my alcoholic father is what formed my spirit of faith. Her enduring faith was characterized by her conviction that “someday our ship will come in.” Years later when I was writing *Prayers for the Holy Cross Man*, she shared with me her favorite prayer which she told me she carries in her wallet: “Dear God, be good to me/ for the sea is so wide / and my boat is so small.”

Finally I recall the story of Elijah. It speaks to my own reluctance. Fearing for his life, Elijah takes off for Mount Horeb and finds shelter in a cave. Then a voice says,

“What are you doing here?” He replies, “I have been most zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, but the Israelites have forsaken your covenant and torn down your altars. They have killed all the prophets and now they’re trying to kill me.”
The voice said, “Go outside and stand on the mountain. The Lord will be passing by.”
And a mighty wind came up—but the Lord was not in the wind.
After the winds, an earthquake—but the Lord was not in the earthquake.
After the earthquake, a fire – but the Lord was not in the fire.
And after the fire there came the sound of a gentle breeze.
And when Elijah heard this, he covered his face. (8)

This is the legacy of Moreau: Competence is a given. Christian witness is an imperative. Witness, worship, and service: this is the mission.

Community and Relationships: Hospitality and Compassion

From our discussion of zeal for mission it is clear that mission is done in community. There are characteristics that define how a Holy Cross educator relates to others in community.

Educating Others' Children

We are educators – lay ministers -- in schools sponsored by the Brothers of Holy Cross whose patron is St. Joseph. We are that component of the Holy Cross family once called the Brothers of St. Joseph and often referred to by Moreau as Josephites. And who was St. Joseph—a man charged with the responsibility of taking care of someone else's child. Joseph: compassionate towards Mary, accepting of her child and hospitable to both. (9)

Family Spirit

The Congregation of Holy Cross has a prevailing family spirit. Moreau's vision was to join priests and brothers and sisters together with the Holy Family as a model. He speaks of a "union of hearts." Moreover, historically we Brothers have been engaged in orphanages and boarding schools, residential colleges and universities, and boys' homes. It has marked our approach to education. Serving a school community that grew out of an orphanage and into a boarding school, I sometimes seem to enjoy a heightened awareness of this family spirit. Simply put, we were never surrogate parents (*en loco parentis*) we were family. To be a brother is to be horizontal in a vertical (hierarchical) church.

Communion of Persons: Personal Gifts/Mutual Enrichment

With regard to mission and education the Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross read:

For many of us the Holy Cross mission expresses itself in education of youth in schools . . . we assist others not only to recognize and develop their own gifts but also discover the deepest longing in their lives. . . . And, as in every work of our mission, we find that we ourselves stand to learn much from those whom we are called to teach. (10)

Reflecting on this passage, Claude Grou, former Superior General of the Congregation remarks:

Education consists not just in transmitting information, but in allowing **each individual** to develop personal gifts . . . this implies a religious awakening, emphasized in our role as educators in the faith . . . education is a process of mutual enrichment . . . we refuse to define ourselves by **relationships** in which we give and others receive. Our approach to work flows from our understanding as proposed by the constitution and of the Church as a **communion of persons** in which all can learn and be enriched. (11. Emphasis added)

Moreau's Christian Education is essentially about how to relate to students and could only have been written by a wise schoolman who knew and loved young people. He writes,

Relationships with young people are always difficultChristian educators really need a call from God in order to deal with all that they face in working with young people. How else can teachers possibly work towards building Christian values in the young as well as towards giving them the knowledge they need?" (12)

Moreau was aware of teachers who "injure their students by making fun of their inadequacies, or their families, or their ethnic background. . . . [or] call their students names." (13) Moreau observes:

Teachers need to watch themselves in order to conduct themselves as they should in front of young people, who closely study their teachers' faults and notice any weaknesses. Do not forget that young people are naturally observant and that they see all and hear all. Teachers are greatly mistaken if they believe that they do not have to be concerned with

what students see or hear if the students are occupied with all of the distractions that go with being young. (14)

Like Moreau, I have long understood that kids pick up their cues from adults. This is my reality. The only thing I know about family is that it is the source of my greatest joy and greatest sorrow usually at the same time.

