

## ***Christian Education* by Venerable Basil A. Moreau, CSC Vision, Instruction, Invitation**

Brother George Schmitz, CSC

2007 Convocation of the Holy Cross Institute

St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas

March 18, 2007

### **Introduction**

I am very pleased to have been invited to deliver the 2007 Convocation keynote address. This is an important year for all of us who are engaged in the ministry of Catholic Education in the Holy Cross Tradition. In September we will join with the church in the celebration of the beatification of Father Moreau, an event that has been a long time in coming, and which has great potential for encouraging us and rejuvenating us in our work as Holy Cross educators. Father Moreau had many roles during his lifetime: priest, teacher, spiritual and retreat director, visionary, and founder. In beatifying Father Moreau, the church is recognizing the validity of testimony to his heroic virtue, and the church is holding him up to us as a model. In my estimation he is a model for all of the faithful in his living out of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. He preached to us about faith through his own lived reliance on Divine Providence; his zeal for ministry was fired by the depth of his hope; his charity was constant, especially in the face of great adversity.


What a wonderful coincidence for those of us who are engaged in the ministry of Catholic Education in the Holy Cross tradition that this year of his beatification is juxtaposed with the anniversary of his writing *Christian Education*. Basil Moreau, the educator, is the focus of our attention this evening, because it was his vision of a new congregation made up of clerics and of lay religious that set the Congregation of Holy Cross on the path that it has taken since 1837. That path has led Holy Cross religious to 15 nations, and where you find the Congregation of Holy Cross you will find schools. That path was also one that was always open to, and inviting and welcoming of, the participation of lay colleagues in the ministries of the congregation.

Today you will find over 60 educational institutions that boast of their Holy Cross traditions built on a Holy Cross legacy. These institutions range from prominent institutions of higher education, to well established and noted middle and secondary schools, to fledgling schools that serve the poor in rather primitive settings and with a minimum of developed facilities. Nevertheless, each of these educational institutions has that unmistakable Holy Cross character that Brother Stephen Walsh spoke about in last year's address.

I would propose that one of the building blocks of the foundation in the development of what we recognize today as the distinctive Holy Cross character was the document that we have all received in coming to this assembly — *Christian Education* by Basil A. Moreau, CSC. The men to whom *Christian Education* was addressed built on that foundation and have passed on to future generations, to us, an enduring legacy that is alive, vibrant and still being interpreted in all of our Holy Cross educational institutions. The ongoing interpretation and implementation of the legacy is what we are about during these days of the second convocation of Holy Cross Institute.

Father Moreau devoted unbounded energy and attention to catholic education from the moment he assumed responsibility for the brothers of Saint Joseph in 1835. His taking responsibility for this group of teachers influenced his thinking about the congregation that he would begin to establish two years later. As the congregation was developing, it was primarily the need and the request for educators that led to its expansion beyond France to Algeria (1840), to America (1841), to Canada (1847), to Rome (1850) and to Bengal (1853). In a letter dated May 25, 1856, Father Moreau first mentioned that he was preparing a treatise on education, *Christian Pedagogy*. In that letter he went on to speak of his desire to see uniformity in teaching methods and in textbooks. He brought the document with him to America the following year, and he instructed that the first part be translated to English and distributed. In 1865, he again calls attention to “my *Pedagogy*” asking those engaged in education to follow it in their manner of conducting classes.

I can only speculate that Father Moreau's document fell victim to the politics and the divisions that arose in the congregation in the late 1860s. Furthermore, the congregation's first forays into education were so diverse it would have been quite difficult to centralize an educational system, if that was indeed Moreau's overriding intention. One has only to read the history of the



congregation's establishment in the previously mentioned areas of the world to see that the different political, cultural and social realities that were encountered, and the unique local challenges that presented themselves, precluded the replication of a prototype out of France. Even Father Moreau's own experiences in starting Notre Dame de Sainte Croix at LeMans and Santa Prisca in Rome were experiences of negotiating difficulties and responding to challenges, rather than laying the foundation upon which to build a uniform educational system or following a blueprint from a previously established institution.

