

Holy Cross Educators: A Spiritual Legacy

Bernard LaFrenière, CSC

The Congregation of Holy Cross was born in troubled times, in the aftermath of the French Revolution and at the end of the costly wars of Napoleon. Everything was in ruins, particularly education in rural areas and the care of the sick.

It was a time when many new religious communities were founded to answer very specific needs. In the diocese of Le Mans,¹ Pastor James Francis Dujarié started with a community of women in 1806. In their early constitutions we read, "The tender and compassionate soul of the good pastor was pained to see that a number of his parishioners, residing far from the town, were deprived of means to educate their children and that the poor who fell sick found themselves without even the most elementary assistance."²

Dujarié's View of Education

Dujarié' first words to his parishioners sounded like a very fine mission statement printed on an ordination card. He said, "I am a priest to be the consolation of widows, the father of orphans, the support of the poor, and the friend of the suffering."³

His view of education was that of Jesus Christ: he wanted people to realize the needs of others, and by answering them, to reveal the signs of God's Kingdom.

What are the signs of his Kingdom today?

Here we find Jesus, the Educator. On his very first day of teaching he said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord."⁴

In Luke 7, John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus answered, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good

¹ The diocese of Le Mans is located on the north side of the River Loire, between Paris and Brittany. Before the French Revolution of 1789-1799, Le Mans was also the capital of the Province of Maine.

² Quoted by Father Basil Moreau in his *Notice on the life and Works of Father James F. Dujarié*. It is found at the outset of his Circular Letters

³ Quoted by Father Moreau in the same *Notice*.

⁴ 1 Luke 4: 18-19.

news proclaimed to them."⁵

Much in the same way, Father Dujarié's view of education was to make the signs of the Kingdom visible today. It was to bring people to answer the needs of others, as a sign that the Reign of God is close at hand. Do we favor his Reign? What signs of his Reign do we reveal? Father Dujarié's Sisters of Providence developed well just doing that: they educated children and visited the sick. Young women flocked around him because they knew it was at the very core of the gospel message.

When Pastor Dujarié was 53 years old, the Bishop of Le Mans and the local clergy asked him to set up a community of men to teach the boys. He did. Now, this community had its ups and downs due to the many crises that took place in society.

Just as a reminder, Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815, and the latter died as a prisoner on St. Helen's Island in 1821. Dujarié's Brothers were founded in 1820 and developed quickly. But there were several outbursts of violence against the Church, especially in 1830, in what was called the July Revolution. Then the Brothers dispersed, and due to an ensuing lack of communication, only 12 came back to attend the annual retreat. One of their friends, a diocesan priest from Le Mans, Father Basil Moreau, welcomed them. Together they wrote and signed a pact of fidelity, promising to stay together whatever the situation.

A lot of faith and courage was needed to remain a Catholic educator in these perilous years. Indeed, when Dujarié himself was ordained a priest in 1795, he did not even mention it to his own parents for security reasons: had any revolutionist found out, he could have been sentenced to the guillotine. In fact he suffered all his life from rheumatism he caught during the long, cold nights of hiding in attics, stables and barns.

Fifteen years after the foundation, Father Basil Moreau was chosen to succeed Dujarié and to take charge of his community. He was 36 years old while the aging Founder could no longer act as superior, due to illness.

Moreau welcomed the Brothers' community as a heritage and eventually they merged with the Auxiliary Priests, a society he had founded two years earlier to preach in rural areas. The new community thus became the Association of Holy Cross in 1837, Holy Cross — Sainte Croix — being a suburb of the city of Le Mans.⁶

Four years later, Father Moreau completed his original plan by adding a branch of

⁵ Luke 7: 19,22.

⁶ At that time, Sainte Croix was mostly an open field, "la Commune de Sainte Croix" as it was called, where people living in the city could bring their cows to a "common" pastureland.

women to this community. Then the Association of Holy Cross became the Congregation of Holy Cross. It consisted of men and women, clergy and lay people, sisters, brothers, and priests directed by the same superior and sharing the same budget.

Moreau's Background

Basil Moreau was an educator. After studying and being ordained a priest in Le Mans at the age of 22, he was sent to study two more years with the Sulpicians in Paris. There he met wonderful people, among whom one priest who became his spiritual director for many years, Father Gabriel Mollevaut.