Once again the oral tradition is confirmed by the teaching of Moreau:

Never forget that all teaching lies in the best approach to an individual student, that all the successes you find will be in direct proportion to the efforts you have made in this area. (15)

Moreau then goes on to describe the different types of students one can expect to teach. In his own words some of them may be those “poorly brought up or spoiled by their parents, unintelligent, self-centered, opinionated, insolent, envious, without integrity, immature, lazy, or in poor health.” (16) However unattractive we may find them to be his message is they are in our midst and we must deal with them. The message is clearly that the Holy Cross Family is inclusive and not exclusive. Furthermore, Moreau says

If at times you show preference to any young person, it should be the poor, those who have no one else to show them preference, those who have the least knowledge, those who lack skills and talent, and those who are not Catholic or Christian. If you show them greater care and concern, it must be because their needs are greater and because it is only just to give more to those who have received less ... seeing in all only the image of God imprinted within them like a sacred seal that you must preserve at all cost. (17)

This is a very explicit challenge for those of us who are called to be Holy Cross educators. About this challenge, we cannot invoke a dismissive that-was-then-and-this-is-now attitude. The admissions criteria employed to create the school community are a critical issue worthy of a separate consideration that cannot distract us at this moment. In my estimation the legacy of Moreau is only eroded by elitist pretensions.

I have come to understand that the longer one stays in schools the more one may become preoccupied with his convenience at the expense of the student benefit. There are some that suffer the illusion of a lost era of selectivity that created a homogeneous student body composed of only the brightest and the best. Anything less is erosion of standards.

For the last forty years, Brothers have described their best efforts “as doing an extraordinary job with ordinary young people.” Brothers have always been more concerned about educating those who chose us rather than choosing those we will educate. But then it’s not really about standards, is it? Let me share a story with you that is closer to the mark.

“There’s not a bad man among us just a lot of tired blood,” he said. With these words Brother William Dunn excused his cautious colleagues to a frustrated young departmental chair at St. Edward’s University in the late 1960’s. It was also an effort to temper what William perceived to be an overly zealous attitude on the part of this young Brother. All I can say is that the zealous inherit the presidency.

- It takes energy to know students in an individual manner.
- It takes time to listen.
- It is more difficult to be attentive than to be awesome.
- It takes wisdom to know that my answers work for me precisely because they have been culled from my experience.
- It takes a responsible love to resist the temptation to rescue.
- It takes courage to risk vulnerability.

But education is a process of mutual enrichment. We ourselves stand to learn much from those whom we are called to teach. Listen to the words of a class salutatorian

Under each identical cap here this morning is a face. There is a unique face; one with unique eyes and a one-of-a-kind voice. These are the faces of my class; the faces that I have seen for four years. I'm not fooled by the fancy caps and flowing gowns; these are the same ugly mugs that have filled my sight since I was 14.

I can see all these faces because I took the time to look . . . and I took a chance. I take a chance when I look at somebody, when I look into his face; he's looking right back into mine. And it's hard sometimes to have someone look right into me; it makes me feel vulnerable . . . It's a natural feeling; everyone gets it. But we can't be afraid to look, we can't be afraid to be looked at. The way people can get into our lives is if we let them. Don't be afraid to look into someone's eyes: for they say the eyes are the window to the soul.

Look into my eyes and you see the joy, the pain, the pride, the humility, and the love of eighteen years of life. Look into his eyes [pointing] or his eyes [pointing again] and you will see the same thing but in a totally different way: the joys, the pain and victories of life in each of our own unique ways. Look into our eyes and see the support our families have given us. See the fun we have with our friends. See the confusion in our eyes whenever we try to figure out the opposite sex. See the memories this school has given us. See the struggles and see the experience, but see that we keep on going. Look into our eyes and see who we are. See the changes we have gone through to this point. So as you look out over these men, these Holy Cross men, remember who we are. Today watch us as we walk up. Don't look at the caps and gowns look at our faces and see our eyes, see our life. Look at the Class of 1997 and see we are smiling. (18)

Do I really see those around me? Am I watching out for the marginalized--seemingly invisible—student? Where is the impetus in my school community to include the poor? Who is an advocate for the poor? What initiatives have I taken to be present to beginning teachers and to incorporate new staff and faculty members into my school community?

We are told that the student generation now in our schools fears community breakdown and is seeking a sense of belonging. Correspondingly, half of this generation is from divorced families. Willing or not, like Joseph have not we too been charged with the responsibility of taking care of someone else's child? This generation is more diverse. Do I embrace this diversity or do I tolerate it?

