



# *Christian Education*

*By Blessed Basil Anthony M. Moreau*

## Editor's Note

First published in 1856, *Christian Education* is a manuscript by Reverend Basil Anthony M. Moreau, founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross. In this manuscript, Father Moreau attempted to outline the ideals and the goals of a Holy Cross education as he saw them. These ideals were used in setting up the school in Le Mans, France, that bore the name Our Lady of Holy Cross.

Part One of the original text, Teachers and Students, is presented in its entirety. Part Two, dealing with the establishment of a school in the France of Father Moreau's day, provides practical guidelines for maintaining a school and directives regarding content and instruction. This edition includes brief excerpts from the final part (the only difference from the earlier version), which deals with the teaching of religion and the Christian formation of students.

Grateful acknowledgement is made to the South-West Province, Congregation of Holy Cross for making *Christian Education* available in English to the Congregation, and in particular to Brother Edmund Hunt, CSC, for the initial translation, completed in 1986. That edition was ably edited by Brother Franklin Cullen, CSC, and Brother Donald Blauvelt, CSC. The new excerpts included in this edition are from a subsequent translation of *Christian Education* by Sister Anna Teresa Bayhouse, CSC, completed in December 2002.

To this sesquicentennial edition of *Christian Education* are appended a readers' guide and materials for further reflection. Grateful acknowledgement goes to the contributions of Brother Joel Giallanza, CSC, Brother Thomas Dziekan, CSC, and Brother Robert Lavelle, CSC, in the preparation of these latter materials.

Finally, special thanks to the capable staff of the Marketing Office at St. Edward's University for their editorial assistance, design and layout of this publication.

Brother Stephen Walsh, CSC  
Executive Director  
Holy Cross Institute at St. Edward's University  
September 15, 2006



# *Christian Education*

*For use by the Educators of the Congregation of Holy Cross*

Basil Anthony Moreau

Le Mans: Julien Printing Shop  
Lanier & Company, Place des Halles, 12  
1856

Imprimatur Cenomani, die 26 junii 1856 Jacobus, Ep. Cen



## Contents

Editor's Notes.....	inside cover
Preface.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Pedagogy.....	4
PART ONE—TEACHERS AND STUDENTS .....	4
Chapter One—Teachers and Their Relationship to Students .....	4
A Call to Be a Teacher .....	4
Faithfulness .....	4
Knowledge .....	5
Zeal .....	5
Vigilance .....	6
Seriousness .....	6
Gentleness .....	6
Patience .....	8
Prudence .....	8
Firmness .....	9
Chapter Two—Students and Student-Teacher Relations .....	10
Young People Who are Spoiled or Have Poor Upbringing.....	10
Unintelligent Young people .....	11
Self-centered Young people .....	11
Self-opinionated Young people .....	11
Insolent Young people .....	11
Envious Young People .....	12
Young People Without Integrity .....	12
Immature Young people .....	13
Lazy Young People .....	14
Young People in Weak Health .....	14
PART TWO—MAINTENANCE AND DIRECTION OF SCHOOLS .....	15
PART THREE—FORMATION OF STUDENTS TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND THE MEANS TO ASSURE THEIR PERSEVERANCE.....	15
Threads that Still Run True: A Reader's Guide to Christian Education .....	17
The Holy Cross Tradition.....	28
Themes for Reflection .....	30

# Christian Education

By Basil Moreau

For use by the Educators of the Congregation of Holy Cross

## Preface

May this short work on education, intended for use by those working in the schools associated with the Congregation, attain the end that I proposed to myself in composing it: the formation of the hearts of young people and the development of a positive response toward religion within them. I have always understood the education of youth to be only this, and I have always been convinced that the first duty of any teacher is to produce Christians: Society

*The first duty of any teacher is to produce Christians: Society has a greater need for people of values than it has for scholars.*

has a greater need for people of values than it has for scholars. Knowledge itself does not bring about positive values, but positive values do influence knowledge and put it to a good use. If there ever existed a time when this type of education should be an influence in the lives of young people, it is certainly now—at a time when worldly and unchristian values seem to produce such confusion for the young. Christian education alone can influence the evil that we all experience in today's world. Christian education alone can return people to the belief in and practice of Christianity by inspiring positive values in the coming generations.

In order to bring unity to our efforts in educating young people in the schools with which we are associated, I have organized the educational plan that is discussed in this work. I call it a plan because as of now it is really only an outline of how to reach the goals I mentioned in my Circular Letter of May 29, 1856. I intend to complete work in this effort after I have received any observations and responses that the Brothers may wish to make regarding this document. §

## Introduction

*Those who teach justice to many will shine like the stars for all eternity*

— Daniel XII: 3

**Pedagogy** derives from two Greek words—that for *child* and that for *leading*. It is the art of helping young people to completeness. For the Christian, this means that education is helping a young person to be more like Christ, the model for all Christians. From the word's roots, we can interpret pedagogy to mean "leading a young person away from ignorance and disorder." In this way it consists precisely in the reforming of human nature, which has been weakened by original sin. This reforming involves restoring to rational processes the light that existed before the fall of our first parents and then restoring to the heart the kinds of feelings and sentiments that ought to reside there. This notion of pedagogy is founded on the principles of Catholicism and makes educating young people a most important work for those who try to perform it—it truly makes education the art of arts.

It is very important that educators in our schools be trained in the art of education before trying to exercise the skill. It is an obligation of those in charge of the schools with which we are associated to help anyone who teaches at them. The educators will need direction to complete their preparation, because they will usually be unprepared to educate in the way I am describing. It is also important that those in charge of the schools with which we are associated understand the importance of this unified effort. Educators must also know what is involved in operating a school according to these principles. This belief, more than anything else, is what has inspired this document. §

*Educators will need direction to complete their preparation, because they will usually be unprepared to educate in the way I am describing.*

## PART ONE

### Teachers and their Relationships with Students

*In order to succeed in the very difficult task of effectively educating young people, a teacher truly must possess certain qualities.*

**A Call to Be a Teacher** Since God alone provides the means for the successful accomplishment of any task, it seems evident that a person needs to be called by God to be an effective teacher. Without this call to teaching, how will anyone be able to put up with everything that teachers face daily? From the time the school year begins, teachers do not have a moment's rest or a moment free. Every good teacher is preoccupied with the care and the progress of students, with their schoolwork, and with the small and bothersome difficulties that inevitably arise in dealing with young people. Teachers will find it difficult to care seriously for their own spiritual needs and their own interests.

Relationships with young people are always difficult. Sometimes those who deal with young people attach themselves too closely to the young and end up giving themselves over strictly to human affections. Finding among their students young people who are frank and open, who are moving towards accomplishing good things, who respond well to the care they are providing, some teachers forget the place of God in the relationship between teacher and student. Learning this often surprises teachers, since it is easily hidden by enthusiasm, kindness, and even duty.

Teachers who experience close relationships with their students become totally occupied with them: every place they go the students come to mind; no matter what they do, they think of the students. Teachers like these often enter into unhealthy relationships of all kinds with their students, often without realizing what is happening.

*Christian educators really need a call from God in order to deal with all that they face in working with young people.*

Christian 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? For the religious, this call to education comes in obedience. §

**Faithfulness** is a virtue that draws us to fulfill faithfully our duties to God. Saint Paul has said that piety is necessary for everyone because it is the opening to all that God has promised us.

What about teachers without this virtue? They are left with only their own resources, complete their tasks without real excitement and even with negligence, and are unable to teach all of the values and responsibilities contained in a Christian education. They have no concern or desire to teach or to practice the life of a Christian; prayer and the sacraments are not important to them. While these teachers may be able to help students develop intellectually, and though they may pass on some knowledge that is useful in life, the important knowledge that students need—the knowledge that leads them to the totality and completeness of the Christian life—is neglected. Such teachers may develop scholars, but they will not develop Christians. They have forgotten the essence of their mission—the development of the heart and the soul, on which good values depend. Consequently, their true goals are forgotten. The tender plants that these teachers have to cultivate will show real potential in their hands, but for lack of real care they will perish, because they have not received the true nourishment they need.

How different, on the contrary, is the result with those students who have been given truly reverent teachers. Convinced that the Lord Himself has given them the students they are instructing and are responsible for, reverent teachers will try above all to bring their students to the completeness of the Christian life. Such teachers see their students' souls more than they see their students' bodies. They know that young people have been won at the price of the shedding of the Lord's blood, and they consider them adopted children of God and temples of the Spirit. Their enthusiasm for their work increases because of this. Their major duty becomes instruction in the faith, and with untiring patience they help students learn to pray. They do not cease reminding students of Christian commitments, the works of God, and the effects of the sacraments. Finally, this kind of teacher helps students become able to deal with the values they will find opposed to Christianity and inspires in students a devotion to the sacred.

The Lord will bless such efforts and reward such enthusiasm with the greatest results. Anyone entering a Christian school will be able to note the reverence of the students. They grow from day to day both in knowledge and in Christian values. Those who have formed students in such a way "will shine like the stars of the heavens for all eternity." §

**Knowledge** If, as Saint Paul says, “knowledge without faith makes one proud” and thus becomes dangerous, it is likewise true that faith without knowledge makes a teacher useless and compromises the honor of the teacher’s mission. That is why Daniel, speaking of the reward prepared for those who teach others, does not assume that teachers must be merely “just,” and hence reverent, but also “learned and knowledgeable.” Without knowledgeable teachers, what can be said to families who want their children to acquire all the learning needed to earn a good position in life? “You cannot give what you do not already have.” This axiom applies to teaching as well—it would be useless for a person to try to teach who did not possess the knowledge sufficient to achieve the goals of instruction.

Teachers themselves should definitely have enough knowledge and instruction to be able to deal with questions that are only indirectly connected with the subjects they are presenting and be able to make lessons interesting and complete. In order to succeed in acquiring a superior degree of knowledge, teachers must have a constant desire for self-improvement and lose no opportunity to satisfy this ambition when it is not detrimental to their other duties.

To teach with success, teachers must know good methods, be skillful in applying these methods, have clear ideas, be able to define exactly, and possess language that is easily understood and correct. All of these skills are acquired and perfected only through study. I think we must assume that good teachers are not content simply with obtaining a degree or a credential to show their capabilities, but that they also try to increase their knowledge even further by studying as much as they can. In this way teachers are able to meet the qualifications required of them. §

**Zeal** Zeal is the great desire to make God known, loved, and served, and thus to bring knowledge of salvation to others. Activity flows from this virtue. Teachers who possess it fulfill the duties of their profession with enthusiasm, love, courage, and perseverance. When they see young people who lack knowledge and Christian values, they experience what Saint Paul felt when he wrote to those he had evangelized: “My children for whom I labor again and again until Christ is within you.” That statement, in fact, is the goal of all Christian education. To reach it, teachers must neglect nothing.

Teachers who have this virtue will be happy only when their students progress in the knowledge of virtue. All day and each day they will work at this great and difficult task of Christian education. When they pray, when they study, when they receive the sacraments, it will be especially for “their young people.” This will be done without distinction or regard for any student as special, because such teachers know that all students are equally important to God and that their duty is to work with each with the same devotion, watchfulness, and perseverance.

*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 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. You must be “all things to all people,” like Saint Paul—little with the little, great with the great, seeing in all only the image of God imprinted within them like a sacred seal that you must preserve at all cost.

Teachers animated by such a spirit do not simply follow what is generally accepted in the profession but have a thousand little ways to encourage progress in even the weakest and least-talented students and challenge all students to their highest performance.

