

Holy Cross Mission Theme:

# *Educating Hearts and Minds*

**“Education is the art of helping young people to completeness.”**

*Christian Education, Blessed Basil Moreau*

Unlike the founders of some other congregations, Father Moreau did not employ only religious to teach in his schools. He simply went out and found the best educators; and since 1837, lay and vowed men and women have worked side by side in Holy Cross institutions. This holistic approach dovetails with his educational philosophy. He believed by educating minds and hearts we could change a person’s life and thereby change society.

Looking back at Moreau, we might say he “thought outside the box.” Yet he not only envisioned an alternative form of education, he nurtured the kind of communities where it could flourish. Science, music, and fencing were not subjects normally taught in his day, especially to needy children. Yet his radical model of student-centered education treated each student just as Jesus treated each individual He met: with respect for their uniqueness and a willingness to step beyond the business He had planned. “Mission in the image of Jesus,” says Father Thomas W. Smith, CSC, “is love thrusting outward, breaking down the barriers of narrowness, comfort, and prejudice that live within each of us.” (*Basil Moreau: Spirituality of Mission*)

Moreau’s pioneering vision is a call to action. By remaining flexible, we know when to step away from our lesson plans and tend to a student who needs our attention. By turning judgment into compassion, we live out of our hearts and liberate understanding from intellect alone. By embodying our faith, we demonstrate how to face the ambiguities of life with spiritual courage. If we do all this, our work as Holy Cross educators will reflect the ancient meaning of the term, “art”, *to fit together*, by integrating learning and fostering wholeness in our students and ourselves

Our society, like Father Moreau’s, can seem chaotic and fragmented, a place where standards of integrity, loyalty, quality, and consequences are less and less clear. More than ever, we need the qualities of resourcefulness and adaptability that characterize Holy Cross, and the best source for 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.

Father Moreau realized that the formation of conscience is a long-term process, and that it cannot flourish if we divide mind and heart.

Taken with edit from: *Becoming Part of the Story*  
*The Legacy of Holy Cross Educators*

***“Believing  
mission is  
not enough.  
Teaching  
mission is  
not enough.  
We have to  
model it.”***