Teacher-to-Teacher Relationships

It should be clear that the principles articulated with regard to our relationships with students apply as well to adult relationships found in a Holy Cross school. Earlier, I commented that “kids pick their cues up from adults.” Adult behaviors in a school community are perceived by students to be appropriate and acceptable modes of behavior. I am convinced that some students could construct a fairly accurate sociogram defining relationships between and among faculty. They know those who respect or like one another. Among ourselves we know that there are behaviors which erode mutual respect and regard among colleagues.

Creating a Faith Community

Our challenge is to create a faith community, a communion of persons committed to a single mission. This is the ideal. There are difficulties that can impede our realization of this goal:

- Increasing ethnic and cultural diversity of our student bodies.
- Increasing disparity in the age of our faculties.
- Fragmentation of families affects both student population and adult community.
- Time constraints imposed by being a single parent.

- Care of aging parents preoccupies an increasing number of those who comprise the adult school community of our schools.
- Long-distance commutes of faculty and staff members in some settings.

Finally, the sheer size of most of our schools creates a challenge for creating community. There is research that asserts that smaller size is an indicator of quality (19). My own experience of faith community in a smaller school has not been all that remarkably different from my experience in larger schools. However, despite the conventional wisdom I cannot resist pointing out that the research demonstrates that *school* size is a more critical factor than *class* size with regard to quality.

The operative virtue in terms of building community is hospitality. Kathleen Norris remarks

adolescent self-absorption recedes as one’s capacity for . . . hospitality grows; it is only as one is at home in oneself that one may be truly hospitable to others—welcoming, but not overbearing, affably pliant but not subject to crass manipulation.” (20)

“It is only as one is at home with oneself that one may be truly hospitable to others.” Becoming at home in oneself requires time to reflect, to connect with others, and to build our relationships into communities. Yet many of us today have become victims of our own accomplishments, or slaves to the tyranny of the checklist. If we can just get all these tasks done, we tell ourselves, then we will have time to focus on the big picture. The larger our context, the easier it is to narrow our focus. Even if we think we’re focused on others (caring for aging parents, parenting alone, commuting long distances to provide a better quality of life for our families), if we lose sight of our mission in life and the meaning of those activities, we become increasingly self-centered—yet less at home in ourselves. We just show up for our responsibilities (the guest), rather than focusing on why we’re fulfilling them (the host).

Several Sundays ago the gospel was the story of Martha and Mary. The insight that came to me was that each was being hospitable in her own way. The story applies here: Martha was focused on others but lost sight of mission.

If we allow them, these difficulties can become excuses for us. It is obvious that faculty-staff wine and cheese parties just don’t cut it anymore. Worthy of our energy is some creative reflection on new strategies for creating community. Allow me to propose some new possibilities:

1. **Hope**—If Holy Cross Brothers are men with hope to bring, can the faculty of a school sponsored by the Congregation collaborate on community-building strategies that bring hope to their neighborhoods, students, and each other? Cf. Andrew Delbano: “today hope has narrowed to the vanishing point of the self alone” (The Real American Dream: A Meditation on Hope)—What kind of strategy would be too big for one person to tackle, but just right for the critical mass of faculty at a Holy Cross school? Or could they expand it to reinforce their sense of virtual community, by having faculties represent their teaching community in nationwide charitable efforts, e.g., the Avon Breast Cancer Walk wearing their school t-shirts/sweatshirts and later sharing their reflections. On each November anniversary of the Salvadoran Martyrs, there is an “Ignatian Family Teach In.” In 2000, the 11th anniversary teach-in took place in Columbus Georgia and included a trip to protest at the School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Georgia. Over 1500 students from Jesuit colleges, universities and high schools participated.
2. **Reflection**--With regard to sharing reflections I was told about a segment of the television news show, 10/6 Chronicle, which featured an online retreat at Creighton University. It seems that the university has created a virtual retreat as a supplement for faculty and staff and adding to the sense of community are 50 faculty and staff members who contribute to the Web site through a daily written reflection on scripture.
3. **Discourse**—Do faculty members of Holy Cross-sponsored schools have the opportunity to know themselves as a national or indeed as an international community? Could the faculty at all the schools begin to create an electronic and/or print collection of reflections, stories, and anecdotes that illustrate what it means to be a Holy Cross teacher? They could write it about themselves or each other. This

living document could be a terrific resource for new faculty, an important historic record, and a way of owning and sustaining the unique Holy Cross educational culture that these laypersons will have to lead in the near future.

4. **Hosting Others**—Do you host any kind of school community event, or do you just show up? Wouldn't it be interesting to see what kind of event you would choose to host?

