

# CHOICES

FROM THE CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS OFFICE OF VOCATIONS

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## IN THIS ISSUE:

Educators in the Faith



Fr. Drew Gawrych, C.S.C., (left) and Fr. Jim Gallagher, C.S.C., (second from right) speak to several men about vocations in Holy Cross.

### The New Evangelization

Evangelization is an inherent part of the work of the Church. We have come to know of the saving power of Christ. We have come to know that it answers the great longing in our hearts. To know this is to then be compelled to share it. We cannot keep such "Good News" to ourselves.

In their witness and in their words, Blessed John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI have reminded us of this important ministry of evangelization. They have done this most especially through their call to participate in the New Evangelization, a revitalized understanding of our call to share the Gospel with all people. To nurture this great work of evangelization, we have entered into the "Year of Faith." In this year, we are offered the opportunity to look again at the beauty, wisdom and truth of our faith that we may come to a deeper appreciation of what we have, as well as a renewed sense of urgency to make it known.

The priests and brothers of Holy Cross participate in this great work of evangelization through our mission as "educators in the faith." Our work as educators does not only happen in the classroom; it permeates all that we do. This education happens in the pulpit, in dorms, in outreach to the poor and in the many other ways that we reach out in service to the people of God. In this issue of CHOICES, we offer a glimpse into some of the many ways that education and evangelization happen through our ministry.

The wonderful thing about the need for evangelization is that it is always present. There are new generations born and in need of an education in their faith. There are new students entering into our schools each year. There are those, fallen away from their faith, who need the invitation to return. There is also the work in each of our lives to continually grow in our relationship with the Lord.

If you feel that the Lord may be calling you to join in our work as Educators in the Faith, please drop us a line that we might help you to follow that call.

In Christ and His Holy Cross,  
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## Walking Through the Door of Faith

*Fr. Neil Wack, C.S.C.*



No matter how young or old people are, they have a thirst for faith that can never be fully quenched. Strengthening our faith and our relationship with God through catechesis and the Sacraments is an

integral part of parish life. In introducing the "Year of Faith," Pope Benedict XVI talked about the "door of faith" – "To enter through that door is to set out on a journey that lasts a lifetime" (*Porta Fidei*, #1). The invitation to faith is the same invitation that the Church has made for centuries, echoing the call of Jesus Christ to come closer to His Heavenly Father.

At Christ the King Parish, this "Year of Faith" has given us a chance to start new initiatives to help parishioners understand their own faith. People have responded to opportunities to learn more about the documents from the Second Vatican Council, the Gospel of Luke, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the timeline of the Bible. Many folks have never had the chance to learn much about these. Many tell me they didn't know what they were missing, but now they experience a desire to deepen their holiness through a better understanding of their faith. They understand more about the tradition and teachings of the Church and in doing so come closer to the Lord.

Along with the desire to learn more about their faith, they wish to put faith into action. We are a Holy Cross parish, which means we embrace the charism of Blessed Basil Moreau to educate both the mind and the heart. In our efforts to evangelize the people of our parish, we must make sure to put our faith into action or else it becomes merely an intellectual exercise without any practice.

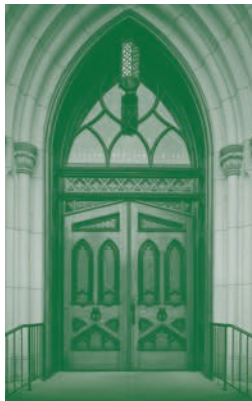


Fr. Neil Wack, C.S.C., preaches during Christ the King's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 2011. Photo courtesy of Kevin Haggengos.

The truth and beauty of our Catholic faith come through the classroom and in conversations with people of all ages and all walks of life: schoolchildren, teenagers in our youth ministry program, couples preparing for marriage, homebound people who closely identify with the sacrifice of Christ and many others. All of these groups are bound together by the faith that has been passed down from generation to generation.

We have the opportunity to hear the Word of God each day and we try to make connections with everyday life to help people grow in their faith and holiness. It is edifying when someone tells me they felt like I was preaching directly to them, sharing exactly what they needed to hear. Inevitably, it becomes clear that it's all the work of the Holy Spirit when the person goes on to describe an important point of the homily that I'm quite sure wasn't anywhere in the text!