Today we do not look upon *Christian Education* as a blueprint or a primer for founding an educational institution. While it may not have brought about Father Moreau's desired uniformity in teaching methods, it did set the stage for the development of catholic education in the Holy Cross tradition as we know it today. I am going to refer to it and speak about it as Father Moreau's vision, his instruction, his invitation. It is the founder's vision of what it means to be an educator. Although the phrase "educator in the faith" was not coined by Father Moreau and came into use many years after his death, *Christian Education* can be viewed as a treatise on the meaning of the phrase.

*Christian Education* was an internal document written by the superior for the brothers of Saint Joseph, soon to be brothers of the Congregation of Holy Cross. Reading the document while perusing Father Moreau's biographies, as I did in preparation for this address, demonstrated to me that *Christian Education* reflects Father Moreau's personal journey through seminary formation, priestly ministry, teaching, retreat and mission direction, leadership of religious houses, and most especially his previous 20 years of experience in directing and guiding the brothers of Saint Joseph. Reflecting on his own experience, Father Moreau had "... a clear understanding of the need for personal sanctification as a basis for external apostolate ..." (MacEoin, 44). This is what he weaves throughout *Christian Education*. I will come back to this later in my address.

I am going to proceed this evening in three parts: first, some historical data about Basil Moreau and an overview of the situation in LeMans leading up to the writing and dissemination of *Christian Education* and the establishment of the Congregation of Holy Cross; secondly, some personal reflections on the document; finally, some comments, questions, suggestions about the document over against our current situation as "educators in the faith" at the start of the 21st century.

## Historical Overview

Let me begin this historical overview with young Basil Moreau, for I believe that his personal experience as a child and as a youth had an impact on how he perceived the importance of education, accessibility to education and the value of having the brothers of Saint Joseph as part of his vision for a new religious congregation. Basil Moreau was born into a society that was still adjusting to the major changes that had come about in France as a result of The Enlightenment and the revolution. Most of his mentors had lived through and survived the revolution and the Reign of Terror, and I would add, with their integrity intact. This is a reality that no doubt impacted how they taught and mentored, and how and what their young student learned and internalized. Basil Moreau was born in the final years of the First Republic; he started primary school during the First Empire of Napoleon. He completed his secondary studies and his seminary training and was ordained and started his teaching and retreat ministry during the restoration of the monarchy. His major work, the founding of the Congregation of Holy Cross, came about after the Revolution of 1830 and during the short-lived Second Republic and subsequent Second Empire. None of these succeeding stages in the development of modern France came about easily. Without a doubt, political realities impinged on every aspect of Basil Moreau's life and of his life's work.

Basil Moreau did not begin his formal education until he was nine years old, mainly because the political reality had brought about the practical extinction of primary education, especially in rural France. When he did begin formal studies, they were provided by the parish priest in the parish rectory. Except that his intellectual ability and his piety were recognized by Father LeProvost, his parish priest and elementary teacher, Basil Moreau probably would have ended his formal education within four or five years, having mastered whatever was the going standard for elementary education in an agrarian society, along with sacramental preparation for penance, first communion and confirmation.

Undoubtedly, the going standard was not much more than basic literacy and mathematics. As reported in one biography of Father Moreau, men and women teachers went "... from village to village, sporting one feather in their cap if able to teach reading, two if writing and three if also arithmetic" (MacEoin, 19). Most had to have a second trade in order to make a living. And the parish priests who were conducting classes in their rectories were doing so along with a host of other duties. Basic education was basic, very basic.

If Basil Moreau's intellectual ability and his piety attracted the attention of his pastor, there remained the problem of finances. The Moreau family simply did not have the money to send their son to secondary school, which was not a local institution, but was a boarding school located some 60 miles away. It was through the generosity of an anonymous patroness that Basil Moreau was able to enter College Chateau-Gontier, a preparatory seminary, in 1814, after only five years of elementary education.