Such teachers know how to maintain silence when required, to keep students at work when required, and to maintain proper order without using punishments—neither threats nor reprimands. Such teachers use any occasion to provide models for young people and to communicate about God, Jesus Christ, and the students’ souls. Since the zeal of these teachers is guided by love, they do everything with strength and with gentleness: with strength because they are courageous and unshakable in the midst of any difficulties they face; with gentleness because they are tender and compassionate like Jesus Christ, the model for all teachers, who loved to be bothered by young people.

Without this virtue of zeal among teachers in a school, everything changes. Everything falls apart. There is ignorance, disorder, bad conduct, and the true corruption of young people—these are what families experience through the faint-heartedness and indifference of teachers without zeal. They are put in the midst of young people and cause the ruin of a great number of them. Thus, the virtue of zeal is necessary for a Christian teacher. §

**Vigilance** The word *vigilance* is connected with watchfulness and hence signifies alertness. It is a virtue that makes us attentive to our duties. Vigilant teachers forget nothing of what they ought to do and do not become distracted from what they ought to be thinking about, seeing, hearing, or doing. There is nothing more necessary for teachers than this constant watchfulness over themselves and their students.

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

*Do not forget that young people are naturally observant and that they see all and hear all.*

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.

Teachers need to watch, above all, over the young people placed in their care. Indeed, they are the spiritual parents of these young people. How else will

teachers be able to carry out their responsibilities to the families that rely on them to help develop good values in their children? From the moment teachers accept charge of young people for their education they become guardians. This vigilance does involve some annoying, tiring, and disquieting things, especially for those who are new to the profession. Until they have responsibility for their first classes, teachers don't realize the concerns that often bother those in positions of responsibility and authority. When they are put in charge of a class, they often experience a loss of calm and peace and create anxieties for themselves that are contrary to what should be motivating them. Looking out for students becomes a heavy responsibility and a real problem, since it leads teachers to dislike their work and even question their calling. I caution young teachers not to take this virtue to the extreme.

Teachers must keep their vigilance within reasonable limits and not imitate those who are always in a state of great alarm, often over some childish prank that they are unable to evaluate correctly. Those who are too vigilant are unaware that a great talent of good teachers is often to pretend not to notice what he or she does not want to be obliged to punish. An indulgence prudently managed is worth much more than outbursts and the punishments that follow them. Always avoid this embarrassing vigilance. It is revolting to students and unbearable for teachers. Let your watchfulness and attention be calm, without over-concern, without agitation or trouble, without great constraint or affectation. But also avoid the opposite, which involves carelessness, distraction, unwillingness to act, and tardiness, which are all contrary to this virtue of vigilance. §

**Seriousness** Seriousness comes through faithfulness to self-control. It is impossible for teachers to be truly serious unless they are able to control their exterior selves. Seriousness, however, does not force a person into pedantry or affectation. Teachers should carefully avoid mean and threatening looks, gloomy and scowling faces, angry voices, and bitter, biting, and satirical words. The aim of seriousness is not to intimidate students, to keep them from showing themselves as they really are, to make them afraid of making mistakes, or to hinder the development of good qualities that might exist in them. Seriousness does not in any way exclude kindness, tenderness, or an affable way with students, which can win them over and lead them with docility.

Seriousness is a virtue that assumes a mental maturity and wisdom in the one who possesses it, along with a real faith in the presence of God. It is a virtue that requires noble sentiments and true humility. It will give you the dignity in attitude that inspires respect, commands attention, and enables you to exercise the authority and leadership that you need.

Although seriousness does not rule out affection for young people, neither does it permit too great a familiarity with them, and it doesn't allow unseemly clowning, childish pranks and jokes, and ridiculous punishments that will discredit the teacher and earn the dislike of students. Teachers who wish to maintain this virtue in their lives guard against giving any particular student too great attention. This is the way one most often loses this virtue. It is the responsibility of a young teacher especially to develop this virtue in order not to lose the dignity of the mission of teaching and the respect that the teacher is owed by students. §

**Gentleness** It was the Lord Himself who said "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." There is no other conclusion to be reached than that in the overseeing of the mind and heart of a young person and in the effective use of authority in a school, a teacher needs to possess gentleness. Gentleness is the filling of the soul with the Spirit so as to moderate the anger that arises when a person feels irritated towards those who have caused some injury. It is the result of a patience that never tires and of a self-control that keeps everything under the guardianship of reason and faith.

Given that, one can understand the need of such a virtue in teachers, for to fulfill their mission successfully teachers must make themselves liked by their students. Gentleness is the only way in which they will succeed in the task of bringing out love in their students. You are aware of the statement "love causes love." As people, we are built so that

we cannot resist a person who displays true affection for us. Young people are very impressionable and are especially prone to this. They relate easily and happily with those from whom they hope and expect to receive reciprocal love and confidence. Feelings of love and respect between teachers and students are the result of charity and gentleness, inseparable virtues that cannot exist independently of one another. Saint Francis de Sales himself says that meekness is “the very flower of charity.”

Teachers who are meek and who follow the example of Jesus Christ lose none of their authority and do not stress what is hard and severe in authority. They put themselves in their students’ places. They try to persuade their students that they will find in their teachers tender and devoted friends who understand them. Considering themselves as taking the place of those who have entrusted young people to them, gentle teachers borrow from the father and the mother positive feelings toward young people. Everything in such teachers bears the stamp of this virtue: They avoid judging with harshness and anger, and they do not rely on exaggerated confidence in themselves. They are always guided by a heart full of compassion and kindness and make their decisions without stubbornness or injustice. They do not say things that will hurt the feelings of young people and do not make fun of students, as people who often feel injured by the statements or actions of another do. Gentleness overcomes those tendencies to self-love and shuts out the desire for revenge. Gentleness permits teachers to endure all the adversities and unpleasant experiences and occurrences that go hand in hand with schooling and to proceed with complete calmness of spirit.

*Gentleness permits teachers to endure all the adversities and unpleasant experiences and occurrences that go hand in hand with schooling.*

Gentleness begets a number of other good qualities: sensibility, good will, and a pleasant manner of acting and speaking. Gentleness permits teachers to remove what is harsh from a command, permits teachers to participate in activities with young people, leads teachers to be able to talk and discuss matters with students, permits teachers to sympathize with students who are often upset over things that are not important, and permits teachers to assist students when they are not feeling well or when they are depressed. Teachers filled with meekness can show an interest and an affection for young people that will win hearts. In class such teachers treat students with politeness, answer their questions with patience, and help keep students from punishments as much as possible by keeping them out of situations that are likely to lead them to misbehavior and punishment.

Gentle teachers will never be seen to inflict punishment when they are overly angry and upset. They will never push to the limit a student who is ready to react with anger and an outburst. Since these teachers are more disposed to reward than to punishment, whenever someone guilty of an offense wishes to return to a positive relationship, they pardon the student and show even more respect and friendship to that student than before. Gentle teachers also look upon school as their mission. Far from being a source of boredom and disappointment, classes become a real pleasure. This simply supports the statement of the wise person who said, “Do everything with gentleness and you will attract not only the respect but the love of other people.”

Teachers who have drawn such gentleness from Jesus Christ will be blessed and happy. They will truly be the important people in their school, and they will cause Jesus Christ to be the important person there. Loved by their students and respected by the parents, who will be so happy to have found such excellent teachers for their children, they will be rewarded with blessings from the entire school community and will go through life “doing good works.” Their memory will remain engraved upon the hearts of those students whom they have brought to the fullness of Christianity, and they will be a model to imitate and an example to follow.

Sad results flow from teachers who lack these qualities. Teachers who make no effort to acquire the gentleness of mind and heart that was recommended by Jesus Christ are really to be pitied. In their classes, they are annoyed and angered over every little thing. They shout, talk harshly, and carry on in all kinds of ways. Their rude and harsh approach intimidates and frightens students without their realizing that these actions can compromise them in the eyes of their students and the students’ families. They injure their students by making fun of their inadequacies, or their families, or their ethnic background. They call their students names. They impose exaggerated and unjust punishments on some; they require of others assignments and duties beyond the range of their abilities or experience. They cause students to lose a love of learning and to develop a distaste for school. Such conduct on the part of teachers earns them scorn and dislike; students try to find all kinds of ways of getting away from them and look for all kinds of ways to displease them. Not only will these teachers be unable to bring students to the fullness of Christianity, but they will also be unable to give students the knowledge and the instruction that are owed them. It would have been better if such teachers had never entered a classroom and attempted the difficult art of teaching. §

**Patience** Anyone who knows young people easily recognizes the necessity of patience, which is the only thing that permits a teacher to rise above the difficulties inherent in educating youth. Patience is most necessary in directing a group of young people from very diverse backgrounds and training. Teachers often need to speak to one student, to answer another student and probably several at the same time, to help others reason out situations when they seem often to have little use for reason, to repeat many times the same thing without seeing any results, to calm those who are too lively, to move forward those who move slowly, to correct those who need correcting, to prepare others to accept responsibility—and it seems that all of this goes on at the same time. Teachers seem not to have a moment for them-selves amid the activity that is constantly going on in a school.

*Without the virtue of patience, teachers would have difficulty enduring the qualities that are so natural to young people.*

Without the virtue of patience, teachers would have difficulty enduring the qualities that are so natural to young people: making life difficult for a teacher, refusing to follow directions, upsetting the class, promoting a bad spirit among other students, and ridiculing and making fun of teachers. Some students mock teachers' voices and gestures; some will complain without cause to their parents, who will immediately assume that what they are being told is the truth. The many difficulties that teachers face would dishearten those who have entered teaching with real hopes of accomplishment. But teachers need to remember that they have received a call and resist such trials with all the means given to them through patience. If you know how to build patience, a calmness will come to you and peace will exist around you. Patience is the shield against which all these difficulties are blunted.

Teachers who do not know patience cannot restrain themselves, and they often show their lack of patience in harsh or imprudent words. They often carry on in all sorts of ways, even becoming violent, and in a burst of anger, as ridiculous as scandalous, will lose all control. They will even go so far as to physically abuse their students. Losing self-control lowers them in the eyes of their students. The first cause of all of that is a lack of patience. With a little more energy and self-control, teachers can prevent these excesses. Little by little, time will calm first prejudices, soften reactions, and lead to reasonable conclusions. Right reason always ends by triumphing over all obstacles. It is through patience that "you will possess your soul in peace." §

**Prudence** Prudence is the virtue that helps us decide the best way of reaching our goals and that helps us work against obstacles standing in the way of reaching them. To understand the necessity of prudence, we only have to reflect on our purpose as Christian educators. We cannot compromise our mission or hinder its progress by acting imprudently in directing our schools.

*Teachers in a school are of necessity in contact with three different groups of people: the students, the parents, and the society in which the school exists.*

Society does not permit us the luxury of mistakes in this area: Often it takes just a minor imprudent act to ruin the reputation of a solidly established school. Teachers and administrators must take extra care to employ prudence so that they don't prejudice the people in the area around the school. It would be helpful to new teachers if they had a greater experience of people and events in the area before they come to teaching, but only a limited experience is possible. Teachers in a school are of necessity in contact with three different groups of people: the students, the parents, and the society in which the school exists. These groups place different demands upon the school and the teachers that must be satisfied in order for the school to exist in reasonable peace with each group. No matter what skilled teachers do, it is likely that some opposition will arise against them from time to time, especially among those who already look upon a particular school with an unfavorable bias. Teachers should expect to be criticized regularly in their careers: some people will complain about their way of teaching, others will complain about their discipline; some will say that their students don't make any progress, others will say that they are unjust in giving awards.