The subtext of this entire presentation is about you becoming a host, about you owning the mission, about you taking the initiative to find new ways to sustain the enduring values of Basil Moreau. As one of your aging sponsors, I am reminded of the lines from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*: "You're getting too old for these tricks, Father William."

In their complete form these lines are:

'You are old, Father William,' the young man said,
'And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—
Do you think, at your age, it is right?'

It is time for you to learn the tricks of the trade in order that you might carry on the family business.

I fear the temptation on the part of some to confuse the challenge of communal initiative with the Hollywood romance of a "Pay It Forward" scheme. As one film critic remarked, "Pay It Forward appears to be a Republican fantasy of charity: it ends, literally with a thousand points of light." (Anthony Lane, *The New Yorker*, November 6, 2000, p 111.) Recently, in an article disparaging the loss of community in the dot com industry I encountered an apt phrase: "individualized networking" (21). We will never build community with a bunch of *individuals* doing nice things for one another.

In another context, I invoked the Augustinian principle: grace builds on nature. The compelling issue is creating a communion of persons committed to realizing a mission that is based on faith in Jesus Christ. Like our students, we too are seeking a sense of belonging. Where is my touchstone in this community? Where do I find hospitality and compassion among my colleagues? When and how do I provide hospitality and compassion to my colleagues?

The novelist John Fowles gave the following line to his protagonist Daniel Martin: "**There is no true compassion without will; there is no will without compassion.**"

I understand "will" to be the power of control the mind has over its actions. I understand compassion to be derived from the Latin *con + passio*, literally "with suffering." I particularly like this context for compassion because it infers an inclination to respond in a deliberate and conscious manner. In his or her relationships with others the Holy Cross educator is compassionate and hospitable.

A host renders hospitality, the cordial and generous reception of guests. In this "all about me" world, hospitality is a much-needed virtue. Am I a host or simply a guest here myself?

Wholeness and Integrity

Give me integrity, Lord.
Give me strength to close the gaps,
between what I know to be true and what I actually do.
Give me courage to be true to myself, to others,
and to you – Source of all Truth.

In these reflections, I found myself often turning to the dictionary in order to clarify meanings. I was surprised to find that the preferred dictionary definition of integrity is "**rigid** adherence to a code or standard of values." My working definition of integrity is best reflected by the title of a 1978 musical "I'm

getting my act together and taking it on the road.” I don’t know about you but my integrity is a dynamic process that suffers unfortunate lapses. For this reason, I tend to mind the gaps.

I should like to explore Moreau’s vision of a holistic education. I would like to propose that educating the whole person takes a COMPLEAT [i.e. of or characterized by a highly developed or wide-ranging skill or proficiency] educator. The wholeness we hope to engender in our students must first be found in us.

When I was Academic Dean at St Ed’s we were inaugurating a series of interdisciplinary seminars designed to realize our mission goal of integration and unity of knowledge. I was criticized for approving an interdisciplinary seminar taught by only one professor. Is it not possible for one person to demonstrate the competence of integration that we hoped was the outcome of this learning experience?

Further, I would suggest that our task is really educating persons of wholeness rather than the whole person. Wholeness (making connections and understanding relationships) suggests an integrated and internalized learning. Are we not more interested in the unity of heart and mind, of thought and action?

Is this distinction between holistic learning and the whole person really necessary? I believe it is because as long as we persist in speaking of the whole person we continue to think of ourselves as parts specialists. Educating the whole person does not mean that some of us are on a head-trip, that some are heart specialists—perhaps counselors, that others are builders of the body—the coaches, and that campus ministers are the sole source of food for the soul.

In a moment I am going to read an entire passage from which we have drawn several recognizable sentences which we believe encapsulate Moreau’s highest hopes. From these selected lines has emerged the insightful paradigm: information, formation, and transformation.

I would like to take a fresh look at this passage. We’ve dropped some of the lines because they don’t seem relevant to our day. And they’re not. But they were both relevant and radical for mid-19th century France. As a whole this is an argument—indeed a polemic—against Rationalism which was the prevalent philosophy that defined schools in Moreau’s day. Rationalism is the theory that exercise of reason, rather than the acceptance of empiricism, authority or spiritual revelation, provides the only valid basis for action or belief and that reason is the prime source of knowledge and spiritual truth. Moreau was not a we’ve-always-done-it-this-way educator and he was going against the tide. With that in mind, we listen to Moreau