Basil Moreau's call to the priesthood became stronger during his high school years, particularly under the direction of Father Louis-Jean Fillion, who was the assistant director at Chateau-Gontier, as well as the spiritual director for the students. He pursued his seminary studies at St. Vincent Seminary in LeMans, where he was ordained in 1821. His intention was to be a simple parish priest in a rural area, moving back to his roots and following in the footsteps of the valiant men who had risked the perils of the Revolution and who had such a strong influence on him. He had also given consideration to going to the foreign mission seminary and serving outside of France. However, his bishop had other plans for him. He was sent to Paris for further studies under the direction of the Sulpician Fathers, whose primary apostolate was the education and formation of priests. In Paris and later at Issy, he prepared himself to be a seminary professor. More important, during these years he developed his personal spirituality and his vision for his future ministerial efforts.

In 1823, he returned to LeMans to teach philosophy at the minor seminary, and later to teach dogma and scripture at the major seminary. Once resettled in LeMans, Father Moreau did not confine himself solely to his seminary duties. He was a noted and much sought-after retreat and mission director, and he was called upon to be the superior of the Foundation of the Good Shepherd at LeMans, one of the houses of a nascent congregation of religious women.

Of most interest to us this evening is his contact with Father Jacques Dujarié, the parish priest of Ruille, and another of those heroic men of integrity who helped preserve the Catholic faith in the aftermath of the revolution. Retreat work initially brought Father Moreau to Ruille. In 1835, after several visits over a period of years, he took responsibility from the aging Father Dujarié for the latter's fledgling group of laymen, the brothers of Saint Joseph. Herein lays the yeast that expanded the vision that Father Moreau was developing of an association of priests who would preach retreats, evangelize and teach in secondary schools. Two years later Father Moreau would bring forth the plan of a religious congregation composed of clerics and laymen. His vision was significantly influenced by Brother Andre Mottais, one of the leaders among the brothers. It was a plan that would develop over the next 20 years before receiving Vatican approbation.

The brothers of Saint Joseph were founded by Father Dujarié in 1820, 15 years before Father Moreau took responsibility for them. This is one of several similar groups that were either starting or regrouping in France at the time. All religious congregations had been disbanded in 1792, which led to the demise of almost all of the rural primary schools in France. Under Napoleon the situation changed somewhat in the cities with the establishment of schools for well-to-do families. With The Restoration, more improvements were made in efforts to meet the need for education, especially for primary education.

In 1816, the monarchy set up a budget for primary education. The governments of Kings Louis XVIII and of Charles X made some important decisions. "Instead of setting up a monopoly, as they did so unfortunately for colleges and universities, their governments adopted for the primary schools a policy of supervised liberty" (Catta, I, 281). This window of opportunity led to the founding of new religious congregations of brothers and the resurgence of those that had been disbanded in 1792. Along with Dujarié's brothers of Saint Joseph, we find the Marist Brothers, the Marianists, the brothers of Christian Doctrine, and the brothers of Christian Instruction. The brothers of the Christian Schools, founded by Saint John Baptist de La Salle in 1680, were in the process of re-grouping.

The new law provided for the opening of schools either by communes or by private individuals, and the committee formed to organize primary teaching was to be presided over by the local pastor. In the case of the religious congregations, the law did not require the teachers to have an officially recognized teaching license. Rather, a letter of obedience from the superior sufficed. The establishment of these new religious congregations of teachers was extremely important to the reestablishment of education as a priority and to the advancement of education in France. However, the loophole requiring only a letter of obedience and not an officially recognized teaching license did not have a positive impact on the development of the brothers of Saint Joseph. Many, if not most of the brothers, were young men who were being sent out to parish school with very little preparation. In many cases, the fact that they could read, write and do basic math was the sum of their qualification. This was something that Father Moreau had to address when he took responsibility for the brothers of Saint Joseph. By 1849, he had brought the brothers to the point where Holy Cross was awarded full teaching rights for the school at LeMans. I believe that having had to address the professional development and preparation of the brothers also played a part in his writing of *Christian Education* in 1856.