Teachers who always act with prudence will know how to make light of all this complaining insofar as it is false and unjust, and they will be able to take care of those areas in which they should make some improvement. The best way to avoid such accusations is to use the following principles: study and distinguish the makeup of students in order to treat each one according to his or her specific needs, and prepare classes well. By reviewing the materials that make up the subject matter of lessons there will be no confusion of ideas and there will be clarity of expression on the part of the teacher. These two principles will assist teachers who believe that their mission is important. It is impossible for a teacher to educate well without fully preparing for the task daily. Cleverness can never substitute adequately for preliminary work and preparation, and most of the time teachers who rely on their own cleverness fall into the use of old materials, repetitions, and digressions. Often some teachers have the illusion that the lesson or material is so simple, so easy, and so elementary that they require no preparation.

No teaching, however, requires more preparation than the teaching of young people. There is nothing more difficult than helping young minds begin building a fund of knowledge—minds often with small capacity and very few ideas. It is not easy to help students with inattentive and unskilled minds move toward study and reflection. Teachers must practice becoming like young people, borrowing their language, taking their ideas, and placing all they say into the young people's limited area of knowledge. This kind of teaching requires real skill and devotion. Teachers who do not prepare for it are acting outside of the counsels of prudence.

*Cleverness can never substitute adequately for preliminary work and preparation.*

Consider teachers who are imprudent enough and presumptuous enough to dare running a class without looking ahead to what they are going to say or do. They enter the class without books or materials. They tend to talk at the top of their voice when they should be silent, saying whatever comes into their minds without considering the worth of what is being said or the importance of their opinions. They do not ask for anyone's advice and do not even listen to those with more experience. There exists great disorder in their explanations, making them incoherent and practically unintelligible to the students. They deny one day what they have rashly advocated on a previous day, and they often contradict what they have said before. The result of all this is boredom and dislike on the part of students. The students, condemned to listen, yawn or sleep and do not know what to do during the class. They waste their time and begin to take on a dislike of learning and study. This dislike may stay with them for a long time, since that is one of the peculiarities of youth: The impressions and experiences of youth tend to leave an indelible trace during an entire life. It is important for young people, then, to learn early the habits of work and application. A skillful and prudent teacher is able to profit from this peculiarity of youth and give students a good and solid education from the beginning.

Prudence, then, is of the greatest importance. Experience is one sure path for acquiring it, but there is another upon which we must all rely: an openness to the Lord, especially in prayer. Ask the Lord for prudence; pray to the "author of all wisdom" that you will be given the light and necessary graces to direct and lead you in everything with the prudence and wisdom necessary to teach. §

**Firmness** The Bible, in speaking of the way in which God governs the world, says that Providence guides everything with "strength" and with "gentleness." That is the model that teachers must follow if they wish to succeed in educating young people.

Without gentleness, they will never truly get their students to have the love of work, application, and good behavior that are all essential conditions of success. On the other hand, if they lack firmness and steadfastness, they will not be able to maintain discipline in class. This virtue is needed to raise teachers above all the difficulties inherent in education, to help them remain unshakable in the course of their duties without becoming discouraged in a task that is troublesome and tiring.

Teachers always must keep an eye on their classes in order to stop any movement towards disorder, wherever it occurs. If students find too great a weakness in a teacher or a softness in demanding compliance, they will permit themselves disorders of all sorts. They will laugh at the threats of such teachers and not even perform the penances given, because they know that the teacher will not push them to the limit and will end by giving in. From the time you enter the school, then, hold to a firm and assured course, know how to make yourself obeyed, and communicate to students that you absolutely demand compliance with your regulations. §

**Conclusion** From what has been said above, one can conclude that you're the teacher's mission is difficult and requires hard work. It requires a great devotion in order to continue in the calling as a teacher. With the eyes of faith consider the greatness of the mission and the wonderful amount of good that one can accomplish. And also consider the great reward promised to those who have taught the truth to others and have helped form them into justice: "They will shine eternally in the skies like the stars of the heavens." With the hope of this glory, we must generously complete the Lord's work. §

## Students and Student-Teacher Relations

It would be a serious mistake to open a school imagining that all the students will be alike in character and conduct. Providence varies all of its works. If two plants of the same family, apart from similar characteristics, have obvious differences, it is no less true that in the group of students given to you there are no two who have the exact same mind and heart. It will do little good then to use the same procedures in working with every student. You would be like a doctor who always gives the same remedy for every illness.

This in itself should be enough to point out the importance of beginning the year or semester by studying your students. If you are taking the place of another teacher in a class, it is important to gain all of the information the other teacher can give you about the students. In order to facilitate this study, which requires a lot of attention, there are some things you can look for to help you understand the different types of students you will be educating.

*Never forget that all teaching lies in the best approach to an individual student.*

You can use the following information to determine the most suitable way to approach each student. 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. In the different natures of young people, one can actually distinguish several characteristics marking them as poorly brought up or spoiled by their parents, unintelligent, self-centered, opinion-ated, insolent, envious, without integrity, immature, lazy, or in poor health. §

**Young People Who Are Spoiled or Have Poor Upbringing** There are young people for whom parents show little care. These young people never do what their parents want, never follow directions, and murmur at the least thing that goes against what they think they desire. They are often dirty, disgusting, and unpolished. They are sometimes impertinent, impolite, teasing, and extravagant, openly yawning, making faces, mimicking the faults of teachers and students. They are children spoiled by indulgence who will tire at the least hint of work and who will become disconcerted at the least punishment. They have become accustomed to seeing their least wishes satisfied and having all their little whims gratified.

Often students who have been poorly brought up are those from rich families, who think of themselves as being so superior as to give themselves an air of authority over their fellow students and independence from their teachers and who believe that they have a right to special consideration and attentions. If it happens that someone makes fun of their ridiculous pretensions, they complain to their parents of poor treatment.

Such young people have great need of being formed by proper education. To achieve this requires much patience, kindness, and charity. A teacher will have to treat them with considerable indulgence, because if they have all these faults, it is not due to a shallow spirit or bad judgment or a poor internal disposition but because they have been left to grow up without direction. You must show them a lot of kindness, display an interest in them, and correct them when necessary, but always in a fatherly manner; when you do correct them, give them only easy punishments that will really help them.

It is also good to have contact with parents in such situations in order to anticipate the accusations and recriminations of the young person and to support your own authority with theirs. This is a troublesome and delicate task. Expect to have a lot of duplicity and annoyance, but strengthen yourself by remembering the example given by our Lord: he also educated, not only children and young parents but also persons already advanced in age and consequently possessing all the prejudices and the bad habits that people so often pick up in the course of their lives.

In fact, recall that the apostles, chosen and formed in the school of our Lord, were unsophisticated, unlettered, and taken from the lowest class of society and combined a lack of education with a lot of ambition, self-love, and egotism. Admire the unchanging gentleness and untiring zeal that the Lord always showed. In all his teaching and actions, he tried only to inform them, to instruct them, and to make new men of them. As teachers, then, meditate on this example and try to pattern your own teaching after it. §

**Unintelligent Young People** It is rare that a teacher will meet any young people so lacking in intelligence and memory that they can understand and retain practically nothing. These young people make no sound except when they think they are being punished. They are often sly, pouting, and surly, do not mix well with companions their age, do not take part in games, and keep themselves apart. A young person like this presents teachers with great obstacles. It is difficult to win the confidence of these young people because they lack openness and are often insensitive to signs of interest and affection. If they inconvenience you in class and bother their fellow students, you will need to work with administrators to ask their parents to withdraw them from the school. But if they are not a source of trouble for the class, it is great benefit to them that you will leave them in peace, limiting yourself to what is possible and being content with the little that they are able to accomplish. §

*Recall that the apostles, chosen and formed in the school of our Lord, were unsophisticated, unlettered.*

**Self-centered Young People** You will sometimes meet students totally concerned with themselves, often looking at themselves in a mirror, combing and arranging their hair artfully, possessing an affected walk, having touchy or extremely timid characteristics, constantly excusing themselves, and never recognizing any faults they might have. These young people can often be described as two-faced, lying, presumptuous, and bold. In class they will often be the first to attempt to answer questions; when they make mistakes, they will get angry and pout for some time. At the least correction they will feel hurt and wounded. They will always be ready to quarrel with their companions and will always use a lofty and superior tone of voice. These actions and attitudes point out to a teacher a self-centered young person. The teacher's task is to correct this, and there are ways experienced teachers have found to bring about this result. If you find this in one of the students, then rarely speak to the student. When you do speak to the student, do so very seriously. If the student makes an error, do not fail to point it out; when doing this, however, help the student see that the resulting pouting and hurt feelings are ridiculous. Be careful always about not allowing the student to respond to your corrections as a teacher, and help the student understand the ridiculousness of his or her feelings and pouting in private as well as in public. Always, however, approach the student in a way that holds him or her in respect. §

**Self-opinionated Young People** Sometimes there are students who refuse to carry out responsibilities given them, who are stubborn to the point that all threats and punishments seem to have no effect on them, and who lay open resistance to a teacher's authority. There are others who eventually give in but do so with such bad grace that they murmur aloud and make noises which disturb their fellow students' attention. Sometimes, those who give in to the teacher assume a posture that is a kind of defiance of the teacher by putting their heads down on their desks, by making ridiculous faces, or by imitating the gestures of the teacher when the teacher isn't watching.

Teachers should first avoid as much as possible giving occasion for such scenes, which can harm the good order of the class and undermine the authority of the teacher. If a teacher has not been able to foresee and prevent this situation, the teacher should refrain from responding too severely until convinced of the seriousness of a student's behavior and the punishment deserved. When a teacher finds it necessary to punish a student in this situation, the teacher should wait until the student's excited state is calmed down and he or she can be talked to without arousing a greater state of disrespect. The teacher has everything to gain by playing for time, since pushing the student to the limit will gain the teacher nothing. When the teacher notices that the young person is calmer, the teacher should use that moment to speak with the student, bringing the student, in an offhand way, to admit to both the original problem and the resistance to the teacher's authority. A teacher will in this way help the student understand that a punishment is necessary only to repair the poor example he or she has given to other students.

Be sure to carry out the punishment while displaying great concern for the student, even if you ask the student to apologize publicly for the behavior. If the student persists in his disobedience, the student should be referred to other school authorities so that they can consider ways of helping the young person. A teacher should always take the opportunity to speak with the student's parents about the situation so that the teacher's authority is not compromised. Dismissal from school, however, should be used only as a last resort, after all other means of working with the student have been tried.

Teachers and schools should proceed in the same way when dealing with students for whom penalties seem to be counterproductive. §

**Insolent Young People** Teachers may have to deal with certain young people who border on insolence, who know no rule of politeness, and have no discretion or regard for anyone. They have a way of getting worked up over nothing, of being irritated at the slightest correction. When they become upset their faces flare up, their eyes move around like two hot coals, their bodies bristle up, and their whole being is agitated. These students so easily lose control of themselves that even the language of reason and kindness cannot make them recover at those times. Teachers should

consider themselves fortunate if that is all they experience from such young people. Many of these students, heated up with anger, burst out with all kinds of insults, threats, and bad language and seem ready to go to any lengths in dealing with a teacher.

The best thing for a teacher to do in such a situation is to keep a profound silence, showing by a sad and postured air that the teacher pities the insolent young person and is waiting until the first fire of anger is put out. That is the moment for the teacher to act and to make the student feel the weight of the teacher's authority. By words of severity and firmness, the teacher should make the student realize the fault, the unworthiness of the conduct, the shame that the student should feel, and the results that the student will then experience. If a teacher can have the student in this way admit to the wrongdoing, the teacher will have gained more respect and authority than was ever lost in the public display.