Coming back to Le Mans, he spent 13 years as a teacher. He taught philosophy in the Minor Seminary of Tesse for two years before moving to St. Vincent's Major Seminary in Le Mans. There he was a professor of dogmatic theology for five years, and then taught Holy Scripture until his departure from the Seminary in 1836.

Therefore, he spent twenty years of his life as a student and as a teacher in houses of education before he founded the Association, and then the Congregation of Holy Cross. Students loved him, as he certainly was a wonderful educator.

For instance, his biographer Canon Catta wrote, "Recognizing the demands of science on the modern world and the necessity of taking its conclusions into account even in the study of the sacred sciences, Mr. Moreau conceived the genuinely new idea of acquainting his students with developments in the scientific world. He was responsible for the inauguration of a course in physics at St. Vincent's." ⁷

His point in broadening the minds of his students was not only to train them for the priesthood, but particularly to prepare them to be teachers later on. In order to achieve this, he called upon a layman, an encyclopedic celebrity in that region, Mr. Thomas Cauvin. In spite of the turmoil of the Revolution, this layman had retained his Christian outlook and his readiness to participate in all charitable works.

Catta wrote, "Possessed of unusual intellectual gifts, his erudition was in harmony with the spirit of those universal academies, one of which existed at Le Mans, with him as its moving spirit. He had no difficulty in interesting the seminarians in flowers and grasses as an added attraction on their regular walks." ⁸

Basil Moreau's students also observed how well he prepared his courses, what a

⁷ Canon Etienne Catta and Tony Catta, *Basil Anthony Mary Moreau*. Translation by Rev. Edward L. Heston, C.S.C., Bruce Publishing, Milwaukee. 1955. Vol. I, page 103.

⁸ Mgr. Sebeaux, *Vie de Mgr Bouvier*, page 38. See Catta, vol. 1, page 104.

wealth of personal thought he contributed to them, and what concern he had "to keep abreast of works of spirituality, whether they were new volumes or only new editions of previously published works."⁹

No wonder Moreau gathered around him, at the time of the foundation of Holy Cross, some of his finest students. Right from the beginning, Holy Cross attracted talented, bright young people, who gave his community a special touch of quality and openness.

Holy Cross Brothers — or St. Joseph's Brothers as they were called at that time — were also teachers. When they merged with the Auxiliary Priests, the latter went on preaching parochial retreats, but they also entered the field of education, that of the Brothers. In 1838, Moreau founded the Institution of Notre Dame of Holy *Cross-Notre Dame* meaning, of course, Our Lady of that place: Sainte Croix. It opened its doors on October 10, 1838.

At this point, one could ask, "What was special about this Our Lady of Holy Cross High School and College in Le Mans?"

Moreau's View of Education

One of Father Moreau's basic ideas was to not only teach the regular course of academic studies, but more specifically to open the students' hearts and minds to broader human and Christian values. The College thus was not only to train scholars, or people competent in their own field. The idea was to prepare full-fledged citizens, people who would later take their place in society. His purpose was to train the complete person: human and Christian.

In other words, it was paramount in his view to prepare young people in such a way that, when they entered society, they would not be inferior to anyone. Their hearts and their minds would be open to every dimension of life — musical, social, intellectual, cultural — that they may grow as fully developed human beings, capable to uphold Christian values.

In those days, after the French Revolution, religious education was one of the most basic needs of society. Holy Cross students were indeed given a solid Christian formation. But Moreau also wanted to secure for them a very broad human formation. For instance, he brought his young students to take part regularly in civil activities, at least with their choir and their marching band. This was rather special at that time.

Very early on therefore, the students were exposed to the public and to their society. At the same time, the local people could see and appreciate the college and its students for who they were.

⁹ Cf. Philéas Vanier, C.S.C., *Recueil documentaire*, pp. 106, 108, 131. 144, 149, etc. Quoted by Catta, vol. 1, page 103

This kind of education was beneficial on three counts: for the awakening of the local people through the performing arts, for the good reputation of the institution in its milieu, as well as for the students themselves, who learned that the way they performed and behaved made a difference.

Involving Lay People

In all this, Moreau was very much aware that he could not find, within the Holy Cross membership, educators already prepared for everything. Therefore, he called upon lay people. That is found in his circular letters. Among others, he called upon a natural science teacher, who finally donated all his books and collections to the laboratory of Le Mans. The presence of a dedicated scientist was another way of awakening the minds and the hearts of the students, while broadening their views.

In all his endeavors in fact, Moreau knew how to associate with a number of wonderful lay people in order to achieve purposes that he knew he could not attain by himself.