Father Moreau became the superior of the brothers of Saint Joseph in 1835, and he immediately began the work of shoring up the floundering group, working with their own leaders among the brothers of Saint Joseph, and preparing them for a more formalized

religious life and ministerial life, and a more professional approach to their teaching. The brothers of Saint Joseph grew and flourished under Father Moreau's direction. They were the predominant group within Moreau's new Holy Cross community in its initial stages and for the early part of its history. Furthermore, they were in great demand. As I stated earlier, it was requests for teaching brothers that brought Holy Cross to Algeria and to the United States in the earliest stages of the congregation's development.

In 1835 Father Moreau brought the brothers of Saint Joseph and their boarding school from Ruille to LeMans. At the time there were 50 brothers who were teaching in 25 schools, with an additional 10 brothers and nine novices at LeMans. Nine years later, in 1846 when Father Moreau sent a request to Rome for approbation, he reported that the congregation was made up of 22 priests with 12 novices; and 182 brothers. Holy Cross was in charge of 59 schools in various dioceses of France, in Algeria, in Vincennes and in Detroit in the United States, and in Montreal in Canada. Ten years later, when he wrote *Christian Education* and when the congregation was officially recognized by Rome, there were 72 priests, 322 brothers and 254 sisters. The congregation had responsibility for 86 primary schools, eight secondary schools and four boarding schools.

### **Christian Education**

I will turn our attention now to *Christian Education*. I made the point earlier that what Father Moreau intended for the document is not how we view it today, that is we don't see it as a blueprint for our establishing or managing a Holy Cross school. However, I do see in the document the founder's ideals for the educator, and his vision of what it means to be a Christian educator, a Holy Cross educator. I suggested that *Christian Education* is Father Moreau's vision, his instruction, his invitation. This is Basil Moreau, the founder, writing to the largest segment of his new congregation on the eve of their achieving papal recognition, proclaiming his belief in the importance of faith-based education and in the primacy of faith in the educational process. This is Father Moreau, the formator of young religious, their spiritual director, giving instruction to the group of men whose ministry has honed his own vision and significantly shaped the mission of the new congregation. This is Father Moreau, the zealous visionary, who has a burning desire to make God known, loved and served inviting others to partake of the mission. Writ large across the whole document is the statement that we have come to know and to quote so well and so often: "We shall always place education side by side with instruction; the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart" (Circular Letter No. 36, April 15, 1949).

On first reading, the document, especially Part One of the document, might sound strange to our 21st-century ears. There is not a lot of talk about virtues in today's professional educational journals or in teacher training manuals. Rather, as was written in a late-December issue of *Time Magazine* in a lead article about 21st-century education in the United States, our main concerns are highlighted as "... whether an entire generation of kids will fail to make the grade in the global economy because they can't think their way through abstract problems, work in teams, distinguish good information from bad or speak a language other than English" (*Time Magazine*, Dec. 18, 2006). In a similar vein, a report issued in September by a commission established by Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings spoke of higher education as "... an enterprise that has yet to address the fundamental issues of how academic programs and institutions must be transformed to serve the changing educational needs of a knowledge economy." For me, this is why Father Moreau's *Christian Education* will always have relevance. He wrote it for teachers in an agrarian society. The majority of the congregation's schools, particularly those which we represent, were founded and thrived in an industrial and post-industrial society. And today we find ourselves confronting and confronted by a "global economy," a "knowledge economy." How we educate the mind will change with the times; how we cultivate the heart is and will remain timeless.

The symbolism of the heart meant much to Father Moreau. It is a symbol of love and the locus of virtue; it is the core of human nature. It is the point where faith and reason embrace. For all his life Father Moreau worked to reconcile the divorce between faith and reason that was one of the results of The Enlightenment.