I am drawn closer to God whenever I talk with parishioners about their faith. We have a homebound parishioner who hasn't been able to leave her home for several years except to see the doctor, so she has spent that time getting to know Jesus better in Scripture and through the teachings of His Church. That has helped her to identify more with the Lord's suffering on the Cross and to offer her suffering for those souls who are in most need of God's mercy. Talking with couples who earnestly want to make God a foundation of their marriage, praying with those who are dying and their loved ones, answering questions about our faith ... all of these situations and many more allow the Lord to walk through the door of faith in our hearts.



**"And when they arrived, they called the church together and reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles."**

(Acts 14:27)

We open the door of faith when we allow our hearts to be transformed by the grace of God, living and loving as the Gospel of Jesus Christ directs us. I am privileged to witness this every day by people who live their faith through all moments of their lives. Amid challenges and suffering, they see the light of Christ shining brightly. Strengthening our faith is a lifelong journey, completed when we are face to face with God in Heaven.

*Fr. Neil Wack, C.S.C., is Pastor of Christ the King Parish, South Bend, Ind.*

## Shepherding Young Men to Faith

*Fr. Pete McCormick, C.S.C.*



"It takes four years." That is what I told the incoming freshmen at Keough Hall on orientation weekend in August. It is also what I told their parents because perhaps they needed to hear it even more than their sons. To drive

the point home, I had the phrase printed on the backs of the shirts worn by my hall staff.

The mantra is meant to remind the men that the process of personal growth they have begun is intentionally slow, a process that, if lived well, will give them a better sense of who they are in relation to one another, God and the world they are preparing to join. Giving the residents four years with the proper love and attention will go a long way in what Blessed Basil Moreau called "the art of helping young people to completeness." (Christian Education 3)

It is to help facilitate those four years of growth that hall staffs and rectors like myself live in residence. The knocks on the door happen day or night in a dorm. When that knock occurs, you never know what might be on the



other side. Sometimes the requests are trivial: "I locked myself out of my room; can you let me in?" There are other occasions when the request isn't so basic: "I need to go to the hospital now; can you take me?" In both cases, those of us Holy Cross religious working as dorm rectors are asked to put a hold on what we had planned for that moment and focus on the needs of another. Through our sacrifice of time and sometimes sleep, we hope "to make God known, loved, and served." (Christian Education 10)

What I most enjoy about my role is the ability to experience the incredible excitement the students have for all things, including faith. Every Sunday and most days of the week, we celebrate Mass in the Keough Hall chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Without fail, the chapel is filled to capacity and then some. Flowing forth from our celebration of the Eucharist, the students involve themselves in schoolwork among a smattering of activities ranging from volunteer service to intramural sports and everything in between.

When Fr. Moreau founded Holy Cross, he did so with the hope that the familial dimension of his community would expand beyond the Congregation and into our parishes, schools, universities, missions and other apostolates. Having ministered in residential life at Notre Dame for seven years, I am confident that the students have experienced what Fr. Moreau had envisioned. Having the opportunity to host root beer floats in my room after Mass each Wednesday night, play basketball with the guys on Mondays until midnight, talk about their plans



Fr. Pete McCormick, C.S.C., chats with several men in Keough Hall, where he is Rector.



**"Jesus Christ is not only the object of the faith but, as it says in the Letter to the Hebrews, he is 'the pioneer and the perfecter of our faith.'"**

Pope Benedict XVI,  
"Year of Faith"  
Opening Homily

for the future, be there when relationship issues emerge: Each setting brings me more fully into relationship with the people I care deeply about.

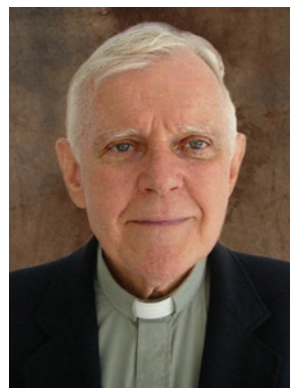
In the end, what makes our community a family is the accountability we have to one another. Students are encouraged to think of the dorm as their home and their fellow students as brothers. The motto of Keough Hall reads: "Brothers, Scholars, Champions." There is no coincidence that all of the dorms, guided by the vision of Fr. Moreau, seek to be the very best while also living together as one community bound by the unity of Jesus Christ. At the most basic level, accountability allows for communities to flourish, friendships to deepen and faith to grow.