Among them, let me mention Leon Dupont, the Holy Man of Tours, whose cause for beatification is now in progress in Rome. He is the one with whom Moreau prepared their departure of the first Holy Cross missionaries for the United States and Canada. This man had a good relationship with the shop owners in Le Havre, and negotiated the conditions of the crossing, going himself to install Father Edward Sorin and his companions in that part of the steerage that was reserved for them. Dupont remained a great friend of Father Moreau all his life.¹⁰

We mentioned the Cauvin couple. A man of science, Cauvin was the one who helped with the organization of scientific studies at Our Lady of Holy Cross College, while his wife was very active with the Association of St. Joseph. Our idea of Holy Cross associates comes from that time. Among other things, the Associates prayed for the success of Holy Cross endeavors and contributed to fundraising.

Baron Pasquier is the one “whose high credit with the civil authorities contributed to the success of the steps that Father Moreau took in view of the recognition of the Holy Cross Boarding School as a ‘fully accredited’ college. Speaking of him in his Circular Letter 20, on the occasion of the interventions to which he had subscribed in favor of the mission of Holy Cross, Father Moreau wrote, “Mr. Jules Pasquier, whom I regard as a father of our congregation.”¹¹

“Academy” of Holy Cross Meetings

Still with the purpose of forming complete human beings, Moreau invited to his

¹⁰ See Graziella Lalonde, C.S.C., *Like a Mighty Tree*. Fides. Montreal. 1989. Page 65.

¹¹ In the same book, page 66.

Notre Dame of Holy Cross College in Le Mans a number of Christian individuals, who were well in view and much involved in society. Among them, Earl Montalembert, head of the Catholic Party in Paris, who represented Liberal Catholicism in France. In April 1849, Moreau invited him to come to address the students during an Academy of Holy Cross meeting.¹² He wanted them to be exposed to this wonderful human being, to his ideas and means of action.

Much in the same way and still to broaden the scope of the students, Moreau invited Frédéric Ozanam, the founder of the St. Vincent de Paul Societies devoted to helping the poor. Ozanam traveled to Le Mans and addressed the students. One must understand that this was an experience the students remembered. As you know, Ozanam was beatified by John Paul II in Paris, on August 22, 1997.

Moreau also invited Louis Veillot, a prominent Christian journalist from Paris, to come and share his views of society with the Holy Cross students in Le Mans.

That to him was paramount. The point was to stimulate the students' imagination by exposing them to the trends of issues and thoughts then debated in France. Afterwards, in literary and academic circles, the students were called to express their own views, and even to compete with students from other institutions on these same issues.

Father Moreau was happy that award winners were most oftentimes students from the institutions of Our Lady of Holy Cross, Notre Dame de Sainte Croix College in Le Mans. It gave the students — who otherwise would have remained very simple countrymen all their lives — a sense of pride and achievement. They now knew that they could move well beyond their daily, limited horizons; that they could roll up their sleeves and make a difference in their personal lives as well as in their society. More specifically, they became aware of the needs of the time, and of their ability to bring about changes.

During the summer, Holy Cross students went to visit the slums to help the poor. This was another way of broadening their hearts and minds. They began by sharing their knowledge and teaching catechism, thereby answering a fundamental need in society. But they also went to do the house cleaning in the homes of the underprivileged and of the sick. All this action originated from the College and the special concern for the actual needs of the French society.

Preference for the Poor

We are all aware, I believe, that initially, Father Moreau had chosen three mission fields for the Congregation of Holy Cross: parish ministry, the youth and foreign missions. But as it was pointed out, "It was Father Moreau's wish that, as followers of Christ, the members of Holy Cross give preference to the service of the poor in all their apostolates. He willingly sent its members to areas where the

¹² On the Academy of Holy Cross meetings, see Catta, Vol. I, page 643.

needs were the greatest, and resources few: “to the humblest and most neglected of country parishes, to the young who were deprived of a Christian education, and to the emerging Churches abroad where the laborers were few in number.”¹³

In the same way, Father Moreau wanted the students from his college in Le Mans to visit the poor and to help them so as to be aware of their situation and needs. It was a most important part of their training. Holy Cross students also helped people after a disaster.

Now, all that we said about the Institution of Holy Cross in Le Mans was later found at Holy Cross College of Neuilly, in Paris,¹⁴ as well as in the United States and Canada.