We can state in a word the kind of teaching we hope to impart. Even though we base our philosophy course on the data of faith, no one needs fear that we shall confine our teaching within narrow and unscientific boundaries. No, we wish to accept science without prejudice, and in a manner adapted to the needs of our times. We do not want our students to be ignorant of anything they should know. To this end, we shall shrink from no sacrifice. But we shall never forget that virtue, as Bacon puts it, is the “spice which preserves science.” We shall always place education side by side with instruction; the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart. While we prepare useful citizens for society, we shall likewise do our utmost to prepare citizens for heaven. (22)

There are tensions here: between faith and reason, between heart and mind, between education and instruction. If Moreau were conveying the same notion to students, he would say, “Don’t let your schooling get in the way of your education.” Finally, Moreau asserts that our efforts “are adapted to the needs of the times.”

It may be instructive for us to consider for a moment Francis Bacon, the sole authority cited by Moreau. Voltaire refers to Bacon “as the father of experimental philosophy.” Bacon was the proponent of inductive reasoning (going from specific to general). Of Bacon, Alfred North Whitehead provides the following insight:

Book-learning conveys second-hand information, and as such can never rise to the importance of immediate practice. Our goal is to see the immediate events of our lives as instances of our general ideas. What the learned world tends to offer is one second-hand scrap of information illustrating ideas derived from another second-hand scrap of information. The second handedness of the learned world is the secret of its mediocrity. It is tame because it has never been scared by facts. The main importance of Francis Bacon's influence does not lie in any peculiar theory of inductive reasoning which he happened to express, but in the revolt against second-hand information of which he was a leader. (23)

It is not a far leap from Bacon and Whitehead to Jerome Bruner. From his Process of Education

The schoolboy learning physics is a physicist, and it is easier for him to learn physics behaving like a physicist than doing something else. The "something else" usually involves the task of mastering . . . a "middle language" – classroom discussion and textbooks that talk about the conclusions in a field of inquiry rather than centering on the inquiry itself. (24)

My point is that for Moreau there is a tension in terms of methodology and content. Let us consider Moreau's "We do not want our students to be ignorant of anything they should know." Not only are there various notions of what students need to know, but also about how they might learn what they need to know.

Few of us would take exception to Robert Hutchins' assertion

The benefits of education are indirect. The mind is not a receptacle; information is not education. Education is what remains after the information that has been taught has been forgotten. Ideas, methods, and habits of the mind are the radioactive deposit left by education. (25)

However, when I contrast the Moreau / Hutchins understanding of "what they should know" with my lived experience of schools, I find that teacher talk dispensing information prevails. At least three times in three different settings I have analyzed complete sets of semester final examinations in the light of the cognitive skills defined in Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. I have found that approximately 80% of the test items are knowledge-based requiring only the recall of information (in contrast to the higher cognitive skills of interpretation, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation).

For Basil Moreau, the educator, there is more to education than book-learning and teacher-talk. From both our considerations of holistic learning and his convictions about how we relate to students, I would believe Moreau would have had little tolerance for the prevalent passive learning. Elsewhere, Moreau empathizes with "students, condemned to listen, yawn, or sleep." (26)

In the current national frenzy of test taking and test scores, the conventional wisdom is that it is content that counts. Alas, we rationalists, like the poor, will always be amongst you. This is the biggest gap I mind in myself and in our schools. It is far easier and much more gratifying for me as a teacher to be awesome to students than to be attentive to them.

To be true to our calling as compleat Holy Cross educators we cannot excuse ourselves from matters of the heart.

The heart does not know the Pythagorean theorem, the parts of speech, or plant phyla.
The heart knows love and its loss, craves compassion, and responds to hospitality.
The heart struggles with ambiguity, weighs choices, and considers consequences.
The heart, given space, learns to risk once it finds courage and hope.
In the stillness of listening it is the heart that hears the gentle breeze.

Looking at the one photograph of Moreau, it is hard to imagine him as a reform minded educator. But he must have been charismatic, given the bitter complaint of the bishop that he was attracting all the brightest and best seminarians away from the diocese and into his group of auxiliary priests. Basil Moreau was convinced that

Our students are destined to live in the business and problems of the world. So they should not be made to live a type of life that they would have to abandon when they leave our institution. They should be trained in such a way that they may be everywhere what they were in school. We must never lose sight of this principle. (27)

This continues the polemic against Rationalism. Part of the earlier definition stated that rationalism dismisses empirical knowledge. Empirical knowledge as Bacon would have us understand comes from observation, experimentation or practical experience rather than theory. Recall that Moreau's whole school was a grand experiment.