The role of rector is certainly a privileged ministry. I have the opportunity to interact with and come to know those men placed in my care. I celebrate with them in their successes and mourn with them in their failures. I never know what a day will bring, but I look forward to walking with each student during our four years together.

*Fr. Pete McCormick, C.S.C., is Rector of Keough Hall and Undergraduate Chaplain in Campus Ministry at the University of Notre Dame.*

## Sharing Faith with the Afflicted

*Fr. David Farrell, C.S.C.*



*"Jesus toured all of Galilee. He taught in the synagogues, proclaimed the Good News of the Kingdom and cured the people of every illness." (Matthew 4:23). From Gospel passages such as this one, we learn that healing people's illnesses – spiritual, physical*

*and mental – was a part of Jesus' mission of bringing faith and the Kingdom of God to people.*

Among the institutions and programs of Holy Cross for sharing faith among the poor in



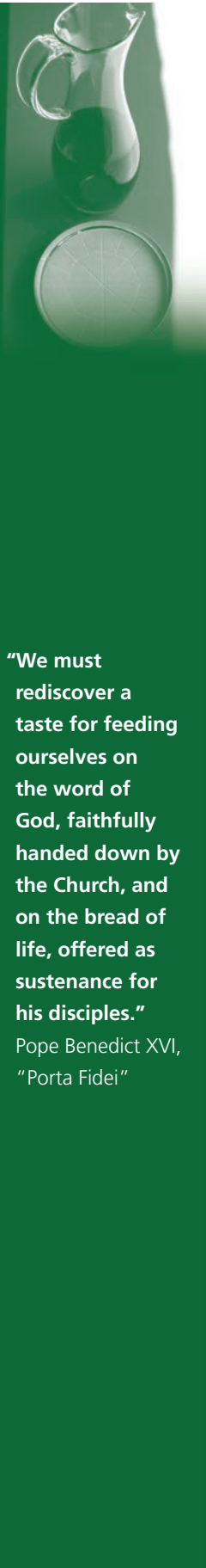
A staff member at Yancana Huasy works with a child at the Holy Cross facility in Lima, Perú.

Perú is Yancana Huasy, which in the language of the Incas means “House of Work.” Yancana Huasy works to address the multiple physical, cognitive and mental limitations and disabilities which exist in disproportionate numbers in our parish on the outskirts of Lima. The most dramatic disabilities are cerebral palsy and other permanent brain and neurological illnesses, mental retardation and Down syndrome.

Inseparable from these health conditions are the complex human, family and social situations of the patients and the demands that the illnesses and disabilities place on the whole community.

Particularly in the case of severe disabilities that Yancana Huasy treats daily, there are also what I have come to see as “life sentences” for the patient with the disability, the parents and the loved ones who live with and must care for the disabled. The necessary organizing and structuring of their own lives around the life of their disabled family member is indeed a “life sentence.”

The labor of Yancana Huasy does achieve some partial reprieves from the life sentences for those with truly severe disabilities. One of the most startling of our successes recently is that of a young man with cerebral palsy who studied in Yancana Huasy since childhood and recently gained admission as a regular university student, majoring in business administration at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos. This young man already has his own small retail business. In the course of his family's struggle for dignity, self-sufficiency and the rights afforded to all citizens, his mother



**“We must rediscover a taste for feeding ourselves on the word of God, faithfully handed down by the Church, and on the bread of life, offered as sustenance for his disciples.”**

Pope Benedict XVI,  
“Porta Fidei”

has become an effective public advocate for those with special needs, in addition to being a small business entrepreneur herself.

Before Yancana Huasy had the professional capabilities that it possesses today in the medical and rehabilitation fields, it was a community of men and women who were brought together by Holy Cross and guided by an ideal and a purpose.

The ideal was that every daughter and son of God possesses an innate dignity and worth as a member of the Kingdom of God, which must be recognized and respected by the family, other persons, the local community and broader society.

The purpose of the community of Yancana Huasy, derived from the ideal, is to identify, confront, educate/prevent and to change the perceptions and the treatment of all persons with disabilities.

The daily services, human caring and community concern help to lighten the burden and improve conditions for Yancana Huasy patients and their loved ones. The reality of not being left alone to cope with and overcome disabilities creates the conditions in which faith can grow – faith of knowing that there are others in the community who are there for them.