Preferential Option for the Poor?

At this point one could ask, "Did Father Moreau, in his education projects, have a *preferential option for the poor*?"

I came to reflect on this from another perspective. For several years, I was in charge of the cause for beatification of Brother André, the founder of St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal.

When he was declared Blessed in 1982, the "preferential option for the poor" was in the process of becoming a major trend not only in Latin America, but throughout Christianity. Having studied Brother André's life in some depth, I was a bit troubled by those who insisted on André's own "preferential option for the poor," even "taking side with the poor against the rich." For some reason, that did not quite reflect his view of ministry, or at least my understanding thereof.

Our constitutions written four years later stated, "As disciples of Jesus we stand side by side with all people. Like them we are burdened by the same struggles and beset by the same weaknesses..."¹⁵

Obviously, the words themselves — "preferential option for the poor" — were coined only long after André died. The expression was unknown to him, as it was to Father Moreau and to other members of Holy Cross in their time. But the fact that Jesus had a special affection for the sick and the outcast was very clear in his mind.

Later, we started to change the "preferential option for the poor" into a "preferential option for the excluded." This sounded a bit more accurate.

¹³ See Graziella Lalonde, C.S.C., *Like a Mighty Tree*. Fides. Montréal. 1989. Page 89.

¹⁴ St. Mary's College of Neuilly, Paris, became Holy Cross College in 1857. "St. Mary's College, said the prospectus, is situated in a magnificent locality, with spacious and shady yards, between the Champs-Elisées and the Bois de Boulogne." Quoted by Catta, vol. 2, page 266.

¹⁵ Constitution 2. § 12.

Zacchaeus, for instance, was definitely not poor. But he was excluded for the fact that he was a collaborator of the Romans. Far from being poor, he became a wealthy man, according to the gospel. So, Jesus had to explain, "*The Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost.*"¹⁶ At this point, in the words of Jesus himself, his preferential option was for the lost ones, and not for the poor alone.

The apostles James and John were not poor: their father Zebedee had a few employees and at least a few boats to drag their nets.

Matthew was not poor as it seems: he too was an active tax collector.

Mary Magdalene was not poor: at least she was not introduced as such by Saint Luke, who seemed to point to the opposite. Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, was not poor either: she seemed to be among the wealthiest women in the kingdom.

So, along with many others, according to Saint Luke, she could provide for Jesus and his disciples out of her possessions. Therefore, Jesus did not associate specifically with the poor.

In addition to their belongings, some of the friends of Jesus were not without influence. In John's Gospel, it is mentioned twice that the son of Zebedee was known personally to the High Priest.¹⁷ All he had to do to enter the High Priest's Palace in Jerusalem was to wave at the maid, who also knew him. Then, he could invite his friend Peter to enter as well.

So, as I went on reflecting on Brother André's approach to ministry, especially his ministry to the poor and the sick, I made up the following story to see how far one could eventually distance oneself from the Gospel. It begins with chapter eight of Saint Luke, verses one to three:

Jesus and the Wealthy Woman

"At that time, Jesus journeyed from one town and village to another, preaching and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God. Accompanying him were the Twelve and some women who had been cured ... Mary, called Magdalene ... Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their resources."

So far, this is quoted from the *New American Bible*. Now, the rest of the story is mine.

Jesus looked up at Joanna and said to her, "You know that I'm now on my way to preach the Good News to the poor." She said, "Yes."

¹⁶ Luke 19: 1-10.

¹⁷ John 18, 15 and 16.

Then he added, "You know, Joanna, you're among the wealthiest women in the kingdom. I don't believe I can still associate with you, or else, my preferential option for the poor will never be understood. Wouldn't it be possible that you stay home for the next three or four weeks?"

How would Brother André have reacted to this? Quick minded as he was, I am sure he would not have hesitated a bit. "Jesus never said that." With his good Holy Cross background in Scripture,¹⁸ André knew the text, and how "Joanna ... and many others, provided for Jesus and his disciples out of their resources."

In fact, right from the beginning, the mission of Holy Cross to the poor needed the support of wealthier and generous people. Father Moreau needed the wealthy. He needed benefactors and collected money from "Associates" in order to build and support Our Lady of Holy Cross — *Notre Dame de Sainte Croix* — in Le Mans, as well as the College of Holy Cross of Neuilly, in Paris. Léocadie Gascoin, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, also needed help to support the Marianites who could no longer stay at Our Lady of Holy Cross College after the building was auctioned off in 1869.