So here Moreau speaks to me of realism. There's something nitty gritty about "the business and problems of the world." He says to me that theory and practice must be integrated. He says to me that education (as distinct from instruction or schooling) must be engaging and experiential if students are to "be everywhere what they were in school."

I am reminded of Brother Jerome Donnelly's passionate reaction to students who feared leaving the security of the senior retreat and returning to the real world. He was fond of saying, "This is real. That's not. Believe it." In Bangladesh the Brothers speak of EDUCATION TO REALITY

One of my more astute readers of the early drafts of this paper was Gail Tyson who both understands and respects the Holy Cross educational mission. Remarking on the tensions found in Moreau's vision, she pointed out the current tension between standardized testing and educational assessment.

Educational assessment is based on the individual's ability to perceive and close 'the gaps'Considering the knowledge-based standardized test items, it is ironic how poorly this prepares students for today's workplace. There the standards of integrity, loyalty, quality, consequences are less and less clear. Moreover, this world increasingly rewards resourcefulness and flexibility rather than discrete kinds of knowledge. In a fragmented world, the best source for nurturing and sustaining these qualities is the wellspring of inner wholeness. Otherwise, it would be easy to lose our way—the purpose and meaning of our actions, and their impact on others.

Finally, she validates the mission of Moreau,

In a society marked by discontinuity, a Holy Cross education seems truly counter-cultural to me—both more rooted in a humanistic reality than politically driven models and more inspiring as an ideal. (28)

It is curious that some aspects of Moreau's exceptional experiment of mid-19th century France have become the ordinary rule of early 21st century American secondary school.

This is nowhere more true than the emphasis Moreau placed on what today we refer to as student activities or extra curriculars. We recall that he incorporated the fine and performing arts into the curriculum and added such things as fencing and equestrian skills.

Nowhere is the strength of our oral tradition better illustrated than in the role of instrumental music in our schools. I recall when I first heard Brother Joel Giallanza's description of Moreau's band. Immediately it made sense to me why the University of Notre Dame lays claim to have the oldest college band in the land. When we arrived in northern Indiana, no one asked if schools had bands in America: we've always done it that way. It comes as no surprise that the band at Holy Cross-New Orleans is more than a 100 years old. And when the Brothers went to the Amazon in the late 1940's they too started a band—the only one of its

kind up or down the river even today. No one asked if Brazilian schools had bands: we've always done it that way. By the time of the great post World War II expansion of Catholic secondary schools, everyone had a band. However, I would point out that despite the devastating effect of California's Proposition 13 on public school music programs (and by extension private school programs) Notre Dame High School-Sherman Oaks has sustained a remarkably strong music program: we've always done it that way.

Admittedly, there are gaps between the ideal and the reality. I would respectfully suggest that the student activities program be due more administrative oversight in terms of mission effectiveness than is often the case. For some teachers, student activities and extra curriculars are a necessary evil. At the other extreme the over involvement of some teachers leads one to believe that some activities are faculty activities staffed by students.

In this latter regard, it would be instructive for administrators to watch the video of a 1999 film entitled Election. One reviewer praises this satiric film for its "dead-on portrayal of teachers and students alike." Kenneth Turan in the Los Angeles Times (April 23, 1999) says the film "takes particular glee in demonstrating the obtuseness of adults like the gee-whiz principal." He compliments the performance of Matthew Broderick who "in a role that is a near-perfect fit, plays the slightly lost, slightly woebegone but awfully sincere McCallister, the kind of educator everyone calls Mr. M. He's been named teacher of the year three times at Carver, a school record. Mr. M means it when he says, "I got involved, I made a difference." And in that there is a story.

We must believe with Moreau that these student activities and extra-curriculars provide opportunities where students are actively engaged in stretching themselves (often passionately), exceeding expectations and experiencing success that sometimes eludes them elsewhere. Extra curriculars are often the arena which provide some students the first real opportunity to become engaged members of the family: to be integrated into the community. These activities can be a source of hope.

Where can engaging and experiential learning occur within a school community?

1. On student retreats
2. In peer ministry programs where older students directing retreats and planning liturgies are a witness to integrity
3. In service learning and Christian service programs
4. In short term group counseling -- for those grieving a loss, for those going through divorce or separation, for codependency—where space is provided to listen and learn from one another and find out you're not alone.
5. In alumni mentor programs
6. In out of school activities including scouting, parish youth groups, Confirmation programs, volunteer programs, and parks-recreation department programs.
7. In after-school off-campus jobs which might benefit from in-school reflection
8. And foremost in the extracurricular program: athletics, music, journalism, drama, etc.