The teacher should then be content with a punishment of short duration, but one that is of the sort to impress the student by its severity. On such occasions, teachers should never fail to hold up for their students the virtue of politeness by praising it and pointing out that they attach great value to it. It is a fine opportunity to give students a lesson in being civil to another person, with confidence that at another time it will be remembered, to the teacher's advantage. §

**Envious Young People** There are some young people, envious by nature, who are unable to see clearly that any fellow student may possess superior talent or merit. They build and hold a feeling of hatred for any fellow student who may appear superior. They speak to such students in a cold way, and the presence of these students annoys them. No matter what the other student does, they are offended; even the thought of another's success causes deep feelings of hate and distress. They often go further and join to their animosity a spirit of strife. Since they cannot endure those fellow students who cause the jealousy, they seek quarrels with them and find fault with all they say and do. They are unable to see in their fellow students anything but faults and go so far as to distort their best intentions. From disputes they pass to fits of passion and fighting.

Was it not jealousy that led Cain to kill his brother and the sons of Jacob to throw Joseph into a cistern in order to expose him to death and then to sell him to foreigners? The secret of success in dealing with the poor slaves of self-love lies in winning their confidence. This is a difficult task and requires great prudence. These young people are by nature filled with suspicion and are erratic in their judgments. Try to build a positive relationship with them as far as this is possible. Then in all ways act with the utmost patience, because this fault penetrates deeply, like a vigorous plant that can be cut or destroyed on the outside but cannot be totally destroyed as long as its roots remain in the ground.

Profit by the control you exercise over such students to help them sense on every occasion how much this passion debases them in the eyes of others and how much it offends God, who loves everyone as they were created. Every time they happen to fall into this vice, impose on them as a penance some small prayer in which they ask God's pardon for their fault and the grace not to fall again. Do not forget also to require of them as punishment to show themselves more gentle and charitable toward those of whom they are jealous and even to give clear signs of repentance by congratulating the others and saying something nice to them. §

**Young People without Integrity** Although most of the young people you educate will have an admirable candor, a purity, and an innocence, be sure that there are others who, even if still quite young, have already tasted the fatal fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The demon has already had access to the souls of these young people, and in an age so young they know a thousand secrets and have aged in the path of depravity. We even find parents, often religious ones, who in blind security are asleep in this regard and indirectly foster the vices of their children by laziness. These poor parents abandon their children to take care themselves, give them liberty to visit anyone, or make no choice of the companions that show up. They are unaware that it is enough to have one dissolute character in their children's midst to spread the poison of malice and corrupt weak or impressionable natures.

Among the many young people in a school, it is hardly possible not to find some affected with this poison. It is your task as the shepherd of the young flock to redouble your care, attention, and vigilance in order to keep these sheep from spreading their evil to all those who are healthy and doing well. You will never be able to display too much zeal and activity in discerning the young people who are the plague of your school and whose influence you must at all price prevent and destroy. Look on them as devouring wolves that the devil has introduced into the sheepfold confided to your care, in order to surprise and kill the tender lambs who rely on you for their security. Experience will also teach you that these hearts have a particular skill in recognizing one another, guess at and attract one another. Surely the nature of evil favors these unions and friendships, for they quite soon have an understanding. A few words uttered by chance are enough to be understood; they already know one another and their friendship is formed. Since crime is the principle and bond of this union, your duty is to break it and prevent the results.

By what characteristics, then, will you recognize these young truants, and by what means will you be able to keep them apart, foil their tricks, or, if possible, work to remedy the situation? At first you will be aware of them from a certain desire they have to be together, to be a separate group, with an air of defiance and a certain separation from their teachers or prefects. You will also know them by their gestures and their attitude, by a type of isolation and staying apart, by an air too calm and quiet to be ordinarily associated with healthy young people of their age. Undoubtedly that will not be enough to let you make a sure judgment or allow your suspicions to become evident facts, but it will be enough to awaken your attention and further open your eyes.

Even if you have suspicion, do not give in to spying. That is tantamount to remedying one evil with another. By acting in that way you would spread among them the seeds of defiance, disunion, and hypocrisy. But try to see and hear everything yourself; try to surprise them at times when they see themselves not in view of a teacher and are not keeping up any sort of guard. Times of recreation, extracurricular events, field trips—those are the times that you must especially exercise vigilance. If you are vigilant, you will succeed in clarifying your suspicions and reaching a good judgment or a reasonable opinion about the condition of these young people.

If their inclinations are well enough known to you, you should at once bring it to the attention of the school administration. Administrators then will need to work with the father and mother of the student, in order to help them improve their son's or daughter's state by purifying the heart and enlightening the intelligence. For that, there will be a need for continued surveillance. To give this heart the goodness it has lost and to inspire in it hatred of whatever eats at the goodness, you must have recourse to all means of prudence, to all the resources of charity, and, above all, to the efficacy of prayer. If, in spite of all that, the student is unable to correct his or her condition or if you are seriously concerned that the student will have a bad affect upon the other students, it will be necessary for the student to be dismissed from the school. §

**Immature Young People** The greatest number of your students will be immature and giddy. That is a mark of youth and a characteristic proper to it. Do not be alarmed then, and keep from wanting always to bring students to a seriousness that is against nature. In connection with this, most of them resemble those butterflies in our garden that are always flying but whose flight is not regulated at all. They leave one flower, return to it, and then quit it to go to another, finding their nourishment and enjoyment in all sorts of places. You should take into consideration their immaturity and act toward them as a wise parent toward a child, with great kindness, patience, and tenderness. Rarely does a wise parent chastise, but a look and tone of voice take the place of reprimands and punishments, making known what the parent really thinks. These are the delicate devices that truly form the hearts of young people and give them nobility of character and loftiness of feelings.

Learn to put yourself within reach of immature young people, treating them with the indulgence that their age deserves, while distinguishing slight faults from those that reflect malice and dangerous tendencies. An immature young person should not be led by way of penalties, because, being susceptible only to transitory impressions, the memory of the correction is soon lost. The young person shortly after falls into the same fault, while not showing real obstinacy. As for these natures, the art of education consists in removing from them the occasions in which they most often fail; thus, in class, be careful to place them between the best behaved and most serious students, in order to remove from them all the small objects that distract and amuse them.

*Learn to put yourself within reach of immature young people, treating them with the indulgence that their age deserves.*

Generally these students have a good heart. Make use of this excellent quality to win their affection and confidence so that they will consider you less as a teacher than as a father or a friend. Above all, know how to arouse their striving by promising and giving them, at opportune times, rewards that flatter them. A skillful teacher knows how to draw a lot of gain from this procedure, for young people are easily led in this way. Wisely used, small rewards and praise can produce the most astonishing results in students.

Also consider how consoling it is for a teacher to be appreciated by the students, to see that they obey less out of fear of penalties than out of fear of displeasing or of not earning the small rewards and praises that are handed out to those students who behave well. It is indeed easy for the teacher who really knows how to educate children to get immature young people to this goal. Most of the time the majority of them need only reflection and more developed reasoning to become excellent students. §

**Lazy Young People** Laziness is not only avoiding work and desiring to waste time away on all those enjoyments that are so natural for the young, but above all laziness is a softness and an indolence that makes students sometimes apathetic and incapable of anything that is serious, noble, and generous. This quality in some students is one of the most irritating, since it amounts to removing the hope of one day seeing the acquisition of good habits. Every good habit is brought about by doing violence to oneself in a series of acts. That is the way one can break in a fiery horse and make it gentle, docile under the master's hand, untiring in work. What good use can one expect from a horse without this vigor?

Lazy students lack the active push that each of us needs from ourselves. They do not have the energetic zest that carries ardent students a long distance. They must then be pressured, sharpened as much by the promise of rewards as by threat of the punishments that they deserve. This twofold way dealing with lazy students ought, however, to be used with discretion and prudence, for there are young people who, if pushed too abruptly or too far, will resist such efforts and will become obstinate, believing that the impossible is being asked of them. They will then do nothing of what is requested of them. Every hope of then getting them to progress will be lost. The teacher, perhaps thinking them totally inept, will then abandon them to decay for lack of care and nurture.

Thus a teacher should avoid excessive zeal with lazy students and practice combining firmness with wise leniency. Teachers must be aware of the natural trouble that lazy students have with work and let no opportunity to overcome this problem pass by. Teachers must let words and counsel call lazy students to their obligation toward work and also join to that their own example and the example of others, using every possible way to encourage what is most noble in the young people entrusted to their care. §

**Young People in Weak Health** In dealing with young people who are in poor health, one must give them compassion, interest, and attention. It is important to lessen some of the requirements of them, to plan for them, and to see to it that they always find cleanliness in the school. It is especially important that the air be clean and often renewed. In anything related to instruction, although teachers should keep them in regular classes, they should be less demanding of these students when assigning duties and lessons. Even when the student is at fault, teachers should be somewhat indulgent as long as other students do not read this as injustice.

In general, teachers should treat such students like those who are extremely gentle and somewhat timid in character. These young people are not generally inclined to waste time as much as others, and their misfortune prevents them generally from getting into some of the difficulties that their fellow students face. The example of those who do well and the natural fear of penalties and punishments they see given out are usually enough to deter them from laziness and encourage them to complete their assigned work. It is often easy to keep such students in good order without severe punishment. Their physical condition, usually well known to others, will serve as an excuse for the teacher's special way of dealing with them. A teacher can always use this reason in dealing with questions raised about equality of treatment. §

**Conclusion** The considerations discussed above can assist teachers in distinguishing the qualities of their students, in knowing students' faults, and in guiding teachers in developing good order in the classroom and school. But these alone are not enough to give teachers a complete knowledge of teaching and the education of young people, a knowledge that each teacher must grasp in order to fulfill worthily the role of a teacher. In conducting a class there are a thousand details, a thousand circumstances teachers run into in practice that cannot even be conceived of before the circumstances arise. These will naturally disconcert a young teacher completely new to teaching and inexperienced in the ways students act.

*It is not age, body size, tone of voice, or threats that give teachers authority and inspire respect among students.*

It is necessary then to join to what has already been said some other counsels related to the running of a school. They can help a young teacher make up for the lack of experience that is naturally lacking in those who are beginning to teach and that often weakens the authority they need for success. Young teachers must not come to believe that it is age, body size, tone of voice, or threats that give teachers authority and inspire respect among students. It is none of these external advantages, but rather a character that is fair, firm, and modest, one that is consistent at all times and that never acts without reason or through outbursts. It is these qualities that keep everything in order, establish good discipline, see that regulations are observed, make reprimands few, and forestall punishments. Actually, the authority a teacher exercises over students depends, above all, on the way in which the teacher begins. Nobody knows a teacher then; they wait to see how the teacher presents himself or herself and then judge the teacher. Teachers who do not grasp this favorable moment, who do not put themselves in charge of the class from the first day, will then have all the trouble in the world in getting back the authority that they did not seize in the first place. The ideas contained here are meant to help teachers not fall into this trap due to a lack of good principles. §

## **PART TWO** **Maintenance and Direction of Schools**

*This section has not been included in these excerpts. The conclusion of Part One, Teachers and Students, is a bridge and introduction to the second part. There Moreau writes, “It is necessary then to join to what has already been said some other counsels related to the running of a school. They can help a young teacher make up for the lack of experience that is naturally lacking in those who are beginning to teach and that often weakens the authority they need for success.”*

*For the most part, the practical guidelines found in this part are pertinent to directing schools in a specific time and place—nineteenth-century France.*

*For those interested in reading this excerpt, a complete translation is available through the Holy Cross Institute at St. Edward’s University.*

## **PART THREE** **Formation of Students to the Christian Life and the Means to Assure Their Perseverance**

*Again, much of this section is not included. Found here are several passages that capture Moreau’s convictions but are free from the context of his times.*

Thus far we have considered only the question of teaching, and you have addressed yourself only to the minds of your students to initiate them into the first elements of human knowledge. You have not yet learned how to make of them Christians conformed to Jesus Christ; nevertheless, such is the principal goal of your mission among the young. To what end would it serve the students to know how to read, write, calculate, and draw, or to possess some notions of history, geography, geometry, physics, and chemistry, if they were ignorant of their duties to God, to themselves, and to society, or if, while knowing them, they did not conform their conduct to that knowledge? It is up to you, then, after the pastor and the parish, to teach all that to your students and to get them to practice it as much as is in your power. You will do this by teaching them the catechism and bringing them to prayer, to the singing of hymns and Mass, to the regular reception of the sacraments and the meetings of youth about which the Rule speaks.