Father Sorin needed the wealthy to build and support the University of Notre Dame. In doing so, he too served the poor: he made education more widely available.

Much in the same way, Brother André had friends among the wealthy. He needed benefactors and collected from them in order to build and support St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal. If he meant to be of any service to the poor, he knew he needed their generosity, and in fact, they drove him each day in their cars, free of charge, to visit the sick. Such was a well-established Holy Cross tradition in France, in the United States, as well as in Canada.

In other words, more than in any ideology, Brother André, as a Brother of Holy Cross, was rooted in the Word of God, because this had been his formation program in the novitiate. He certainly did not take the side of the poor against the rich, because that was not found in the Holy Cross heritage. He did not live with the poor, although he had a preference for them and visited them in their homes.

Today, we speak about liberation theology. Father Moreau talked about a resurrection theology. Graziella Lalande, a Canadian Holy Cross Sister and historian, finds it interesting to point out that, when Father Moreau updated his *Christian Pedagogy*¹⁹ (1856-1858), he presented therein education as a work of resurrection.

¹⁸ As a part of their training in the novitiate, Holy Cross Brothers who had no or little schooling were to learn by heart chapters 5, 6 and 7 of Saint Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount. André did it easily. Then he went on learning the parables and all four narratives of the Passion. Indeed, he knew more of the gospel by heart than many a priest. This also shows how every Holy Cross member was to be an educator in his or her own way.

¹⁹ See Graziella Lalande, C.S.C., *Like a Mighty Tree*. Fides. Montreal. 1989. Page 91.

At the same time, he offered for meditation, within the framework of his *Exercises of Saint Ignatius* (1855 -1858) the resurrection of Jesus as the foundation for liberation and Christian freedom. To the educators in Holy Cross, he issued an invitation to contemplate the divine mystery: "The Resurrection of Jesus," he wrote, " is the model of the new life that a rlarianite --a Holy Cross Sister-- should live after her novitiate or profession."²⁰

As a Scripture teacher, in his book on *Christian Pedagogy*, Moreau refers to this as a work of resurrection. Graziella Lalande calls Father Moreau "an artisan of renewal and a deviner of life" — you know, these people who look for water springs and wells underground. She writes, "To regenerate society in order to prepare better times for the world that is ours."²¹ 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,²² men conformable to Jesus Christ,²³ persons set free from ignorance and disorder, because Moreau is certain that the knowledge and experience of Jesus Christ are factors of regeneration, liberation, and of growth in justice and honesty."²⁴

This is certainly at the heart of Father Moreau's ideas on Catholic education: one way of liberating people by bringing them to the fullness of a new life in resurrection.

"Once Jesus is known and loved in the world," he wrote in one of his sermons, "everything will be renewed. The light of his Gospel will scatter the darkness of the times; his doctrine will regulate the mores and justice will reign."²⁵

Holy Cross in Canada

Now, before we end, let me reflect on what Holy Cross schools have achieved and represent in my homeland of Quebec, Canada. You may recognize the same tradition.

Canada is one place where Holy Cross came as Father Moreau had wanted it: sisters, brothers and priests together, and for ten years they depended on each other while they lived on the same budget according to the original plan.

The average age of the four sisters and eight brothers was 20 years. The oldest brother was 29, and he came with his sibling, the youngest sister, who was 18. The oldest of the sisters, Aglae Morineau de la Chaptais, belonged to the French peasant nobility, like Father Edward Sorin de la Gaulterie. These people were used to setting standards and to guiding people. She certainly had a good

²⁰ Basile Moreau, *Exercices de Saint Ignace*, page 317.

²¹ Basile Moreau, Circular Letter 1.

²² Basile Moreau, Circular Letters 26, 42

²³ Basile Moreau, *Pédagogie Chrétienne*, pp. 99, 102, 123, etc.

²⁴ See Graziella Lalande, C.S.C., *Like a Mighty Tree*. Fides. Montreal. 1989. Page 90.

²⁵ Basile Moreau, *Sermons publiés par ordre du chapitre général...* 1920. Page 445.

influence on the first group.

In fact, the first superior, Father Vérité, may well have been a holy man but he was a bit weak. Yet, he soon understood that they could work together and that things would go well. Aglae gave a good impetus to Holy Cross at the beginning. She was replaced two years later by the Foundress in France, Léocadie Gascoin — Mother Mary of the Seven Dolours — who spent 14 years in Canada.

