

**“CALLED BY GOD”
Faculty and Staff Formation
in the Holy Cross Educational Legacy**

*Four Themes
Developed by Joel Giallanza, CSC and Stephen V. Walsh, CSC*

EDUCATION: “ART OF ARTS”

In the introductory paragraph of *Christian Education*, Father Basil Moreau describes education as the “art of arts.” This simple description has significance for faculty and staff formation in the Holy Cross educational legacy. In its most ancient form, the term “art” means “to fit together,” its etymology assumes that various components are combined to produce something of lasting value and meaning.

A group of Holy Cross educators from schools sponsored by the South-West Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross, including school principals and province leadership, has identified four themes around which they propose to build a sequential formation program for Holy Cross educators. These themes include: building respect, educating hearts and minds, being family, and bringing hope. Beginning with “building respect” a four-year cycle will be inaugurated in the 2003–2004 school year.

For the present context, those components are the fundamental practices through which the Holy Cross educational legacy is expressed. Those practices must be modeled by faculty and staff if they are to have any impact on the lives of students, for now and for the future. Only through the living example given by faculty and staff will such practices “fit together” with the values to be transmitted to the students. If they remain but words and theories, the Holy Cross educational legacy can never reach its potential for forming and transforming people. Each of these practices is a responsibility which faculty and staff accept by their commitment to serve in a Holy Cross school.

1. BUILDING RESPECT

Holy Cross education teaches respect for personal, social, racial, ethnic, political, religious, gender, and linguistic diversity.

Respect for others is rooted in the dignity to which each human being has a right. That dignity expresses a basic truth of our creation: we reflect the image and likeness of God. In the book of Genesis it is written,

“God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.’ So God created humanity

in this image, in God's image human beings were created.” (Genesis 1:16-17)

Saint Paul echoes this from a Christian perspective. *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God...?” (1 Corinthians 6:19).*

Regarding the seriousness that must mark our work as educators, Father Moreau speaks of it as a quality of life and ministry which assists us in preserving the *“dignity of our mission, and the respect we owe to students” (Christian Education, Part I, Chap. 1, Art. 6).* The quality of our presence and the integrity of our character are the primary means for building respect.

“Do not think that it is age, size, tone of voice, or threats which give a teacher that authority and inspire the respect of the students; no, it is none of these external advantages; it is a calm, firm, moderate character, always exhibiting self-control, never acting through caprice or temper ... The influence you exercise over your students depends above all on the way you first present yourself.” (Ibid., Part I, Chap. 2, Concluding Summary)

Respect promotes the dignity and uniqueness of the individual, fosters inclusivity within the school community, nurtures diversity and accessibility, cultivates self-respect.

Never forget that all teaching lies in the best approach to the individual student and that all the successes you will find will be in direct proportion to the efforts you have made in this regard. Basil Moreau, *Excerpts from Christian Education*, p.25:

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 which you must preserve at all costs. (Ibid, p.10)

This respect is built and communicated through a variety of avenues:

- admissions policies
- in the classroom through teacher-student and student-student interaction
- extra-curricular activities which include “something for everyone”
- student support programs: personal and academic counseling, tutoring
- faculty in-service
- hiring policies
- recognition of achievements for students, faculty, and staff
- faculty in-service

- faculty, staff, and student orientation programs
- alumni mentoring programs
- informal and formal employee recognition programs

Father Moreau himself provides us with a profile of the respect which must characterize educators in the Holy Cross tradition.

“Observe strict impartiality towards all. You must guard against capricious preferences, and with even more care against antipathies. Value qualities rather than pleasantness; reward success in proportion to the efforts it has cost; give all the students the same instruction, the same care, the same attention; cultivate among them union, fight infatuation in order to prevent inconstancy and respect the feelings of young people who are extremely sensitive and easily cut to the quick.” (Christian Education, Part II, Chap. 4, Art. 1)

The Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross speak of this respect in terms of the assistance that we offer to others through our mission as educators.