*To what end would it serve the students to know how to read, write, calculate and draw if they were ignorant of their duties to God.*

Begin by convincing yourself that the Christian life depends on the faith more or less enlightened by education and that this first of the theological virtues is, according to the Council of Trent, the root and foundation of our justification. If this faith is lacking in the teachers, it will also be lacking in their students, and there will be among them only little or no piety, or a routine piety.

*From a section entitled “Length of Time for Catechism” is found a passage that reflects the adage “the more things change the more they remain the same.” Here Moreau speaks of the balance between secular subjects and religion.*

Sad experience has proven that the Brothers, in general, no longer give as much time to the religious education of the students who are confided to them as before the creation of the primary schools directed by secular teachers. The development that Catholic educators have had to give to profane studies, and the fear of succumbing without it in the battle they are engaged in, seems to have cooled their zeal for religious teaching. Too often the catechism has been sacrificed, or at least the time that should be devoted to it has been shortened and become occupied exclusively with certain specializations that ought to come only in second place. However, the end that has been proposed in founding institutions of this kind, which we wanted especially in the work of Holy Cross and which the Church who approved it has the right to expect of us, is principally that the students you rear be solidly instructed in religion, formed in the practices of the Christian life, and able to persevere in virtue after they have left your schools.

May you never lose this important end from view and understand that if the struggle with the secular schools obliges you to develop more than formerly the profane part of your lessons, and if the frightening fight against lack of faith [and] systematic immorality...threatens, you will be obliged to expand the sphere of religious education of your students rather than diminish it.

*The final chapter of this section is entitled “Youth Meetings.” In this section Moreau makes the case for what we would today call youth ministry and campus ministry. His remarks in this regard seem prescient.*

The students—being familiar with these places while you were still their teachers, and having acquired good habits, finding there good friends and attractive amusements—would continue to go there in great numbers, especially on Sundays and feast days, after having left your classrooms. Henceforth you would be in a position to continue the benefit of their Christian education, to support them against the temptations of adolescence and against the seductions of the world, helping them to persevere in virtue and in the regular reception of the sacraments, until the time when, having become adults, the exercises of piety of their parish church would be sufficient.

*The concluding lines epitomize Moreau’s highest hopes.*

*Hurry then; take up this work of resurrection, never forgetting that the special end of your institute is, before all, to sanctify youth.*

This is what you can and should do for your students, if you really are zealous for their salvation. Hurry then; take up this work of resurrection, never forgetting that the special end of your institute is, before all, to sanctify youth. It is by this that you will contribute to preparing the world for better times than ours; for these students who now attend your school are the parents of the future, the parents of future generations, each one of whom bears within them a family. Influence them, then, by all the means of instruction and sanctification that have just been explained. Then, and only then, can you hope to attain the end of your vocation by the renewal of the Christian faith and piety. May it be so! May it be so!



Threads That Still Run True  
*Christian Education*  
*Guide for Reading and Reflection*



## Addendum Part I

# THREADS THAT STILL RUN TRUE

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### Guide for Reading and Reflection

*Christian Education* can be read on several levels. Written by Basil Moreau to meet the needs of Brothers who were sent out—sometimes alone, sometimes in pairs—to create primary schools in mid-nineteenth-century rural France and other parts of the world, it could be dismissed as simply a quaint piece of the history of the Congregation of Holy Cross, a mere handbook of advice. But the text’s usefulness extends beyond time and place. *Christian Education* provides language and thought that resonate with the experiences of today’s Holy Cross educators in a variety of settings.

The book’s original title, *Pédagogie chrétienne*, translates literally to *Christian Pedagogy*. While the title *Christian Education* remains appropriate (education and pedagogy are synonymous), “pedagogy” is a more precise definition: “the art, science, or profession of teaching.” This definition enhances our understanding of Basil Moreau’s primary focus. His belief that teaching is a call from God took expression in his understanding that teachers teach only when they interact with young people. As Brother Donald Blauvelt has remarked, “Throughout all his writings on education, the organization of the school takes second place to the quality of the persons teaching in the school.” Consider the opening lines of the text:

Pedagogy derives from two Greek words—that for *child* and that for *leading*. It is the art of helping young people to completeness. For the Christian, this means that pedagogy is helping a young person to be more like Christ, the model for all Christians. From the word’s roots, we can interpret pedagogy to mean “leading a young person away from ignorance and disorder.” [...] This notion of pedagogy is founded on the principles of Catholicism and makes educating young people a most important work for those who try to perform it—it truly makes education the art of arts (*CE* 3).

Perhaps one reason that pedagogy as a term has fallen out of favor today is the connotation of dullness associated with the pejorative *pedagogue*. But Basil Moreau was no pedagogue. Indeed, he derides pedantry and affectation in teachers. He was at once a practical schoolman and a reflective educator. His original text provides detailed guidelines for curriculum and instruction that for the most part are not included in the sections excerpted here. The practical advice they contain speaks of a wisdom borne from firsthand experience in the classroom.

There are some who have wished for a more “contemporary rendering” of the text. It is not altogether clear that a new text would bring more clarity or coherence. If we overlook the sometimes florid rhetoric and eliminate the detail peculiar to nineteenth-century schools, we discover Moreau to be a remarkably innovative Christian educator whose wisdom remains relevant to twenty-first-century educators.

If there is any shortcoming of *Christian Education*, it is that it might seem a disjointed list of virtues on the one hand and student personality types on the other. A closer reading and reflection, however, suggests that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. In fact, the work is incomplete. Moreau remarks in the introduction that he intends to finish it “after I have received any observations and responses that the Brothers may wish to make regarding this document” (*CE* 2). For whatever reason, Moreau’s intended revision was never realized.

An important feature of *Christian Education* is its function as a primary source for validating an oral tradition that finds its expression in the practice of ministry and work of Holy Cross educators today—at least in those schools sponsored by the Brothers of Holy Cross in the United States. Until its translation in the mid-1980’s, *Christian Education*, and therefore what Moreau had to say about education, was unknown to most English-speaking Holy Cross educators.

The discovery made by *Christian Education* recalls lines from T.S. Eliot’s *Little Gidding*:

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

This readers' guide has been written to make *Christian Education* more accessible by unraveling its threads and connecting them to the experience of contemporary Holy Cross educators.

Before reflecting further, let us consider the place and time in which the Holy Cross contribution to education was born.

## The Birth of a Legacy

In the Preface to *Christian Education*, in the first sentence, in fact, Moreau writes: "May this short work on education, intended for use by those working in the schools associated with the Congregation, attain the end that I proposed to myself in composing it: the formation of the hearts of young people and the development of a positive response toward religion within them." In *Circular Letter 77*, in response to reports that he had received from the schools, Moreau expands on his motivations: "One fact is evident from these various reports, namely, the almost general lack of unity and cooperation, which are of such prime importance in this field. These considerations gave me the idea of preparing a treatise on Christian education for us in our primary schools."

*Until its translation in the mid-1980's, Christian Education, and therefore what Moreau had to say about education, was unknown to most English-speaking Holy Cross educators.*

Father Moreau was a man concerned with details. Critics may translate his interest and involvement in the fine points of a project as control and autocracy, but this fails to take into account that Moreau was a man—possibly even *the* man—who knew well the religious of Holy Cross. He was aware of the type and extent of their skills as well as their shortcomings. In the matter of professional preparation as educators in particular, their backgrounds spoke more of shortcomings than of skills. It was one reality to commission several religious to begin a school in a town or village; it was quite a different reality to assume they would know what to do once they arrived and settled in. Usually, they did not.

*Christian Education* was born in response, first, to Moreau's concern about the general state of education in France at the time. This is hardly surprising, given that France was still reeling from the effects of the Revolution and its educational services and standards were far from stable. Second, the book addresses his interest in the quality and consistency of education offered by the religious of Holy Cross. The primary school Institution de Notre Dame de Sainte Croix began in 1836, and the secondary school opened in 1838. By 1856, the school was twenty years old and Holy Cross religious were in a variety of ministries in France and other countries. The business of the members did not always afford them the time to write and send reports that could give Moreau a clear picture of their schools' educational standards. Such reports were especially important because it was Moreau's responsibility to inform both civil and ecclesiastical authorities of the work being done by the Congregation.

*By writing Christian Education, Moreau wanted to create a guide and a handbook to assure authorities that the school could begin and remain on sound foundations in terms of the requisites established by civil and ecclesiastical governments.*

Moreau wanted to ensure that Holy Cross schools continued gaining the government's "accreditation" for permission to offer the higher-level courses necessary for university admission. He also sought, at least before 1857, the church's recognition of Holy Cross as worthy of approbation by approving the constitutions or rules of the congregation. Good reports from the government in terms of the quality of work being done were helpful in this even at the Vatican, though the bishop of Le Mans, Jean-Baptiste Bouvier, remained a stumbling block until his death, in 1854. Tellingly, the Congregation received its first level of Church approval in 1855. By writing *Christian Education*, Moreau wanted to create a guide and a handbook to assure authorities that the school could begin and remain on sound foundations in terms of the requisites established by civil and ecclesiastical governments.

Even though some of the principles in *Christian Education* apply to all levels of education, a basic target in Moreau's mind, as he says in the Letter, are "primary schools." This is particularly evident in sections two and three of the book, in which Moreau addresses very basic issues related to school management and the rudimentary skills students must learn. These sections—which are not included in this translation so it focuses on Moreau's education principles—are quite detailed in order to assure the quality of instruction provided by those who operate the school.

The students who took advantage of these first schools came from rural settings, in which the finer points of socialization and decorum would not have been a priority. Both the education being provided and the attendant socialization were, in Moreau's mind, necessary on the primary level to ensure a solid foundation for one's future, as a student and as a citizen.

This raises the question of the audience Moreau had in mind when writing *Christian Education*. Nineteenth-century primary teachers in France were not very well educated. The focus in the text is not only on new teachers, but on teachers who may have had only a rudimentary education, though sufficient enough to be employed as teachers. Concerning their education, some, like Brother André Mottais, probably started in a rectory school in Larchamp, much as Moreau had in Laigné en Belin and Brother Vincent Pieau had in Courbeville. Further schooling came if a parish priest recognized the young man's potential and either arranged for him to have additional schooling or did some further tutoring himself. Others had access only to basic rectory schooling and whatever they could learn at home or from others. Some others, like Sorin and probably Mottais, did have access to secondary school.

Those destined for ordination, of course, benefited from the seminary studies that expanded their fund of knowledge. For the Brothers that Moreau believed had the aptitude and ability for additional studies, arrangements were made to have them trained, often by the De La Salle Brothers. Mottais himself studied with the De La Salle Brothers, first in Le Mans, then in Paris, studying both the practices of religious life and the techniques of education and administration. But by and large, the Brothers' success in education had a great deal to do with their creativity and ingenuity and not always with their level of training. (They didn't have access to higher education until the early and mid-1900s.) The level and quality of education received were very uneven, as the methods used varied depending upon the setting and culture. Moreau was very concerned about the proficiency of the teachers.