So for those teachers who find these experiences mere foolishness, the student time out of class a waste, and their own reluctant participation wearisome my response is, "We've always done it that way."

However, holistic learning (i.e., the incorporation of experiential learning, the integration of theory and practice, and interdisciplinary connections) must find expression in the classroom and the curriculum and not simply in the EXTRA curriculum. Just as he did in his day, I believe if Basil Moreau were standing before us he would challenge the prevailing classroom methodology as inadequate. It is easy to fiddle with student activities. To be true to our legacy, holistic learning must find expression in enough classrooms to make a difference.

The Cross and Hope

Inevitably, somewhere on our various school seals one finds the cross and double anchors taken from the seal of Congregation of Holy Cross that sponsors the school. The anchor is the Christian symbol for hope

and with the cross aptly illustrates the Congregation's motto: *Crux Spes Unica*: The Cross our only hope. It is taken from *Vexilla Regis Prodeunt*, an ancient liturgical hymn sung at vespers on feasts celebrating the cross and during Passiontide. The hymn proclaims, "Hail, O Cross, our only hope." [O Crux, ave, spes unica.]

The Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross read

The face of every human being who suffers is for us the face of Jesus who mounted the cross to take the sting out of death. Ours must be the same cross and the same hope. But we do not grieve as men [and women] without hope, for Christ the Lord has risen to die no more. If we, like him, accept suffering in our discipleship, we will move without awkwardness among others who suffer. We must be men [and women] with hope to bring. The footsteps of those men who called us to walk in their company left deep prints, as of men carrying heavy burdens. But they did not trudge; they strode. For they had the hope. (29)

I specifically invite you to walk in the company of Holy Cross and to share our hope. Our hope is of sterner stuff than the preferred dictionary definition of hope suggests: to wish for something with expectation of its fulfillment. To understand Christian hope we must turn to the second entry which is referred to as the archaic definition: to have confidence, trust. Confidence comes from the Latin *con+fides* literally "with faith." The Christian anchor of hope is about trust not wishing.

Let me put it this way: hope is Good Friday without the foreknowledge or certainty of Easter Sunday. Hope is for the "in between times." It is for now. With Matthew Arnold "we live between two ages one dead and the other powerless to be born." Hope is the virtue lacking and virtue sought by Yeats' "rough beast slouching towards Bethlehem"-- an image from his poem *Second Coming* (30). Hope gives me the courage to be and to take risks.

Paul VI eloquently speaks of hope in relationship to mission

Take a Christian or a handful of Christians who in the midst of their own community, show their capacity for understanding and acceptance, their sharing of life and destiny with other people, their solidarity with the efforts of all for whatever is noble and good. Let us suppose that, in addition, they radiate in an altogether simple and unaffected way their faith in values that go beyond current values, and **their hope is something that is not seen and one dare not imagine**. Through this wordless witness these Christians stir up irresistible questions in the hearts of those who see how they live: Why are they like this? What or who is it that inspires them? Why are they in our midst?

Nevertheless this always remains insufficient, because even the finest witness will prove ineffective in the long run if it is not explained, justified—what Peter called always having "**your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have**"—and made explicit by a clear and unequivocal proclamation of the Lord Jesus. (31. Emphases added)

Thus we return full circle to mission.

The truth of being a Holy Cross educator,
a daughter or son of Moreau,
in the fullest sense of the word
is that I live in the shadow of the Cross.

Hope is the characteristic virtue of the Holy Cross educator
but it is always in the context of the cross.
Hence, *Crux Spes Unica*.

I have been mulling these
things over for a long time.
In my mind's eye Faith is solid and Hope is malleable
[And by extension Charity is action.]
Hope is the middle child of the virtues:
there by well suited for the in between times.

Hope is the testing and processing of
Faith tempered by the heat of the day.
Hope always bounces back
but only after it has been heated up
and made pliable through pain and suffering.

In the words of the former Czech president,
Vaclav Havel, "Hope is not the conviction
that something will turn out well,
but the certainty that something makes sense,
regardless of how it turns out." (32)

For Emily Dickinson,

"Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the words,
And never stops at all."
Yes, for the poet, "Hope springs eternal."
There is more.
Hope floods the heart
melting boundaries
to stretch it and take it to new places
and it is "the power dammed up behind
our resistance to pain and suffering."