“Wherever we work we assist others not only to recognize and develop their own gifts but also to discover the deepest longing in their lives.” (Mission, 16)

2. EDUCATING MINDS AND HEARTS

There is no Holy Cross educator who is unaware of the following lines from Basil Moreau;

We can state in a word the kind of teaching we hope to impart. Even though we base our philosophy course on the data of faith, no one needs fear that we shall confine our teaching within narrow and unscientific boundaries. No, we wish to accept science without prejudice, and in a manner adapted to the needs of our times. We do not want our students to be ignorant of anything they should know. To this end, we shall shrink from no sacrifice. But we shall never forget that virtue, as Bacon puts it, is the “spice, which preserves science.” We shall always place education side by side with instruction; the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart. While we prepare useful citizens for society, we shall likewise do our utmost to prepare citizens for heaven. (Letter 36)

This text from Father Moreau in 1849 expresses not only a fundamental principle within the Holy Cross educational legacy, but also the holistic approach with which that legacy has influenced and formed countless students for more than one hundred sixty five years. The very expression of his convictions admits to the inherent tensions found in schools — both then and now. There are tensions between faith and reason, between heart and mind, between education and instruction. If Moreau

were conveying the same notion to students, he would say, “Don’t let your schooling get in the way of your education.” Finally, Moreau asserts that our efforts “are adapted to the needs of the times.”

Throughout *Christian Education* Father Moreau assumes that mind and heart, together, are the primary objects of education. Negligence of either results in an incomplete and unbalanced education. Whether he is writing about vocal music and the importance of religious songs (Preface), or the quality of gentleness which marks the teacher’s approach to the students (Part I, Chap. 1, Art. 7), or introducing the students to astronomy (Part II, Chap. 4, Art. 2, No. 6), the priority remains that minds and hearts must be the teacher’s first concern. Father Moreau knew that the academic material presented to the students would be of high quality, he wrote *Christian Education* to assure that teachers would be attentive to “*the formation of the heart of students and the development of their religious sentiments*” (Preface).

Moreau’s understanding of educating minds and hearts echoes Saint Paul’s instructions to Timothy.

“Hold to the standard of sound teaching you have received in the faith and love that are in Jesus Christ. Guard the treasure of knowledge which has been entrusted to you with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives within us. Be strong, then, in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from many witnesses you must entrust and teach to faithful people. Then they will be able to teach others even as you have taught them.” (2 Timothy 1:13-14; 2:1-2)

If we take to heart what we have learned, then we can pass it on to others by word and witness, through mind and heart. In Father Moreau’s anthropology, the mind and heart are so interwoven that the growth and development of one promotes the growth and development of the other. Even more, the growth and development of each is necessary for that of the other. For Moreau education is not an either/or situation. The presentation of academic material which focuses exclusively on one is not a complete education. Focusing on the mind apart from the heart risks canonizing content without compassion for the context; it communicates a message apart from meaning; it forgets that “*society has much greater need of people of values than of scholars*” (*Christian Education, Preface*). Focusing on the heart apart from the mind risks depriving students of the basic data they need to make informed decisions; it emphasizes feeling without foundation; it forgets that our goal is to help students “*grow from day to day in knowledge and in virtue*” (*ibid., Part I, Chap. 1, Art. 2*). Focusing solely on one or the other is, ultimately, an injustice to the students.

Educating minds and hearts promotes integrity and wholeness, cultivates a sense of balance in life, encourages and teaches behaviors that reflect values which can have a transforming influence on the world.

This caliber of education is transmitted through various channels:

- academic integrity
- classroom environment and management
- discipline codes and behavior
- extra-curricular activities
- admission and hiring policies

The balance of heart and mind is reflected in the current practice found in all Holy Cross schools of providing for student retreats and personal and academic counseling during the regular school day. There is also evidenced an appropriate emphasis and mutual regards exercised between athletics and academics. It is an awareness that student services and extra curriculars are as formative as sitting in a classroom. As one Holy Cross educator has written:

*To be true to our calling as compleat Holy Cross educators
we cannot excuse ourselves
from matters of the heart.
The heart does not know the Pythagorean theorem,
the parts of speech, or plant phyla.
The heart knows love and its loss,
craves compassion, and responds to hospitality.
The heart struggles with ambiguity,
weighs choices, and considers consequences.
The heart given space
learns to risk once it finds courage and hope.
In the stillness of listening
it is the heart that hears the gentle breeze.*

In part, Basil Moreau was reacting to the prevalent Rationalism of his day. One of the shortcomings Moreau finds with Rationalism was that it dismisses empirical knowledge. Empirical knowledge comes from observation, experimentation or practical experience rather than theory. Thus, he writes:

*“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.”*

Reflecting on these lines, a Holy Cross educator observes,

*“Considering the knowledge based standardized test items, it is ironic how
poorly this prepares students for today’s workplace. There the standards of
integrity, loyalty, quality, consequences are less and less clear. Moreover,
this world increasingly rewards resourcefulness and flexibility rather than
discrete kinds of knowledge. In a fragmented world, the best source for*

nurturing and sustaining these qualities is the wellspring of inner wholeness. Otherwise, it would be easy to lose our way, the purpose and meaning of our actions, and their impact on others.”