Another theme of Moreau's critics was that he sent religious to found or continue apostolic works even when they were little prepared for what they would confront once they began their ministry. The Congregation of Holy Cross came into existence in response to pressing needs, and Moreau wanted to respond, to the best of his ability and as soon as he could, to the requests he received from prelates, pastors, and parents to provide educators for youth. His own zeal made it difficult for him to say no when he believed he and the religious of Holy Cross could be of assistance. Sometimes those who had very basic training—as teachers and as religious—were sent out. It cannot be contested that by today's standards of preparation for ministry many of those pioneering men and women of Holy Cross were not fully ready for the work to which they were assigned, and on occasion the results were disastrous. In response, at just about the time Moreau was composing *Christian Education*—the mid-1850s—he placed a moratorium on new foundations precisely to address the issues of professional and religious formation.

*Moreau wanted to respond as soon as he could to the requests he received to provide educators for youth. His own zeal made it difficult for him to say no.*

“Zeal is the great desire to make God known, loved, and served, and thus to bring knowledge of salvation to others” (CE 8). This was Moreau's driving force, his “great desire.” When it came to priorities in the mission, this was the highest. The needs of the mission called for, even demanded, a response. He chose to respond, and he transmitted that same desire to those he assigned to ministries around the world. While it might have been incomplete, professional preparation was never neglected. Besides, it could never have replaced the value Moreau saw in effective Christian witness.

Zeal is the very root of that passion with which Holy Cross religious responded to the exigencies of mission in the wake of the French Revolution. Zeal continues to shape our response in mission today. However, zeal is more than the impetus for responding to whatever the mission may demand of us. It is also a graced quality of life that sustains us in mission. The practical character of this sustenance becomes clearly evident in the unity of effort that we are called to bring into all our endeavors. In his seminal *Circular Letter 14*, Moreau writes:

Notwithstanding differences of temperament and talent, inequality of means, and differences of vocation and obedience, the one aim of the glory of God and the salvation of souls inspires almost all the members and gives rise to a oneness of effort that tends toward that more perfect union of hearts that constitutes its bond and strength.

Moreau makes a direct connection between unity of effort and union of hearts. Without the work—and often it is hard work—involved in building and maintaining a genuine unity of effort in mission, the language of the union of hearts becomes little more than pious words with no practical power. While Moreau does not say that the union of hearts will take care of itself, he does indicate that oneness of effort “tends toward” such a union. And further, the union of hearts is the “bond and strength” of our united effort. The two cannot be separated.

Moreau's language of unity and union is chosen quite purposely. He is not speaking about uniformity. Given the internationality of Holy Cross and the diversity of needs that must be addressed in the mission, it would be a ministerial—and especially an educational—disaster to assume that the same approach will be equally effective in every culture and context. Unity of effort and union of hearts prioritize the mission above the method.

For Moreau, unity of effort was much more than a method: It was a prophetic witness in mission. Moreau was convinced that unity of effort and union of hearts were substantive to our success in continuing the mission of Jesus. Among his favorite scriptural texts were the verses in the Gospel of John in which Jesus prays for his followers: “The glory that you, Father, have given me I have given them, so they may be one as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you

*Moreau makes a direct connection between unity of effort and union of hearts. Without the work involved in building and maintaining a genuine unity of effort in mission, the language of the union of hearts becomes little more than pious words with no practical power.*

have loved me” (John 15:22-23). Combined with professional preparation for ministry, our unity truly would be a “powerful lever with which we could move, direct, and sanctify the whole world” (*Circular Letter 14*).

Finally, a note about certification for educators. In nineteenth-century France, teachers received a letter from the pastor of the parish school where they worked and/or from the mayor of the village where they taught testifying that they were in “good standing.” This good standing rating meant that the teachers

had performed their duties successfully and effectively and that they had no personal or professional problems that would disqualify them from continuing for the next academic year. This document was necessary when reassignment was being considered, since the next place of employment would want to know about the teachers’ performance in the past.

New teachers would work with more skilled teachers before they were given a classroom of their own; in time, they would receive their first good-standing certificate and would eventually train even newer teachers through communication and demonstration. This arrangement of new teachers learning from seasoned teachers had a profound influence on the way Holy Cross education transmitted from one generation to the next. An oral tradition emerged that has evolved and endured even until today.

## Links Between Then and Now

Apart from *Christian Education*, the legacy of Holy Cross education was passed from generation to generation. It has been suggested that it was mostly an informal process of conversation and storytelling, and many have expressed regret that the stories were never recorded. One storyteller took the time to spin his tale. Irish by birth, Brother Kilian Bierne did a service not much appreciated at the time of publication in *From Sea to Shining Sea* (Valatie, New York: Holy Cross Press, 1966), his highly personal and anecdotal history of Holy Cross Brothers in America. Woven throughout the book were threads of the early twentieth-century formation and education of the Brothers. He tells of a visitor to the University of Notre Dame in 1915 who reported having seen “the Brother who had a degree.” Not long after, formalized summer school evolved, meeting with initial resistance from those returning from the schools. But, as Kilian concluded, schooling “was a blessing not only because it raised the scholastic standard of the Brothers but also because it obviated the dangers consequent on too much leisure.”

In-service professional development evolved to pre-service teacher education programs at the University of Notre Dame and St. Edward’s University. It was at one or the other that the vast majority of Brothers were educated from late 1940s through the late 1960s, a period that saw the foundation of most of the existent Holy Cross secondary schools in the United States and the tripling of Brothers there. Brothers shared the same teachers—usually experienced Brothers—in classrooms full of mostly student Brothers.

Of the many Brothers who contributed to teacher formation, special note needs to be made of Brother Majella Hegarty. His handbook, *Technique of Teaching* (South Bend, Indiana: Dujarie Press, 1950), went through ten printings and was the basis of a course he taught to generations of student Brothers at Notre Dame and St. Edward’s (a course he last taught in the summer of 1967 at St. Edward’s). In a community of teaching brothers who voiced skepticism about the worth of education courses, Brother Majella was highly regarded as a man who knew what he was talking about.

In fact, *Technique of Teaching* bears an uncanny resemblance to *Christian Education*. The thread from past to future is no more apparent than when we compare Majella Hegarty’s list of essential teacher traits with the qualities defined by Moreau. Here is Brother Majella’s list:

- LOVE: zealous desire for material and spiritual success of every pupil.
- HOPE: trust in God’s power and goodness, in the fundamental good in the human nature of pupils.
- PATIENCE: ability to note and stifle the beginnings of annoyance, anger.

- **DECISION:** strong convictions, definite purposes, command of one's job.
- **DIGNITY:** self-respect. Be not distant, but keep your distance.
- **TACT:** moderation—a little blind, a little deaf to things that do not matter. Not “You're hopeless” but “You can do better than that.”
- **STUDY OF PUPILS' NATURE:** intelligence and adaptability to suit teaching methods to maturity level of pupils and to individual differences.
- **ATTENTION TO DETAIL:** intelligent control of classroom conditions—light, heat, etc.; alertness in noticing physical discomfort and illness.
- **MECHANIZATION OF ROUTINE:** beginning and stopping on the minute; having a settled plan for distribution and collection of materials, for seating, for entering and leaving the room, classroom courtesies, system of markings, etc.

*Technique of Teaching* is truly a touchstone to our past that has gone unacknowledged. Like its precedent handbook, *Christian Education*, its wisdom exceeds time and place.

## Rediscovering the Holy Cross Legacy

In colloquial English, we sometimes refer to a story as a yarn. *Yarn* means both a tale spun and a continuous plied strand composed of fibers or filaments that can be weaved and knitted to form cloth. These are two apt images for considering the Holy Cross educational legacy, as the threads in today's story or yarn find their earliest expression in *Christian Education*.

When visiting schools sponsored by the Brothers of Holy Cross, one commonly hears the statement, “There is something unique about this place, but you can't put it into words.” There is a tacit knowledge not necessarily understood to be the legacy, as we do not always comprehend what we apprehend. When one listens to students, faculty, and administrators in fifteen Holy Cross-sponsored secondary and middle schools in the United States, it is clear to me that there is resonant experience from coast to coast.

Subsequent Holy Cross educators did little in the name of Moreau because they simply did not know what he had to say about education. It would have been ironic if the original editors of these excerpts, upon reading Brother Edmund Hunt's 1986 translation of *Christian Education*, had found that it bore no relationship to the lived experience. Instead, they found they had arrived where Holy Cross started.

Once again, the intention here is to unravel a few threads of Moreau's thought, which are reflected in the pattern of our experience. Hopefully these connections will make *Christian Education* more accessible and encourage a broader reflection.

*Moreau defines a role for adult witness of Christian values in the formation of a school community-family, the need for gentle but firm interventions, and the reinforcement of positive values through encouragement and praise. This calls for the teacher to be the host. It calls for hospitality and compassion.*

## A Family Spirit

Students frequently call their Holy Cross institutions not a school, but a family. Moreau's original vision of his congregation was to have three societies united as the Holy Family: priests, brothers, and sisters. His vision of family was more important than being merely a symbol, and in reflecting on *Christian Education*, one is struck by the variety of references to parents and the families of students.

Even though family is not one of the specific topics found in *Christian Education*, it is a thread woven throughout. Moreau is quick to remind teachers that they are accountable and responsible for parental expectations (CE 6, 7, 9).

He tells us that teachers are “the spiritual parents of these young people. How else will teachers be able to carry out their responsibilities to the families that rely on them to help develop good values in their children?” (CE 6). From the moment teachers accept charge of young people for their education they become guardians. He goes on to say that we must consider ourselves “as taking the place of those who have entrusted the young people to them” and that “gentle teachers borrow from the father and the mother their positive feelings toward young people” (CE 7). Thus, Moreau defines his highest aspirations for teachers: Not only are we to respond to parents, but we are encouraged to be as attentive to students as good parents are to their children.

Moreau, having been forced out of the congregation he founded by his confreres and living his last years in exile, was not naïve; he was aware of some parents' shortcomings in raising their children. He counsels that in some situations it is "good to have contact with parents...in order to anticipate the accusations and recriminations of the young person and to support your own authority with theirs" (CE 10). Sometimes, he remarks, "administrators then will need to work with the father and mother of this student, in order to help them improve the behavior of their son or daughter." Likewise he acknowledges the rude and harsh attitude of some teachers, by which "they compromise themselves in the eyes of families" (CE 7).

In the Preface to *Christian Education*, Moreau writes, "I have always been convinced that the first duty of any teacher is to produce Christians: Society has a greater need for people of values that it has for scholars" (CE 2). He concludes by asserting that the measure of our success is the degree to which we have contributed to the formation of good parents and strong families:

Hurry then; take up this work of resurrection, never forgetting that the special end of your institute is, before all, to sanctify youth. It is by this that you will contribute to preparing the world for better times than ours; for these students who now attend your school are the parents of the future, the parents of future generations, each one of whom bears within them a family (CE 16).

Today, given the reality of family life in America (e.g., high divorce rate creating single parent or blended families and the economic necessity of both parents working), Holy Cross educators have a prophetic role. Students are quite able to create a sense of community among themselves. For instance, in most schools students are easily found during lunch because everyone seems to know at which table in the cafeteria and with whom they are sharing lunch—the closest some may come to sharing a common meal on a daily basis. Moreau defines a role for adult witness of Christian values in the formation of a school community-family, the need for gentle but firm interventions, and the reinforcement of positive values through encouragement and praise. This calls for the teacher to be the host. It calls for hospitality and compassion.