Through this education in the faith, Yancana Huasy has evolved from creating a new social perception to providing the best professional support available for countless children and adults with disabilities. This is good news –



Yancana Huasy staff help a child at the Holy Cross facility in Lima, Perú.



even a new life – for patients and their families inserted into the surrounding community. In this experience, we daily see crosses that are transformed into signs of hope.

*Fr. David Farrell is President of Yancana Huasy, the Director of the Instituto Pastoral de la Familia, Steward of the District of Perú and Director of Policlinico Parroquial Hermano Andrés. All are in Canto Grande, Lima, Perú.*

## In Praise of the ‘Phantom Homily’

*Fr. Don Dilg, C.S.C.*



It has happened to me several times. In fact, it has happened to so many priests, over so many years, that it has become a standard joke. The experience is standing outside the entrance of church on a Sunday morning at the end of one of the Masses over which I just presided. A man comes out, obviously in a hurry to beat the bumper-car crunch of the parking lot, but dutifully reaches out to shake my hand, and as he passes by says, “Good homily, Father.” The thing is, it was the deacon who preached at that Mass! This is the “Phantom Homily.”

My immediate, rash judgment of that person has always been that he was mindlessly inattentive. Yet, standing at a distance from the experience, I wonder if, at least at times, a deeper dynamic might be at work here. Perhaps my busy friend was not so much “mindlessly inattentive,” but rather attending to the homily at the level of the heart rather than the mind. Stimulating both of these ways of “attending” is necessary and complimentary in fulfilling a fundamental charism of the Congregation of Holy Cross – being “educators in the faith.” One of the famous quotes from



**“Faith grows when it is lived as an experience of love received and when it is communicated as an experience of grace and joy.”**

Pope Benedict XVI,  
“Porta Fidei”



Fr. Tom O'Hara, C.S.C., Provincial Supervisor of the United States Province, preaches during the Final Vows Mass last summer.

the founder of the Congregation, Blessed Basil Moreau, states, “We will not educate the mind at the expense of the heart.” Fr. Moreau clearly understood the need to help people’s minds come to understand the rich truths of the faith. This passing on of what is technically called the “deposit of faith,” is, I believe, what most people would associate properly with education or teaching. At the same time, this passing on can become cold and sterile if it doesn’t resonate with a person’s deepest experiences. This points to the proper provenance of preaching: I believe the goal of preaching is to awaken recognition in the heart of the listener that “This is *my* life,” followed closely by the realization “I’ve got to know more about this.”

Thus, I like to say that preaching is never about me and preaching is always about me. If I am to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the meaning of all life, I can only effectively do so by standing within the mystery of that Gospel and my own life. So, when I preach the Gospel story of the sons of Zebedee who ask Jesus if they can sit one at his right and the other at his left in the Kingdom, I have to know that I am those sons. I am seeking the same security they are. I want a guarantee – like being assured a position of power – everything is going to be all right for me in the end. Then I have to hear Jesus saying to me: “I can’t offer you that kind of security. I can only invite you to come into my life and serve as I serve. There you’ll discover what life is about.” Paradoxically, if I can preach that

message truly from my heart, then “I” disappear and the Gospel remains. And the hunger is awakened.

Now, returning to the image with which I began – the man who gave the compliment to the wrong preacher – maybe when this man reaches home, having survived his exit of the parking lot, his spouse notices that he seems preoccupied about something and remains so for some time. Finally, when she asks him what’s bothering him, he simply responds that he can’t get the homily he just heard out of his head (read “heart”). His spouse asks him who preached. After a short, reflective pause, he responds, “I don’t remember.” Maybe that’s the highest compliment a preacher could receive.

*Fr. Don Dilg, C.S.C., is Assistant Novice Master at the Holy Cross Novitiate in Cascade, Colo.*

## Educating the Poor in Haiti

*Fr. Lou DeFra, C.S.C.*



A little boy – the middle of seven children – begs on the streets. He’s tagging along with our group of Holy Cross priests and brothers and leaders from the Alliance for Catholic Education and the University of Notre Dame. The

boy’s parents do not have enough money to send all the kids to school, so he has been left out. He is one of 400,000 elementary-aged Haitian children not in school today. Chances are he will not complete the sixth grade.