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

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

Educating minds and hearts and building respect are interdependent. By respecting the diversity of students we serve, we educate their minds and hearts to recognize and respect that same diversity in others. Father Moreau instructs us,

“You would be greatly mistaken if you imagined that all your students are alike in character and in conduct. Nothing is more varied than the works of Providence; and if it is true that two plants of the same family have, with their points of resemblance, differences more or less apparent and notable, it is no less true that in this gathering of students which is confided to you, there are no two who have the same mind and the same heart, or an exact resemblance ... Conduct yourself with each one in the fashion most appropriate for that type of mind. Never forget that all the science of teaching is there, that all the success you will obtain will be in direct proportion to the efforts that you will have made to form your students.”
(*Christian Education, Part I, Chap. 2*)

The Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross note that “*for the kingdom to come in this world, disciples must have the competence to see and the courage to act*” (*Mission, 14*). Unless we educate the mind, we will not have the competence necessary to see the many realities in our world yet need to be transformed. Unless we educate the heart, we will never have the courage to act in support of that transformation. Education in the Holy Cross tradition demands both.

3. BEING FAMILY

Holy Cross education nurtures an environment of collaboration, supported by a family spirit which touches and includes everyone associated with the school.

Among Father Moreau's favorite images for Holy Cross is family. His understanding of this family included the religious of Holy Cross as well as all those involved in continuing the mission. The mission would not be accomplished by one person alone; Jesus is the model in this. In Saint Mark's gospel, as his ministry expands and becomes more involved, Jesus "*called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him and to be sent out to proclaim the message*" (Mark 3:13-14). This constitutes the very function of apostles — to be with the Lord and to continue the mission. The two are inseparable. It is as family that we implement the Holy Cross educational mission, it is as family that we form the students, it is as family that we can transform society.

Maintaining family assumes unity among the members. Jesus' prayer shortly before his death focuses precisely on this reality. He prays to God that his followers will be protected.

"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that 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 have loved me. (John 17:20-23)

The goal of the unity for which Jesus prays is personal and global transformation; that "they may become completely one, so the world may know..."

This prayer for unity was among Moreau's favorite gospel texts. He refers to the transformative character of unity in a letter written to the members of Holy Cross and their co-workers.

"Let us be 'one,' just as our Lord Jesus Christ asked this unity for us of his Father. It is only on this condition that God will give us strength; this strength which flows from charity, mutual harmony, oneness of wills, and the mild bonds of the heart. From this there arises a twofold power, without which we can do absolutely nothing for the salvation of others: power before God, who is the source of union, and power before the people, whom it captivates, because it is the effect of grace and consequently of supernatural help ... No matter what the cost, let us remain united." (Letter 153)

Unity is cultivated through that respect which must characterize our interactions with one another and recognize the gifts of each person. Saint Paul teaches that diverse

gifts are given for the good of all.

“There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-7).

Father Moreau follows this same principle when addressing the diversity among us.

“Notwithstanding differences of temperament and talent, the inequality of means, and the 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 which tends toward that more perfect union of hearts which constitutes its bond and strength.” (Letter 14)

Being family fosters compassion and love, recognizes the giftedness of each individual, offers support through healthy relationships and generous service to one another, accepts others without judgment, cultivates a hospitable environment.

Family spirit is evident in several ways:

- quality of communication within the school community
- praying and playing and celebrating together as a school community
- caliber and content of the orientation given to students, faculty and staff
- reaching out to families, welcoming and hosting others

The Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross challenges us to be *“educators in the faith to those whose lot we share, supporting men and women of grace and goodwill everywhere in their efforts to form communities of the coming kingdom.” (Mission, 12)*

4. BRINGING HOPE

Inevitably, somewhere on our various school seals one finds the cross and double anchors taken from the seal of Congregation of Holy Cross that sponsors the school. The anchor is the Christian symbol for hope and with the cross aptly illustrates the Congregation’s motto: ***Crux Spes Unica: The Cross our only hope.*** It is taken from *Vexilla Regis Prodeunt*, an ancient liturgical hymn sung at vespers on feasts celebrating the cross and during Passiontide. The hymn proclaims, *“Hail, O Cross, our only hope.” [O Crux, ave, spes unica.]*

The hope of a Holy Cross educator is of sterner stuff than the preferred dictionary definition of hope suggests: to wish for something with expectation of its fulfillment.