Unlike other founders who might have dedicated their congregations to Jesus, or to Mary, or to Saint Joseph, Father Moreau dedicated the branches of the Holy Cross family to the hearts of Jesus, of Mary and of Saint Joseph. For, where but from the heart could one respond: "Not my will, but yours be done. Be it done unto me according to your word." "I will take you into my home as my wife and I will cherish as my own this mysterious child growing within you."

In this document as in all of his writings to Holy Cross Religious, Father Moreau speaks from the depths of his own heart. He is speaking to his fellow religious from what he interiorized, especially during his formative years at Paris and at Issy. I also believe much of what we find here is probably drawn from his own study of philosophy and theology where virtue is pondered, probed and proclaimed by Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas.

Again, *Christian Education* is Father Moreau's vision. Likewise, it is also his instruction and his invitation. As his instruction, *Christian Education* is a guide for teachers on how to "be" rather than how to "teach." It ties directly into his seminal statement about not cultivating the mind at the expense of the heart. Here he is doing with the teacher what he expects the teacher to do with the student. I am struck by how comfortably and how accurately his instruction reflects the motto of one of his contemporaries, the renowned British theologian and educator John Cardinal Newman — *Cor ad Cor loquitur* — Heart speaks to Heart.

Father Moreau tells us in the preface that his purpose in writing *Christian Education* is "... the formation of the hearts of young people and the development of a positive response toward religion within them." And further on in the preface, we get a broader view of where he is leading when he states, "Knowledge itself does not bring about positive values, but positive values do influence knowledge and put it to a good use."

I suggest that this sentence is the key to understanding the next part of the document, his instruction on the nine values that he proclaims essential for a successful teacher. For Father Moreau, education goes beyond merely presenting and explaining a list of dogmatic truths or scientific facts to be learned. Education equally calls for helping young people to open their hearts to assent to the truths that are being taught. Father Moreau knew that it is neither knowledge nor ignorance of the quadratic equation, French literature or economics that leads to jealousy, prejudice and deceit. No, it is the uncultivated heart, one which tends toward greed rather than generosity, vengeance rather than mercy, revenge rather than justice, hatred rather than love. He states it well when he says the values of the heart will "... influence knowledge and put it to good use."

In *Christian Education*, before he elaborates and instructs on the nine essential values, Father Moreau, the mentor, establishes that teaching is more than a profession; it is a vocation, a call from God. In this first section of Part One, I find Father Moreau to be very realistic. Uncharacteristically he shies away from religious language to speak practically of all that teachers face in the course of a day and in the course of an academic year. His empathy for the situations that teachers find themselves in speaks of his personal experience as a teacher and it strengthens his premise for what is to be presented in the following nine sections of Part One. As I view it, the premise is this: mission is not our work, mission is God at work; and teaching is a crucial component of mission as we witness in the life of Jesus. This is what I mean when I say that *Christian Education* is Father Moreau's invitation. He is inviting the religious, through their vow of obedience, as well as the laymen and laywomen who will be working in Holy Cross schools, to partake in the mission. And he is reminding them that this work of teaching is a calling as well as a profession.

As an aside here, I want to step back for a moment to another historical note that might give us further insight into the origin of this document and particularly to the listing of the essential virtues for teaching in the next section. I had mentioned previously that the early decades of the 19th century saw the development of a number of new congregations of religious teaching brothers in France, as well as the resurgence of the brothers of the Christian Schools, founded by Saint Jean Baptist de La Salle. De La Salle's community was the prototype. De La Salle himself was an innovator from the very start of his congregation in 1680. He established free schools, which opened education to the poor; he promoted teaching in the vernacular instead of in Latin; he opened the first boarding secondary schools; he provided teacher training for the brothers — in some ways the novitiate was a normal school; and, he wrote what has become known in the schools of the Christian Brothers as the 'Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher.' Brother Andre Mottais, the acknowledged leader of the brothers of Saint Joseph, had been sent for training to the de La Salle Brothers by Father Dujarie. I have no doubt that Brother Andre brought all of this back to the brothers of Saint Joseph, and that Father Moreau was well aware of all of this. In my research for this address I found considerable similarity between de La Salle's Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher and the nine values that Father Moreau elaborated.