I would like to conclude with a reading from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians (4:1-6). It is these lines which inspired the title of this reflection: Called to Hope.

Brothers and Sisters: I, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body, and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Notes

1. Moreau, Basil Anthony. *Circular Letters of Father Basil Moreau*, Circular Letter 36, (April 15, 1849), p.112
2. Giallanaza, Brother Joel, C.S.C., “A Reflection on Basil Moreau’s Sense of Mission,” *A Simple Tool: The Mission and Message of Father Basil Moreau*, Rome, 1998.
3. Moreau, Basil Anthony. *Circular Letters of Father Basil Moreau*, Circular Letter 36, (April 15, 1849), p.112
4. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Lay Ecclesial Ministry: The State of the Questions*, Washington, DC, March, 2000, pp. 14-15
5. Mahoney, Cardinal Roger. *As I Have Done for You: A Pastoral Letter on Ministry*. <http://cardinal.la-archdiocese.org/000420.html>, p.12
6. Norris, Kathleen. *The Cloister Walk*, Riverhead Books, New York.
7. Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God*, Brunswick NJ Bridge-Logos Publishers, 1999, pp.46-47. Amazon.com provides access to a number of editions of this classic. Brother Lawrence was a Carmelite lay brother who worked as a cook and sandal maker. His 17th Century contemporary, M. Beaufort transcribed his conversations.
8. Cf. 1 Kings 19: 9-13
9. Joe Moyer, C.S.C. needs to be credited for the insightful turn of phrase “Joseph was charged with the responsibility of taking care of someone else’s child.” It was used in a homily and is much more dynamic than the static foster father of Jesus. Personally, it has caused me to reevaluate my preference for Joseph pictured as a carpenter rather than holding a pudgy baby Jesus.
10. *Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross*, Constitution 2: Mission, Article 16
11. Grou, Claude, C.S.C., *Commentary on the Constitutions*, Rome, 1997, p.28.
12. Moreau, Basil Anthony. *Christian Education*, abridged edition, Holy Cross Institute. 2006. <http://www.holycrossinstitute.org>, p.4
13. Ibid. p.7
14. Ibid, p.6
15. Ibid., p.10
16. Ibid., p.10
17. Ibid, p.5
18. Hansen, Ben. “Class of 1997 Salutatory Address,” *Prayers for the Holy Cross Man*, Holy Cross School, New Orleans, 1997. pp. 55-157
19. References to size: NASSP—optimum size of high school is 600 students; Editorial page New York Times, September 5, 2000 reference to The Tipping Point by Malcolm Gladwell; Washington Post and Times Picayune, Summer 2000 “School Size Matters: the lower the enrollment the better the education
20. Norris, Kathleen. *Amazing Grace: A vocabulary of faith*, New York: Riverhead Books: Penguin Putnam, 1998, p.75.
21. Pillar, Charles. “The Place That Tech Forgot.” Los Angeles Times. October 19, 2000.
22. Moreau, Basil Anthony, *Circular Letters*, op.cit. p.112.
23. Whitehead, Alfred North. *The Aims of Education*, Free Press: Macmillan, New York, 1967, p.51.
24. Bruner, Jerome. *The Process of Education*, Vintage Books, 1960, p.14.
25. Hutchins, Robert M. *The Learning Society*, New American Library, p.52-53.
26. Moreau, Basil Anthony. *Christian Education*, abridged edition, Holy Cross Institute. 2006. <http://www.holycrossinstitute.org> p. 9
27. Moreau, Basil Anthony. *Teacher’s Guide to Holy Cross* as quoted in *Christian Education*, abridged edition, Holy Cross Institute. 2006. <http://www.holycrossinstitute.org> p. 27
28. Tyson, Gail. Correspondence with the author, August 23, 2000.
29. *Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross*, Constitution 8, The Cross, Our Hope
30. Yeats, William Butler. *The Second Coming*. There is a powerful image in the final lines of this poem: “And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, / Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?” It provides a contrast to the line in the Constitutions “But they did not trudge; they strode. For they had the hope.”

31. Pope Paul VI, *On Evangelization in the Modern World*, December 8, 1975. United States Catholic Conference, Washington, DC, pp. 17-18
32. Both the quote from Vaclav Havel and the final two lines in Part 4: Hope come from somewhere in Gregg Levoy, *Callings: Finding and Following an Authentic Life*, Three Rivers Press, New York, 1998.

The American Heritage Dictionary is the source for dictionary definition references not out of any preference but simply because it was at hand.