To understand Christian hope we must turn to the second entry which is referred to as the archaic definition: to have confidence, trust. Confidence comes from the Latin *con+fides* literally "with faith." The Christian anchor of hope is about trust not

wishing.

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

Paul VI eloquently speaks of hope in relationship to mission

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

*Nevertheless this always remains insufficient, because even the finest witness will prove ineffective in the long run if it is not explained, justified what Peter called always having "your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have" and made explicit by a clear and unequivocal proclamation of the Lord Jesus. (Pope Paul VI, *On Evangelization in the Modern World*, December 8, 1975. United States Catholic Conference, Washington, DC, pp. 17-18)*

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

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

Faith is solid and Hope is malleable
[And by extension Charity is action.]
Hope is the middle child of the virtues:
there by well suited for the in between times.

Hope is the testing and processing of

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

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

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

Hope looks forward and Isaiah's message is compelling:

"Do not hang on to the events of the past or keep thinking about what happened long ago. Watch, instead, for the new thing I am going to do. It's happening already, you can see it now!" (Isaiah 43:18-19)

We won't watch for anything new and we can't see anything new if we don't believe there is a future worth hoping for. We live in a world that needs the witness of those who hope, of those who are convinced there is a future, of those who believe that the world can be transformed person by person. The students we serve will confront that same world as they develop and mature. What we do now in building respect, educating minds and hearts, and being family will determine whether they will bring hope to all those they encounter.

In one parable, Jesus speaks about a person who finds a treasure hidden in a field. In light of that discovery, the person sells all personal belongings to purchase the field and so possess the treasure (see Matthew 13:44-46). The person acts with hope, confident of a brighter future. Hope is a treasure we bring, we stake our future on that hope because we are convinced that continuing the mission of education is worth our time, energy, and talent, because we are convinced that we can make a difference.

Father Moreau's sense of hope is closely related to his conviction that God is intimately involved in our lives, present and active through what we do. In whatever difficulties he encountered --and there were many throughout his administration — Moreau insists, "*I have never lost hope in Providence or in your fidelity to the sublime vocation which God has given you*" (*Letter 14*). His hope rests firmly upon God's fidelity to us and our fidelity to the mission we have received. He reiterates this throughout his writings; it is a fundamental aspect of his spirituality.

Bringing hope engages us in service to others, calls us to think globally and act locally, urges us to an active citizenship and compassionate responsibility, gives us an awareness of the internationality of our mission and of our links to others around the world who share this mission.

Hope, like faith, is real to the extent that it is put into action. Saint James writes that "*faith without works is dead*" (*James 2:26*); the same can be said of hope. In the Holy Cross educational legacy, we bring hope through:

- service projects and immersion programs
- networking with other schools associated with Holy Cross
- various outreach programs
- mission drives and other activities which highlight the broader context — initiatives which celebrate the international dimension of Holy Cross mission

The Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross are uncompromising. "*We must be men with hope to bring*" (*The Cross, Our Hope, 118*). We must be women and men who bring hope, who speak and live hope, who teach hope to our world. We must be all this precisely because "*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*" (*ibid.*). This is good news. This is cause for hope.

"CALLED BY GOD"

Education in the Holy Cross tradition, this "art of arts," is more than any collection of talents and skills, however extensive. It is, essentially, a vocation. Moreau asks,

"If it is true that it is necessary to be called by God to a state of life in order to fulfill properly its obligations, because God alone prepares the means necessary in order to acquit oneself of them successfully, is it not evident that one must be destined by Providence to the functions of a teacher in order to exercise them worthily?" (*Christian Education, Part I, Chap. 1, Art. 1*)

Functioning as worthy educators in the tradition of Holy Cross compels all of us to build respect among the students, faculty and staff, and within the entire school community. It calls us to educate minds and hearts, for they hold the potential to transform our world. Teaching in the Holy Cross tradition urges us to be family as a

message and a model of unity among all people. It demands that we bring hope into all situations, as people of hope, as people who are convinced that we are responsible for creating the future. Father Moreau tells us that “*in order to instruct successfully, it is necessary to know what you should teach, and the way to do it*” (*ibid.*, Part II, Chap. 4, Art. 2). Respect, the whole person, family, and hope are the basic components for this “art of arts;” they constitute what we should teach as well as the way we should teach it. We are called to do this.

Father Moreau says, “*I have the firm confidence that God will bless our educational program since God is giving us the means to realize it*” (*Letter*, 36). Such confidence is also ours in this adventure known as the Holy Cross educational legacy, for we have been “called by God.”