Continuing in Part One Father Moreau elaborates the nine qualities that a teacher must possess to succeed in "... the difficult task of effectively educating young people." Moreau's nine values are similar to, and some coincide with, the traditional Christian moral virtues. A virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do the Good. For Father Moreau, cultivation of the values of one's own heart is a prerequisite for a successful teacher. These values of the heart, virtues, really, can be taught by instruction, but they can only be learned by example. *Cor ad Cor loquitur*. In doing with the teacher what he expects the teacher to do with the student, Father Moreau is the instructor and he is the mentor.

I am going to divide Father Moreau's nine qualities into triads: faithfulness, knowledge and zeal, vigilance, seriousness and gentleness, patience, prudence, and firmness. Going back to something that I said earlier, these nine values reflect Father Moreau's insistence on the need for personal sanctification as a basis for external apostolate. Having issued the mentor's invitation to accept the call to the vocation of teacher, he now begins his instruction.

I place the first triad of faithfulness, knowledge and zeal as a continuation of the opening statement that teaching is a vocation as well as a profession, something that one is called to and prepares for. Father Moreau places faithfulness before knowledge because



without faithfulness to the vocation teachers forget, as he states it, "... the essence of their mission." And the mission, once again, is "the development of the heart and the soul, on which good values depend." Knowledge is next and it is presented within the context of a teacher's obligation to students and to families. He is most practical here, pointing out that successful teaching requires good methods and skill in applying the methods. He is also conscious that parents expect the teacher to be prepared to teach his or her subject matter. Finally, we have zeal, which calls for teachers to go above and beyond what the profession itself might call for, to give their all for their students. It is here that Father Moreau instructs us to reach out especially "... to the poor, those who have no one else to show them preference, those who have the least knowledge, those who lack skills and talents, and those who are not Catholic or Christian." Historically this section shows a significant positive progression for the brothers of Saint Joseph from their early days under the direction of Father Dujarié. It also shows the direction in which Father Moreau was leading the new congregation with regard to the ministry of education. He had moved far beyond sending a young religious out to teach with only a letter of obedience.

I place the second triad in the context of a teacher code of conduct. Teachers are counseled to conduct themselves with vigilance, seriousness and gentleness. However, Father Moreau is attentive to the fact that any one of these can be overdone, and he is particularly attentive to young teachers who might take these to the extreme. He weaves through this section the idea that teachers act *in loco parentis*, but he cautions them not to become mother hens, nor to act like Chicken Little. His advice is sound, "... keep your vigilance within reasonable limits and don't imitate those who are always in a state of great alarm ..." I find the section on gentleness to be one of the most beautiful ones in the document. Father Moreau's snippets of instruction here speak of his belief that a teacher has a responsibility to draw out what is best in the young person in his or her charge. "Avoid judging with harshness and anger ... remove what is harsh from a command ... never inflict punishment when you are overly angry and upset." The goal of this teacher code of conduct is summed up in another sentence from the section on gentleness, "Teachers filled with meekness can show an interest and an affection for young people that will win hearts." Heart speaks to heart.

The final triad of patience, prudence and firmness is focused on classroom management and the maintenance of a school's standing in the community. Like the other two triads, Father Moreau's writing here demonstrates his personal knowledge of young people and how they act, knowledge that came from his own experience as a teacher. The challenges that he met in establishing the school at Sainte Croix in LeMans and the political realities he faced throughout his life obviously made him attentive to the fact that an educational institution is not set apart from the community in which it is established. Under the rubrics of patience and firmness, Father Moreau points out the demands that are made on teachers by their students and the difficulties students can cause teachers. He stresses that lack of patience leads to loss of control which in turn leads teachers to do things that lower their students' respect for them. Similarly he points out that lack of firmness leads to loss of order which is essential to instilling in students a love of work, of application and of good behavior, all of which are necessary conditions for success. It is under the heading of prudence that Father Moreau hits a note of contemporary resonance: "We cannot compromise our mission or hinder its progress by acting imprudently in directing our schools ... Society does not permit us the luxury of mistakes in this area." I can sum this up in terms that we often use in our advancement efforts: know your market, know your consumers, do your homework and be attentive to how each relates to your mission statement.'