As far as the political situation goes, Holy Cross came to Canada in troubled times, when a lot of healing was needed. A movement of Canadian Patriots rose against England in what is now Ontario. Their province was then called Upper Canada, up the Saint Lawrence River. Then the upheaval spread to Quebec and British Army General Colborne went far beyond his duty: he really crushed the French Canadians. He was called back to England afterwards, but he had set Catholic churches ablaze with people inside. French-speaking Patriots were hanged in 1838, and then in January and February 1839, to affirm the British power over the local people. It caused profound and long lasting cultural wounds in the country.

Then, Queen Victoria and the Parliament in London decided that the Empire needed no further war of religion and language: Let the French-speaking practice their own religion and speak their own language. A Canadian law that submitted education to the Anglican bishop of Quebec was then overturned by London. This is when Bishop Ignace Bourget went looking for teachers from France to help rebuild a Catholic school system. Meanwhile, three generations had been deprived of education and 90 percent of men did not even know how to sign their own names.

Holy Cross Education

The first Holy Cross men were given a stone house, built in the 1700s, which was to be their school. It is still in existence today. There was a shed next to it, and so they built anew addition in between.

Very early on, the first boys' school was much appreciated by the local people, as well as the young sisters' schools. Here we must say that, when the religious women of Holy Cross came, they were four. Three years later, we find 50 of them.

The local people loved this community and felt like entering the movement. Young men and women who wanted to teach found with them a support, a good formation, and a sure direction. That enabled them not only to feel useful, but to perform a much appreciated service.

The boys' school had to be enlarged a few times, then they built another house across the street. It eventually became Saint Laurent College.

The sisters had to triple the size of their house after two years. Once more, many entered the community. So, they founded some new schools. The first year, they went to Saint-Martin; then to Sainte-Scholastique and to Ontario, in Alexandria, for Scottish families who had to leave their country because of persecutions. The brothers always moved to these new locations with the sisters. Collaboration was the rule.

The sisters opened teachers' schools to prepare teachers, who in turn, founded some more schools. There was a lot of enthusiasm, because, right from the start, the reputation of all these schools was excellent.

Boarding students came to St. Laurent from the Province of Ontario as well as from the East coast. Many came from the New England States. So, it had to be a bilingual school, and everyone was to speak English during the recreation that followed the noon meal. This situation lasted as long as it was needed, until 1920, when English-speaking Catholics had their own school system.

The first purpose of the Holy Cross schools was to teach young people trades and commerce. It was to help the French-speaking people to enter a new type of society as it was emerging then, in the middle of the 19th century.

As for the sisters, during the second year, they bought a piano. I find that fascinating. These poor women, who did not even have a winter coat bought a piano, because music is a part of culture, it is a part of education, and by this means, they wanted to give a local population a taste for what is beautiful, what is valuable, what is agreeable in life.

They did all this with very little means, and yet, they held on to fine values. They did it so well that people admired their institutions; their reputation kept increasing so that they had to build, and to enlarge, year after year.

We could say that Holy Cross educators saw fostering culture, theatre, music and the arts, as a part their mission to education. They liked to do things well. Just like at Neuilly and in Le Mans, there were academic circles, literary groups, theatrical plays and music performances in the evenings. One could feel the enthusiasm of people saying, "Well, maybe we can do a little better! We may look into some of the great traditions, the classical plays. We can put all this into full light. It is good for the students. It is good to awaken their imagination, their mind, their intelligence, and their hearts."

This is how they formed the complete person: human and Christian, in the Holy Cross tradition.

Indeed, culture is not only a few folk songs, a dance with a flag, or a kilt, or a Lederhose from some old European country. Culture is one way of looking at things, of discovering in this world what is beautiful, what is significant and

valuable, what makes us grow, what develops our intelligence and our generosity, what gives people their place in life and in society.

I'm thinking about all that was done for young women by the Sisters of Holy Cross by training teachers. Soon they founded Basil Moreau College in St. Laurent, which provided the full cycle of humanities, the complete course then called liberal arts, to young women who, today, have taken their place in society and have considerable influence.

Culture means a vision of life, an awakening to our reality as human beings and Christians in this world. What is the universe in which we live all about? What's beautiful in it? Can we name these things? Can we talk about them? Can we bring them into full light?

I believe that, in this, Holy Cross has done the work of real pioneers: it was and it still is very much appreciated for it.