This is the challenge that leaders from Holy Cross in Haiti and the United States, working alongside educational leaders from ACE, are seeking to address. For Haiti to rebuild better after the devastating earthquake of January 2010 and for children to have a chance for a decent life, education will need to play a pivotal



**“Faith, precisely because it is a free act, also demands social responsibility for what one believes.”**

Pope Benedict XVI,  
“Porta Fidei”



Fr. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., President of the University of Notre Dame, meets with men and women of Haiti.

role. Education has always been at the heart of the Holy Cross ministry.

Even before the earthquake, Haiti’s educational system was failing. Fifty percent of the population is illiterate and the schools are ranked as the worst in the Western Hemisphere. Almost all Haitian schools are private and tuition-driven, making school inaccessible for the poorest families. Teachers are untrained, resources are non-existent, facilities are insufficient and so on.

The earthquake ripped away already limited resources. Holy Cross runs Ecole Basile Moreau, a school which is doing heroic work in one of the toughest neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince. The years before and after the earthquake – despite holding classes in tents – Basile Moreau performed better than any school in Haiti on national exams. Lunch and tuition are free. The Catholic faith is passed on to both the minds and the hearts of students through the teaching and witness of Holy Cross religious who serve there, as well as by our lay collaborators whose teaching is animated by the Holy Cross charism.

On Jan. 12, 2010, Basile Moreau was reduced to rubble. This story is not unique; it has happened to thousands of schools, medical facilities, churches, homes and other institutions in the most populated region of Haiti. Immediately after the earthquake, the Congregation and its friends set out to rebuild the school. Two years later, the children have returned to a new elementary building. A beautiful new

high school – built like the elementary school according to California building code – will be finished by January 2013. But so much more needs to be done.

In the months following the earthquake, Haitian Holy Cross priests and educational leaders from Notre Dame began working to create a critically needed, pioneering new educational institution of higher learning, the Institute Superior Marcel Bedard. This institute launched last August and is serving to bring the highest standards in teacher training to Haitian educators. Still, this was not enough.

A little over a year ago, Holy Cross and Notre Dame leaders teamed up with the Haitian Catholic Church and Catholic Relief Services to attempt a systematic renewal of Haiti's 2,300 Catholic schools, which educate more than 600,000 students. After coordinating a national study of existing Catholic schools, employing dozens of Haitian data collectors wielding iPod Touches and GPS technology, these partners began to analyze the critical data for all of Haiti's Catholic schools and have begun to implement recommendations to upgrade the country's Catholic education system as a whole. This coalition is now gearing up to implement an ambitious set of projects ranging from national teacher training to large-scale facility improvements, among many others.

We are just getting started. As Holy Cross, this is who we are. We are a missionary order, committed to being "educators in the faith" wherever the call leads us. From the first days of the Congregation, when Blessed Basil Moreau sent some of his earliest members to Bangladesh, it is in our spiritual DNA to go to the toughest places and serve with those in greatest need. We live and serve as men with hope to bring.

*Fr. Lou DelFra, C.S.C., is Director of Pastoral Life for the Alliance for Catholic Education at the University of Notre Dame. Thanks to T.J. D'Agostino, head of ACE's initiative in Haiti, for his assistance with this reflection.*

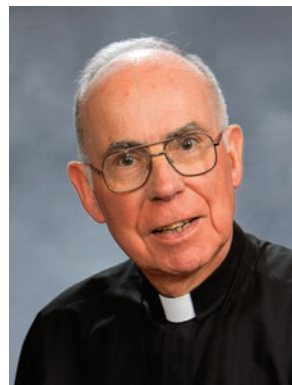


**"Without the liturgy and the Sacraments, the profession of faith would lack efficacy, because it would lack the grace which supports Christian witness."**

Pope Benedict XVI,  
"Porta Fidei"

## Teaching is a Spiritual Work of Mercy

*Fr. Tom Blantz, C.S.C.*



Most Catholics can probably name four or five of the seven corporal works of mercy – feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the sick and perhaps visit the imprisoned – but few can probably

recall many of the spiritual works of mercy (counsel the doubtful, admonish the sinner, comfort the afflicted, etc.). One of these is to teach the uneducated. There can and should be something deeply spiritual – deeply holy – about teaching.

Teaching, first of all, is simply helping others learn, helping students improve, better and perfect their minds. We are all created in the image and likeness of God, not in any material way – the color of our hair or the size of our feet – but in our intellect and will. Our intellect, then, is one of our highest, noblest and most God-like faculties. If caring for another's bodily needs



Fr. Charlie McCoy, C.S.C., teaches a math class at the University of Portland.