In the section that follows, titled Students and Student-Teacher Relations, Father Moreau continues with his instruction. It is a rather lengthy treatise about problematic young people, delineating issues and situations that derive from family background, character flaws, and even illness. It is clear that Father Moreau is familiar with young people, understands young people, and wants what is best for young people. His introduction gives us insight into the kind of person he was: "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 work." What a wonderful way to put it: "Providence varies all of its work" Every student, no matter what his or her background, demeanor, quirks or flaws is a child of God and deserves to be known, understood and helped to achieve his or her best and ideal potential. Having given us the nine qualities — virtues — of a good teacher, Father Moreau is now showing us how we will be challenged in our day to day dealings with students. His focus is always student centered, going so far as to remind teachers of how they will have to accommodate to meet the needs, to address the concerns and to help correct the flaws of their students.

I will conclude this section with Father Moreau's own words because they sum things up succinctly and eloquently. "From what has been said, one can conclude that the teacher's mission, your 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 them into justice: 'They will shine eternally in the skies like the stars of heaven.' With the hope of this glory, we must generously complete the Lord's work."

## Conclusion

I have been asked by Brother Stephen Walsh to leave you with some questions to ponder and to discuss in our next session. I hope that these questions might lead to further defining of our common ministry as Holy Cross Educators and to ways and means of addressing the broad issues that confront us today beyond our local geography. The Holy Cross Institute was established to provide a framework for such discussion, and for creatively and collaboratively seeking and developing programs that will enhance and strengthen our legacy for the benefit of a new generation of Holy Cross students.

I frame these comments and questions around the title of Part Three of *Christian Education: Formation of Students to the Christian Life and the Means to Assure Their Perseverance*.

*How do we cultivate hearts in a world where mystery is missing?* We live in a *CSI* culture, *CSI* being one of my favorite current television shows. By a “*CSI* culture” I mean a culture in which awe has been overshadowed by certainty. Technology has given us the capacity to investigate and to find the source and, in most cases, the solution to any problem. On *CSI* there are very few mysteries that are not solved after precisely probing the angle and the trajectory of a bullet, or after having reconstructed the weapon, a beer bottle broken into hundreds of shards. Certainty eclipses mystery, and we know from the start that it will. But from a Christian perspective mystery never disappears because we are always being invited and called into the depths of God. The mystery of faith is not a problem to be solved, rather it is a depth to be probed and secrets to be shared. In late December I watched one of the year-in-review television programs presented by NBC. One of the areas that was examined was our fascination with reality television, not the staged reality television of *Big Brother* or *The Apprentice*, but the reality of watching a high speed police chase, or the all-news, all-the-time reporting of a disaster unfolding. We are anxious to know how it started, how it turns out, what is the outcome, what is the solution.

The program then focused on the school shooting tragedy that took place among the Amish community in Pennsylvania in the fall. The Amish culture got in the way of the close up, *CSI*-type reporting that we relish. Rather we were left with the mystery, and to add to the uneasiness, we had to ponder the incredibility of the Christian faith of the Amish community, their capacity to forgive. And the visual images were poignant in their simplicity. Instead of fast talking reporters trying to elicit catchy sound bites from the agitated man or woman on the street, we were confronted with saddened but peaceful Amish faces that spoke eloquently without words.


*How do we reconcile being an educator in the faith with being a 21st-century educator?* I was struck by the two documents that I quoted earlier in the address — the *Time Magazine* article and the Department of Education commission study. Both made reference to education vis-à-vis a “... global economy” and a “... knowledge economy.” The economy seems to have replaced society as the focused end for which we undertake our educational endeavors; productivity over participation, globalization being the driving forces behind it all.