### **A Bright Thread that Binds: The Mind Will Not Be Cultivated at the Expense of the Heart.**

Moreau's attitude and approach is reflected in the familial ambiance that many students and their families value in our Holy Cross schools. Students speak of faculty and administrators who are caring and concerned. As one remarked, "This school has a great big heart."

*For Moreau education is a balance between heart and mind, between faith and knowledge (the latter being the first two qualities he defines for a teacher).*

The family spirit is an expression of the central principle of Moreau's philosophy. Here he speaks of "completeness...restoring to rational processes the light that existed before the fall of our first parents and then restoring to the heart the kinds of feelings and sentiments that ought to reside there" (CE 3). To refer to education as a work of restoration is to recall Moreau's earlier assertion that education is a work of resurrection.

For Moreau education is a balance between heart and mind, between faith and knowledge (the latter being the first two qualities he defines for a teacher). The story is told of a high school teacher released from his contract at mid-year because he could not manage a classroom. Afterwards, the department chair remarked, "I don't understand it. The guy taught math in college." To which the principal responded, "Ah, there's the rub. Here we teach students." It is often easier for teachers to deal with matters of the head than with matters of the heart. Moreau counsels, "Learn to put yourself within reach of immature young people, treating them with the indulgence that their age deserves...Generally these students have a good heart. Make use of this excellent quality to win their confidence so they will consider you less as a teacher than as a parent or friend" (CE 13).

As one Holy Cross educator has reflected:

To be true to our calling as complete 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.

There are several lines from another source, *Circular Letter 36*, with which Holy Cross educators are most familiar.

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.

The most familiar line, “the mind shall not be cultivated at the expense of the heart,” should be considered with a word of caution: from this phrase is derived the abbreviated “educating hearts and minds” and the unacceptable “educating hearts.” To reduce Moreau’s philosophy to these few words outside their original context is perhaps to over simplify his imperative and overlook the nuances of his implied creative tensions.

There are implied tensions  
between heart and mind,  
between teacher and student,  
between schooling (instruction) and education (outcomes),  
between school and society  
between ethics\values\virtues and daily living,  
and between the mundane and the transcendent.

In defining teaching as a vocation, Moreau remarks: “Christian educators 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?” (CE 4). It was one of Moreau’s deepest convictions that men and women of faith will touch eternity by transforming the lives of the young people they teach.

Moreau reminds us to “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 the distractions that go with being young” (CE 6).

## A Process of Education that Begins Where Students Are

As suggested earlier, sometimes the yarn is being spun right before our eyes, but perhaps we are too close to pick up the thread. For instance, when conversing with Holy Cross educators across the country, one obvious thread in the rich tapestry they all share by Holy Cross is reflected in the oft-repeated line “We begin where students are.”

Diversity—whether ethnic, religious, academic aptitude, or socio-economic—is an obvious point of pride among Holy Cross educators across the country. And here we find a persistent thread throughout *Christian Education*. In today’s parlance, Basil Moreau had a preferential option for the poor. When discussing whom we should teach, he writes:

If at times you show preference to any young people, they 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 less...[seeing]...in all only the image of God imprinted within them like a sacred seal that you must preserve at all cost (CE 5).

For Moreau teaching is essentially about the relationship between the teacher and the student. Teach young people first and then teach the subject. Several of the qualities he encourages—seriousness, gentleness, prudence, patience, and firmness—are virtues or qualities that define and develop relationships with students. He addresses no less than eleven student characteristics that can serve to distract teachers. Among them he names students who are poorly brought up or spoiled by their parents and students who are unintelligent, self-centered, opinionated, insolent, envious, without integrity, immature, lazy, or in poor health. This is quite a cast of characters, and for each he articulates appropriate strategies.

*For Moreau teaching is essentially about the relationship between the teacher and the student. Teach young people first and then teach the subject.*

“It would be a serious mistake to open a school imagining that the students will be alike in character and conduct” (CE 10). Despite this caution by Moreau, many teachers are annoyed and surprised when confronted with this reality. He goes on to say: “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” (CE 10).

This is both a remarkable and a challenging proposition: all teaching and all success lie in the best approach to an individual student. If education is a work of resurrection, then we must expect to find the Cross in the process. For Moreau, the Cross is a sign of hope anticipating the resurrection. In the words of Margaret Wheatley in *Turning to One Another* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2002), “As we work together to restore hope to the future, we need to include a new and strange ally—our willingness to be disturbed.” When we choose to accept students where they are and to accompany them at their pace, we will find the journey arduous: “We must be men [and women] with hope to bring. There is no failure the Lord’s love cannot reverse, no humiliation He cannot exchange for blessing, no anger He cannot dissolve, no routine He cannot transfigure ... He has nothing but gifts to offer. It remains only for us to find how even the cross can be borne as a gift. Resurrection for us is a daily event” (*Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross*, 8:118-119).

One of the longest segments in *Christian Education* is devoted to gentleness. In this regard, Moreau remarks, “Gentleness permits teachers to endure all the adversities and unpleasant experiences and occurrences that go hand in hand with schooling ... and begets a number of other good qualities: sensibility, good will...” He continues, “Teachers filled with meekness can show an interest and an affection for young people that will win hearts” (CE 7).

### The Process of Education Brings Young People from Threshold to Threshold

Both recognizing the goodness in young people and accepting flaws in their behavior and shortcomings in their preparation, Moreau sees education as a process that begins where students are. It is also a process that leads to transformation. He asks us to

recall that the apostles, chosen and formed in the school of our Lord, were unsophisticated, unlettered, and taken from the lowest class of society and combined a lack of education with a lot of ambition, self-love, and egotism. Admire the unchanging gentleness and untiring zeal that the Lord always showed. In all his teaching and actions, he tried only to inform them, to instruct them, and to make new men of them. As teachers, then, meditate on this example and try to pattern your own teaching after it (CE 10).

For what purpose did Jesus instruct to make new men of them? The concern for what students would become “once they leave the school” is the continuing preoccupation. The most succinct synthesis of Moreau’s thinking in this regard is provided by Graziella Lalande, CSC, when she writes in *Like a Mighty Tree* (Montreal: Editions Fides, 1989):

Basil Moreau felt called to be an artisan of renewal... “To regenerate society in order to prepare for better times for the world than ours,” that was the essence of what he proposed to his disciples. The means? By a certain type of education that would aim at forming “new men,” persons conformable to Jesus Christ, persons set free from ignorance and disorder, because Moreau is certain that the knowledge and experience of Jesus Christ are factors for regeneration, liberation and growth in justice and honesty.

Father Moreau proposed to the educators of Holy Cross that they “take in hand this work of resurrection.” Our founder inscribed all the educative process in a paschal logic, in a baptismal logic. To educate was to bring young people from threshold to threshold toward a maturity that was more and more human and Christian. It was to work at bringing about a future, in oneself and in everyone, as free men and women capable of “living, speaking, acting like people who were alive, that is to say like Jesus Christ,” like the Risen Jesus.

Worthy of deeper reflection is Sister Graziella’s wonderful turn of phrase: “To educate is to bring young people from threshold to threshold toward a maturity that was more and more human and more Christian.”

### Mission: Motive and Measure

The compelling factor in prompting Moreau to prepare “a treatise on Christian education” was his concern about reports he had received on conditions in the schools. In *Circular Letter 77* he remarks that those reports indicate “general lack of unity and cooperation.” Brother Joel Giallanza says, “If there is anything Moreau wanted in both the members of Holy Cross and their works, it was the spirit of unity and cooperation.” And ever shall it be.

*Moreau felt that the measure of mission is the formation of new men and women for better times than ours.”*

More than once Moreau speaks of teaching as a mission. For him, mission is about motive and outcomes. Margaret Wheatley says, “There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.” (op.cit, 48) Mission is no more or less than what we passionately care about. It is in mission that we find common cause and collective energy. Zeal for mission is a

consistent theme of Moreau's, and in today's parlance we may better understand it as urgency or fervor for mission. In the plain language of Moreau, the mission is this:

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 (*Circular Letter 36*).

With the eyes of faith consider the greatness of the mission and the wonderful amount of good that one can accomplish. And also consider the great reward promised to those who have taught the truth to others and have helped form them into justice: "They will shine eternally in the skies like the stars of the heavens." With the hope of this glory, we must generously complete the Lord's work (*CE9*).

For Moreau, the measure of mission is the formation of new men and women "for better times than ours." In Moreau's *Teachers' Guide to Holy Cross*, which is lost and known only by references found in other writings, he remarked, "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."

These powerful lines are a clear expression of Moreau's conviction that education is a cohesive process. The medium is the message. Just as our students were accepted for who they were (warts and all) and brought from threshold to threshold as new men and women, so too they must be prepared to accept and address the world they enter (flawed as it is) bringing to it the transcendent hope of the resurrection. A resurrection they first experienced at the hands of caring teachers who believed with St. Paul that "My little children I must go through the pain of giving birth to you until Christ is formed in you" (Galatians 4:19).

**Stephen V. Walsh, CSC**

Section titled "Birth of a Legacy" by Joel Giallanza, CSC

## *Addendum Part II*

### **THE HOLY CROSS TRADITION**

The Holy Cross tradition of operating a school and teaching young people began in post-revolutionary France at a time in which Christian education was a crucial concern. When Father Basil Anthony M. Moreau took on the direction of the Brothers of St. Joseph, a group of lay men founded by Father James Dujarié, he saw these men primarily as educators. For Father Moreau, the vocation of a teacher was a special call from God as important as God's call to the religious life.

Father Moreau defined a Holy Cross education when he said that true education consisted in forming the hearts of young people. He truly believed that the first duty of a teacher was to develop Christians. He said, "Society has a greater need for people of values than it has for scholars." This is not to say that he believed knowledge and scholarship to be unimportant. His philosophy was quite the contrary: knowledge and scholarship have great importance, but only if placed in a context of values. Without this context, they are useless and meaningless.

This tradition of the Holy Cross school has flowed to the present from the earliest Holy Cross foundations. It has taken expression in various forms, but usually in a philosophy which promotes the education of the whole person—spiritual, intellectual, artistic, physical, social. Father Moreau was an educator who introduced some revolutionary ideas into the Catholic educational system of the time. Prior to his contribution, education was modeled on the seminary. Father Moreau believed that physical, social, musical and artistic activity were educationally valuable in themselves and should not be relegated only to periods of relaxation from school. Liberal education for Father Moreau was a much broader term than just the classical education practiced in seminary schools.

Father Moreau tried to show society that there was no sacrifice of "excellence" as defined in his time in this new education.

Holy Cross schools were required to maintain the highest-level accreditation possible and to involve students in local community or town life even from the earliest years.

Throughout all of Moreau's writings on education, the organization of a school takes second place to the quality of persons teaching in the school. His belief that teaching is a call from God took expression in his understanding that teachers teach only when they interact with young people. Teachers are life models for young people and will be effective Christian educators only in so far as they are faithful, knowledgeable and caring Christians themselves. He often pointed out to teachers that they could not give others what they did not possess themselves. The personal qualities of teachers in a Holy Cross school are what make Father Moreau's vision of education work. Without these personal qualities of reverence, knowledge, zeal, vigilance, self-control, gentleness, patience, prudence and firmness, teachers will not be able to carry out their call to develop young people into Christians and the schools in which they work will be ineffective.

### **The Mission Values of Holy Cross Schools**

The Holy Cross tradition is an oral tradition. It has been adapted by individuals to different cultures in different times. It has never been static, but rather responsive to the needs of a people in which it was placed. Thus it could be effective in cultures as diverse as France, Canada, the United States, Brazil, Chile, India, Uganda, Bangladesh or Ghana.