Fr. Dan Issing, C.S.C., teaches a theology class at King's College, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

such as feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty is a commendable act of charity, how much more might be caring for and perfecting another's intellect.

Further, much of what we teach can be seen as a manifestation of God in the universe. Astronomy, the study of the stars and planets, can tell us something of the power and order of God; cellular biology and subatomic physics something of the precision and detail of God; literature something of the creative inspiration of men and women created in God's own image and likeness; philosophy studies the good, the true and the beautiful, all aspects of God himself; and theology studies God and His attributes directly. The Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins begins one of his poems: "The world is charged with the grandeur of God," and in teaching we can help others recognize this.

Good teaching can also permeate – in a ripple-like effect – throughout the rest of society. In my courses in U.S. history, I raise questions for students to consider and discuss: whether the colonies had any right to declare independence from Great Britain in 1776; whether Abraham Lincoln had any right to prevent the Confederate States from leaving the Union; whether the United States should have declared a preventive war against Adolf Hitler in the 1930s and save the world from the Holocaust; and whether President Truman was justified in dropping the atomic bombs. The students we teach, whose minds we have helped expand and whose view of



**"By faith, men and women have consecrated their lives to Christ, leaving all things behind so as to live obedience, poverty and chastity with Gospel simplicity, concrete signs of waiting for the Lord who comes without delay."**

Pope Benedict XVI,  
"Porta Fidei"

God's universe we have helped form, should, because of their broader and improved mind, be able to think more deeply, analyze more clearly, judge more accurately and explain more persuasively, giving them greater influence for good on others.

It should be added, of course, that the priest-teacher will also always have opportunities to offer Mass, hear Confessions, preach, etc., for the academic community in which he lives and will be called on frequently to preside at the marriages of his students and, later on, at the Baptisms of their children – always very happy and satisfying occasions.

Several years ago a Holy Cross priest-teacher suggested that it would not be wholly improper to post a sign at the entrance of each classroom with the words of God to Moses before the burning bush: "Remove the sandals from your feet for the ground you are standing on is holy ground." There is indeed something holy about teaching, a spiritual work of mercy.

*Fr. Tom Blantz, C.S.C., is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Notre Dame.*

## Welcoming Faith through Sacraments

*Fr. Rick Wilkinson, C.S.C.*



"God may be slow, but God is never late." This statement is true in the long view of living and the present reality in which we each find ourselves. For the past 14 years, my priestly ministry was in Campus Ministry

at St. Edward's University, in Austin, Texas. Previously, I had worked with youth in a parish in Santiago, Chile, then later with postulants, novices and temporarily professed seminarians preparing for the priesthood and religious life. One thing they all had in common was the lack



Fr. Rick Wilkinson, C.S.C., helps bring people to the faith through the Sacraments.

of patient waiting, especially with the many questions and challenges in their life of faith. I am energized by young people seeking God. That seeking often draws us into places where we hesitate to go, whether it is the anger of grief, the desolation of rejection, the contradictions of life, the pain of failure or the fear of doubt. A student would occasionally throw me a curve ball, but I was pretty confident that the Holy Spirit had my back. I was not so confident when Grayson, at 90 years of age, asked to be Baptized in the Catholic Church.

As we enter a “Year of Faith,” Grayson’s story is a sign of God’s grace and indwelling in every person we meet. I had come to know Grayson through his daughter and his son-in-law, both colleagues at St. Edward’s. He came to Mass every Sunday with his grown children and grandchildren. They were a presence in the small University chapel. Not all were “practicing Catholics,” but they all came. This followed the tradition of Mae, Grayson’s wife, who took the children to Mass every Sunday, with Grayson always joining them.

Grayson intrigued me. I wondered about this gentle man who would celebrate Mass every week with us, but apparently had no desire to join us at the Eucharistic table. Then came that day when I was asked what he “had to do” to become Catholic. I said, “We are going to Baptize him.” He and I met the following week.

We have all seen God. We see God every time we open ourselves to God’s revelation in the people and events of the life around us. Praying with Grayson in our first meeting, we simply prayed, “Come Holy Spirit.” The Spirit did not disappoint. We spoke about deep things that afternoon. He spoke about his search for God, the



**“Through faith, we can recognize the face of the risen Lord in those who ask for our love.”**

Pope Benedict XVI,  
“Porta Fidei”

blessing of marital love, family and how family was always the Divine in his life. He spoke of wrestling with God about his wife’s faith and why she felt so strongly about his Baptism. He wondered if the proximity of death was the real motive for his move toward the Baptismal waters.