In his book, *The Earth is Flat*, Thomas L. Friedman, a *New York Times* writer, makes the point that globalization has been with us for some time. He elaborates three stages of globalization and does so using computer software terminology. Globalization 1.0 began in 1492 and ended in the early 1800s. It was characterized by countries globalizing — collaborating and competing. Globalization 2.0 lasted until the late-20th century. It was characterized by companies, particularly multinationals, globalizing — collaborating and competing. Globalization 3.0 is with us now, and it is characterized by the newfound power of individuals to collaborate and to compete globally based on their knowledge of the technology that drives the economy.

In each of these globalization eras we can point to stunning successes and advancements that have taken place due to global collaboration. Likewise, we can elaborate competition that has gone awry leading to frightening failures and disasters, very often at the expense of the most vulnerable among us. The agents of Globalization 3.0 are the students in our classrooms today. I said earlier that how we educate the mind will change with the times; how we cultivate the heart is and will remain timeless. What the mind is seeking changes with the times; what the heart desires is constant. We have an obligation to develop young minds so that they will have the tools to compete strongly and to compete ethically; we have a duty to cultivate young hearts that will willingly and generously collaborate in the building of God’s kingdom here on earth.

Lastly, I present some comments for your dialogue and our future collaboration as Holy Cross Educators through The Holy Cross Institute. I comment on two tools that we currently have and utilize so very well in our Holy Cross institutions — service learning and liturgy.

Liturgy, especially Eucharistic liturgy, is the symbolic and sacramental expression of the healing of the severed relationship between God and humanity. The importance of liturgy in our educational process can be lost to many young people due to the withering



effect of our secularized society and the individualizing impact of Globalization 3.0. Yet young people, most people for that matter, will always gravitate toward some form of liturgical prayer in time of crisis and loss, and particularly at those times when the severed relationship has brought out the worst in human behavior — Columbine, Oklahoma City, and September 11th. I believe that they turn to liturgical prayer because the soul of liturgical prayer is community, the ideal place to express loss and once again begin a healing process. The communion that God desires for his creation is a reality yet to be achieved, no matter if we are experience loss or joy. It is a communion that cannot be achieved through MySpace and You Tube. The promotion of that communion is one of the fundamental building blocks in the foundation of Father Moreau’s philosophy of education. *How can we strengthen the liturgical prayer that is so central in our schools and to our efforts to cultivate hearts? How can we write it across the curriculum, as it were, so that our students truly understand the important place it has their education? How can we use this tool to help our students understand and appreciate that true communion cannot take place in cyberspace? True communion needs real space that is sacred space, whether that space is a chapel or not.*

Hand in hand with liturgy is service learning, another valuable tool that we have to cultivate the heart as we instruct. Service learning programs go well beyond the wonderful benefits they bring to the communities and to the individuals being served. Service learning is where our theoretical theology meets our lived theology; where our fundamental Christian belief that the severed relationship between God and humanity can be healed is put into practice. Service learning programs are excellent tools to do what Father Moreau encouraged us to do, to help young people to open their hearts to assent to the truths they are being taught. These programs make Father Moreau’s previously quoted words even more real for us: “Knowledge itself does not bring about positive values, but positive values do influence knowledge and put it to a good use.”

*What are our best practices in service learning? How can we write service learning across the curriculum so that our students’ experiences will open their hearts to assent to the truths they are being taught? How can we better help them to see the scientific, historical and cultural connection between what they are learning and how they served, who they served and where they served?*

I thank you for this opportunity to be with you this evening and to share these reflections with you. In this special year in which Father Moreau will be declared blessed, let us give thanks for the rich heritage that has been built on the foundation that he laid for us, and for the opportunities that we have to continue to share that heritage with the church throughout the United States and the world. May God bless all of the endeavors at each of your educational institutions, and may God especially bless the young men and women at our schools so that the positive values we instill in them will always influence the knowledge we convey to them. Thank you.