Despite this responsiveness, there are certain values that seem to characterize Holy Cross schools throughout the world:

1. The school's primary purpose is the leading of young people towards being true Christians.
2. The school is a community and family. A spirit of family among administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents, alumni and board members characterize the school.
3. The school serves a diverse population. Young people served by the school include the economically rich and the economically poor, the intellectually capable and the intellectually less capable, Catholics and non-Catholics.

4. The school approaches its responsibilities with a world-wide perspective. The mission of the school is seen as a part of the world-wide educational mission of Holy Cross with teachers banded together in all parts of the world and in a variety of cultures.
5. The school views itself as a part of the mission of the local diocesan Church. The school community, especially students, are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the diocese.
6. The school's mission includes helping students gain the best education possible by secular standards. The school's policies and programs fulfill well all secular requirements, and the education of students graduating from the school compares well with exemplary secular programs of the area. The school maintains the highest accreditation possible in its area.
7. The school's mission includes helping students become active and informed citizens. The school's programs lead to an "education for life," not just for the present.

### Questions for Reflection

The qualities, characteristics, or core values often associated with the Holy Cross Charism include: zeal for mission, trust in Divine Providence, community or sense of family, a spirit of unity, hospitality and compassion, the paradox of the cross, the hope of resurrection, inclusiveness, option for the poor, forgiveness and education of the whole person.

1. What draws you to share in the ministry and mission of Holy Cross? How is your experience different from other schools with which you have associated?
2. Which core values (charisms) most resonate with you how you see yourself living them? How do see them reflected in the school culture where you are serving? Are there ways in the school could be more deliberate in its expression of this core values?
3. What charism(s) or core values would you think others would recognize in your performance of your responsibilities? In what ways might a visitor to your school find these charisms, qualities and characteristics operative within your school?
4. What do you consciously try to implement in your interactions with others?
5. How or in what ways does your position allow you to express and implement what you understand to be the legacy of Holy Cross education?

### *Addendum Part III*

## **CONTINUING THE STORY: TOWARDS A SPIRITUALITY FOR HOLY CROSS EDUCATORS**

Holy Cross educators often express the desire for a deeper understanding of the spirituality and charism of Holy Cross, i.e., the unique gift of congregation and Basil Moreau to the Church. As has been suggested elsewhere, it is helpful to think of charism as a lens through which Moreau read the gospel or as a prism that catches the light and reflects some aspects of the Gospel. Therefore, if we desire a deeper understanding of Moreau's spirituality, then we must pray the Scriptures.

### **Definitions of Spirituality**

It is perhaps helpful to consider what is meant by spirituality. Here are several definitions that might be helpful in this process of reflection and understanding:

From pages 6 through 8 of *Christian Spirituality, Themes from the Tradition* (New York: Paulist Press, 1996) by Lawrence S. Cunningham and Keith J. Egan, we find the following:

- “Spirituality [...] refers to our religious experience.”
- “...Christian spirituality is the lived encounter with Jesus Christ in the Spirit.”

From page 3 of *Contemplatives in Action* (New York: Paulist Press, 2002) by William A. Barry, S.J., and Robert G. Doherty, S.J., we find:

Any specific spirituality derives from an experience or series of experiences of God that a group has. Any such experience is never, of course, a pure experience of God. Every human experience is multi-dimensional...the product of an encounter between something and a person with a psychological, social and cultural history. Benedictine spirituality with its vow of stability was the product of an encounter between God and Benedict and his followers who grew up at the time of the breakup of the Roman Empire, when stable institutions were few and far between. Ignatian spirituality evolved from the encounter between God and a late medieval Basque noble and warrior at the time of the dissolution of the medieval synthesis. Methodist spirituality developed from the religious experience of John Wesley and his followers as they tried to cope with the effects of the Industrial Revolution in England.

Gustavo Gutierrez defines an analysis that complements the one found in *Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2684*. In his *We Drink from Our Own Wells* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1984), he provides the schema for understanding the background and development of Christian spirituality. He distinguishes three stages in the formation of a Christian spiritual tradition:

- Certain persons in the past have had a powerful religious experience as they lived their Christian faith... These experiences gave them a new insight into the life of the Spirit or a new way of understanding God's word or a different approach in their desire to follow Jesus.
- They or people close to them reflect upon the experience and attempt to express it in any one of a different number of ways: through their writing, through artistic expressions; in the formation of followers; by the composition of prayers; by preaching and teaching; by the founding of a new kind of Christian community, etc.
- These experiences and the traditions founded from them then enter into the broad Christian tradition. In the words of Gutierrez, they “are not the end of the line...they are offered to the ecclesial community as a new way of being Christian.” Such traditions are built upon and drawn from or modified by subsequent generations of Christians.

Found here are several themes that reflect the charism and spirituality of Holy Cross. With the intention of prompting deeper reflection, quotations of Basil Moreau on a particular theme are found with parallel references to the Gospels.

## Relationship

### What Moreau said

From *Circular Letter 20*—Above all, let us work with the strength, unity and clear understanding which comes from mutual cooperation and the possession of all things in common. We must never lose sight of the fact that strength of numbers joined with unity of aim and action, is the greatest of all strengths and is limited only by the bounds of the possible.

From *Circular Letter 36*—...the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart.

From *Circular Letter 79*—Our rules certainly insure the necessary training for the mind, but their first and foremost concern is with the formation of the heart through the development of those religious dispositions which alone can make a good person and a Christian.

From *Christian Education*—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. You must be “all things to all people,” like Saint Paul—little with the little, great with the great, seeing in all only the image of God imprinted within them like a sacred seal which you must preserve at all costs.

*(These texts point to a willingness to enter into relationship with those we serve and the courage to call them to relationship with others.)*

### What Jesus said/did

Luke 6:32-35—If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you give to those from whom you hope to receive what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return.

Luke 10:29-37—(The story of the good Samaritan is a model of willingness to go beyond established social conventions for the good of others and of willingness to enter into relationship with those that society rejects.)

### Reflecting on my story and integrating my experience

## Hospitality/Compassion

### What Moreau said

From *Christian Education*—If at times you show preference to any young people, they 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. You must be “all things to all people,” like Saint Paul—little with the little, great with the great, seeing in all only the image of God imprinted within them like a sacred seal which you must preserve at all costs.

From *Christian Education*—In fact, recall that the apostles, chosen and formed in the school of our Lord, were unsophisticated, unlettered, taken from the lowest class of society, and combined a lack of education with a lot of ambition, self love, and egotism. Admire the unchanging gentleness and untiring zeal that the Lord never ceased to show. In all his teaching and actions, he tried only to inform them, to instruct them, and to make new men of them.

### What Jesus said/did

Mark 10:14-16—Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

Luke 18:16-17—Let the children come to me and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.

Luke 19:1-10—(The story of the invitation to and acceptance of Zacheus.)

John 4:1-42—(The story of the Samaritan woman at the well.)

### Reflecting on my story and integrating my experience

## Zeal

### What Moreau said

From *Christian Education*—By zeal is understood that flame of burning desire which one feels to make God known, loved and served and thus save souls. Apostolic activity is therefore the essential character of this virtue and every teacher who is animated by it will fulfill the duties of his state with eagerness, affection, courage and perseverance.

From the Constitutions of 1857—The spirit of faith inspires and animates zeal, that is to say, the sacred fire which the divine Master came to bring on earth. If then we have faith and the zeal which inspires faith we will be ready to undergo anything in order to instruct the mind in the knowledge of eternal truths and to form the heart to virtue.

From *Circular Letter 16a*—My heart assures me that, as long as I live, I shall work for the one aim of making Holy Cross ever more perfect. My time, my vigils, my health, all that I am, even to last drop of my blood, belong irrevocably to Holy Cross and each one of you in particular.

### What Jesus said/did

Luke 4:16-21—(Jesus' mission)

Luke 4:43—I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose.

Luke 12:49—I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!

### Reflecting on my story and integrating my experience

## Hope/The Cross

### What Moreau said

From *Circular Letter 23*—I do not know what new crosses await us during the coming year. Whatever they may be, let us not forget that the heaviest crosses contribute most to the general good of our work and to the welfare of each one of us.

From *Circular Letter 69*—As always, God's protection has been in proportion to our trials.

From *Circular Letter 179*—The many different trials to which we have been subjected are the indubitable marks of God's will in our regard, and of the presence of the Lord in our midst. No one but God could have carried this Institute through its many financial and moral crises.

From *Christian Education*—Hurry then; take up this work of resurrection, never forgetting that the special end of your Institute is, before all, to sanctify youth. It is by this that you will contribute to prepare the world for better times than ours; for these students who now attend your school are the parents of the future, the parents of future generations, each one of whom bears within self a family. Influence them, then by all the means of instruction and sanctification which have just been explained. Then, and only then you can hope to attain the end of your vocation by the renewal of the Christian faith and piety. May it be so!

*(These are the final lines of Moreau's text. They speak of the hope of resurrection in contrast to the first lines of his text found below, which speak of the crosses found in teaching.)*

Since God alone provides the means for the successful accomplishment of any task, it seems evident that a person needs to be called by God to be a teacher if that person is going to be able to be effective. Without this call to teaching, how will anyone be able to put up with everything which a teacher faces daily? From the time the school year begins, a teacher will not have a moment's rest or a moment free.

### What Jesus said/did

Matthew 16:24—If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Luke 24:13-31—(The Emmaus story is one of hope born from an encounter with the cross.)

### Reflecting on my story and integrating my experience

## Providence

### What Moreau said

From *Circular Letter 23*—We are in greater need than ever before of renewing ourselves in the spirit of our vocation. Let us not forget that the development of the work entrusted to us depends upon our acceptance of the inspirations of grace and our fidelity in seconding the designs of Divine Providence.

From *Circular Letter 79*—There is one condition which is essential for the future of our congregation, a condition without which not even Providence will act. This condition is your own generous cooperation and your faithful correspondence with the grace of vocation.

## Mission

### What Moreau said

From the *Constitutions of 1857*—The ends of the Congregation are as follows: 1. The perfection of individuals by the practice of the evangelical counsels; 2. The sanctification of others by preaching the word of God, especially in rural areas and foreign missions; 3. The Christian instruction and education of youth through schools in which humanities and sciences are taught, and of schools of agriculture and the trades: these latter being especially designed for poor and abandoned children.

From *Circular Letter 8*—If we are not animated by the spirit of the saints, the important work of Holy Cross will come to nothing, and our efforts for the sanctification of youth will be vain and useless.

From *Christian Education*—With the eyes of faith consider the greatness of the mission and wonderful amount of good that one can accomplish. Also consider the great reward promised to those who have taught the truth to other and have helped to form them into justice. “They will shine eternally in the skies like the stars of the heavens.” With the hope of this glory, we must generously complete the Lord’s work.

### What Jesus said/did

Luke 12:6-7—Aren’t five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God’s sight. Even the hairs of your head are all counted. Do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Matthew 28:20—Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

### What Jesus said/did

Matthew 28:19-20—All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

John 15:16—You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that God will give you whatever you ask in my name.

John 20:21—As God has sent me, so I send you.

### Reflecting on my story and integrating my experience

### Reflecting on my story and integrating my experience



The Holy Cross Institute  
AT ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY

*Forming a community of learning and practice for Holy Cross educators*

3001 South Congress Avenue ■ Austin, TX 78704-6489 ■ 512.448.8650 ■ 800.566.1837 ■ Fax 512.637.1937  
[www.holycrossinstitute.org](http://www.holycrossinstitute.org)