It was clear that Grayson’s time was catching up to God’s time. God may have been slow, but God was not late. I explained that the Sacramental life is not about us; it is about God breaking into the ordinary of our lives to make it extraordinary. We just have to show up. One Sunday, with his blood family and faith family gathered around the Baptismal font, he poised his aged head above the water and was Baptized into the new life of Christ. We anointed him and the faithful erupted in “Alleluias” that matched those of Easter morning.

Sacraments are moments of God’s grace made manifest in the lived reality of life. They express the inexpressible. In talking with Grayson, I was amazed at the number of people in his life who he saw as quiet witnesses of a faith that were signs of God’s grace in his journey of faith. A “Year of Faith,” affords each one of us the opportunity to reflect and share our own Sacramental life. How I live out my Baptism defines who I am as person of faith. How I am Sacrament for others expresses how Christ is Sacrament in my life. As a priest who is privileged and blessed to preside over Sacramental celebrations, there is nothing so humbling and life-giving than to welcome someone into our faith where “God may be slow, but God is never late.”

*Fr. Rick Wilkinson, C.S.C., is First Assistant Provincial and Vicar of the U.S. Province.*



Fr. Steve Wilbricht, C.S.C., hears a confession.





## Blessed Basil Moreau's Charge: Be 'Educators in the Faith'

After his Ordination to the priesthood, Basil Moreau asked his Bishop to send him to the Foreign Mission Seminary. He wanted, like the first Apostles, to spread faith in Jesus Christ and His Good News.

As Providence would have it, Moreau never realized his dream of being a foreign missionary. Yet he later founded a religious community of apostles, the Congregation of Holy Cross, whom he sent out from Sainte Croix around the world "to make God known, loved, and served and thus save souls."

Moreau knew that education was the key to evangelization. He realized that Catholics cannot be "ignorant of anything they should know" if they are to be salt for the earth and light for the world.

That is why the priests, brothers and sisters of Holy Cross are to be educators in the faith. In schools, parishes and foreign missions, they are to evangelize through education, what

Moreau described as "the art of helping young people to completeness, for the Christian, this means that education is helping a young person to be more like Christ, the model for all Christians."

Moreau believed that such an education begins with the heart: "We shall always place education side by side with instruction; the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart." The formation of the heart meant providing people with spiritual and vocational formation that prepares them to live out their Baptismal calling.

And yet this education also requires the cultivation of the mind. Moreau wanted academic excellence, as "we do not want our students to be ignorant of anything they should know. To this end, we shall shrink from no sacrifice." Only such rigorous cultivation of the mind empowers people with the knowledge and skills they need to be real Gospel leaven in the world.

As potent a combination as spiritual and vocational formation coupled with academic excellence could be, Moreau realized that this education can only set the world on fire if its recipients also have instilled in them a zeal — a burning desire — to be sent on behalf of the Gospel in service to the Church and the world.

It is a zeal that has to find its hope in the Cross, because there is no way to transform the world without coming face to face with the pain and suffering of the poor and afflicted. No education, and certainly no Christian education, is ever complete without teaching how "even the Cross could be borne as a gift." Only with such uniquely Christian hope, can disciples of Christ "move without awkwardness among others who suffer" and become people "with hope to bring" (Constitutions 8:118).

Moreau knew that the only thing that could hold such an ambitious education together is the bonds of family. He modeled his religious congregation on the Holy Family and called upon his religious to extend the Holy Cross family to those with and for whom they served by living and working together as one. Turning their schools, parishes and foreign missions into "communities of the coming Kingdom" (Constitutions 2:12), they can then become signs of the true communion possible in God.

This work of education and evangelization entrusted to Holy Cross and its collaborators was, for Moreau, nothing short of a "work of resurrection." It has the power to raise people to new life in Christ. And through educating and evangelizing the next generations in the faith, Holy Cross continues, as Blessed Moreau dreamed, to "contribute to preparing the world for better times than ours."



Blessed Basil Moreau, founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross





*I will give you shepherds  
after my own heart.*

JER. 3:15



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to the religious life or the priesthood please visit us at

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