

## THE LEGACY OF HOLY CROSS EDUCATION AND ITS IMPACT UPON HOLY CROSS EDUCATORS TODAY

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The significance of education is seen from different perspectives in different places, but "inclusivity" in the process of teaching and learning is a value for Holy Cross men and women all over the world. The need for quality education is extreme. It is teaching not merely for passing examinations, but for becoming better human persons. The report of the International Commission on Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century suggests education to be, that which enhances learning for *knowing, doing, being, and living* together with others (UNESCO, 1996). The report sees these as the four pillars of education, each having its distinct but interrelated focus. Other major purposes of education include democracy, autonomy, critical thinking, national identity, self-determination, and well-being, preparing students for the business world, formation of students according to each one's religious faiths and traditions, human resource development, poverty reduction, and economic development.

In the Declaration on Christian Education in the Encyclical "Gravissimum educationis (GE)", His Holiness Pope Paul VI (1965) reiterates that all peoples of every race, condition, and age, inherently enjoying the dignity of a human being, have an undeniable right to an education that takes into consideration their ultimate goal, ability, sex, and the culture and tradition of their country. This education should also foster unity and peace in this world in accord with their fraternal association with other peoples. The pontiff gives further details about the aim of education as being the formation of the human person. Parents are seen as the primary authors of education (GE 3) and have a serious responsibility for the education of their children (Amoris Laetitia, 2016). However, educational institutions are designated not only to develop with special care the intellectual faculties but also to form the ability to judge rightly, to hand on the cultural legacy of previous generations, to foster a sense of values, and to prepare for professional life (GE, 4). Catholic institutions, nonetheless, have a specific responsibility to create an atmosphere in which knowledge will be illumined by the faith (GE, 8) and Catholic Educational institutions must influence the world (GE, 12).

As regards inclusivity, it is stressed that education is afforded a significant role in many of the world's religious traditions. In Islam, (Sura 96) the very first revelation to the prophet Muhammad is- "Read". Allah "taught Man that which he knew not" and that Allah did so "by the Pen" suggesting that Allah taught humankind "the Holy Scriptures," or "writing". Islam, from its very beginning, expressly prioritizes the imparting and acquisition of knowledge, learning, and education; and Allah is humankind's undisputed supreme teacher.

In Hinduism, education is an important means to achieve the four aims of human life- dharma (virtue), artha (wealth), kama (pleasure), and moksha (liberation). Education is also vital to the preservation and propagation of Dharma, without which, declares Vedic dharma, we cannot regulate our society or families properly or live in peace. It is the means by which an individual can gain the right knowledge, control his desires, and learn to perform his duties with a sense of detachment and devotion to God so that he can overcome the impurities of egoism, attachment,

and delusion and achieve liberation. A person who is initiated into education is twice born - the first time physically and the second time spiritually.

The Buddha's teaching contains three major points: discipline, meditation, and wisdom. Wisdom is the goal and deep meditation, or concentration is the crucial process toward achieving it. Discipline through observing the precepts, is the method that helps one to achieve deep meditation; wisdom will then be realized naturally.

Among Christians, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations..." (Matt. 28:19 KJV) is a mission mandate given to the disciples. Jesus said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mk. 16:15). Jesus got up in the temple courts and began to teach. The Jews were amazed and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?" Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him" (John 7:14-18). It is evident then, that in all these religious traditions teaching is seen as a sacred, moral duty.

In the National Education Policy for India (Chapter II, P. 3, RTE Act, 2009 & New Education Policy 2020) and Bangladesh (National Education Policy 2010), the following goals and objectives are reflected:

1. Constitutional guarantee at every level of education
2. Raising the consciousness of students about the country's independence, sovereignty, and safeguarding its integrity
3. Free and compulsory elementary education
4. Equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. Generating enthusiasm in the students' minds, works, and practical life Circumstances
6. Ascertaining moral, social, scientific, and cultural values,
7. Burgeoning (growing) human qualities and inculcating a spirit of justice, non-communalism, dutifulness, discipline, honesty, and perseverance.
8. Developing strong character
9. Standard learning and practice of language and offered opportunities for street and floating children to benefit from the education system
10. Inclusive education (irrespective of religion, sex, socio-economic and geographical position, ethnic identities, and disabilities), Adivasi (indigenous) teachers and textbooks on Adivasi languages, and enhanced facilities for teachers.

Historically, the monarchy and the Church, the two basic institutions of French culture and government, were overthrown during the French Revolution of 1789 to 1794. Due to the closure of Church institutions, children in rural areas did not learn to read and write, as the new government provided no schools at all. A very few families were able to provide some education for their children, but almost "an entire generation of French children grew up as street urchins." This is what made Fr. Basil Moreau (1799) realize the importance of education for the young people of France. He began his transformative work in 1835 and continued for almost four decades after the revolution, while the society was still under the influence of the revolution. His philosophy of education has had a great impact, not only in France but in many other countries even today.

The philosophy of education (Information, Formation, and Transformation) of Fr. Moreau is a landmark for Holy Cross educators. As Fr. Moreau writes, "We shall always place education side by side with instruction; the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart" (Moreau, 1849). Education - to lead a young person away from ignorance and disorder; it is the art of helping young people to completeness.

The feudal social system was weakened in France, while the bourgeoisie - the merchants, manufacturers, and professionals - aspired for political power. In 1789, the French population of 26 million people experienced food shortages, price rises, high taxation, bankruptcy, and other perils. Fr. Moreau insisted, "Society has a greater need for people of values than it has for scholars" (Moreau 1856). Knowledge and scholarship have great value, but only if placed in the context of values. For almost five decades, divisions between the nobles and peasants and multiple wars had a corrosive effect on society. In order, to have some sort of tranquility the society needed a "work of resurrection".

In a philosophy that promotes the education of the whole person - spiritual, intellectual, artistic, physical, and social, physical activity, social activity, music, and artistic activity are educationally valuable in themselves and should not be relegated only to periods of relaxation from school. According to Fr. Moreau, teachers teach only when they interact with young people. In order to be effective, a person needs to be called by God (creator) to be a teacher (Moreau, 1856). Every good teacher is preoccupied with the care and the progress of young people and with their schoolwork (Moreau, 1856). A teacher cannot give what he does not possess.

Inspired by the philosophy and educational legacy of Fr. Moreau, the mission values of Holy Cross educational institutes are leading young people towards being true human persons. Administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents, alumni, Managing Committee members, and other stakeholders create a community and family; serve a diverse population- rich/poor, more intelligent/less intelligent, and other religious and/or ethnic students; approach responsibility with a worldwide perspective; help students to gain the best education by secular standards and become active and informed citizens.

As educators of the faith, Holy Cross teachers today impart "Integral Human Formation" i.e. the education of body, mind, and heart. The Formation of children and youth, especially the poor, through education, to engage more vigorously by utilizing its various educational institutions (Pastoral Plan of Bangladesh Church, 1985) has been imperative in Holy Cross educational institutes for many parts of the world. The beauty of the teachers is to teach in the school – not to teach anything privately in their homes for financial gain. They are well-equipped professionals, models, or heroes to their students as individual persons and as part of the school family. Students are taught to be kind, polite, and modest in their attitude, behavior, dress, and deliberations with family; loyal to their institutions, and not expected to take part in any kind of activities subversive to the interest of the nation and its institutions.

In conclusion, congregational educational institutions are very different from other public, private, or non-governmental institutions. Discipline, regularity, and integrity are highly valued in the Holy Cross institutions. Forming students as human persons is far more important than coaching them

to pass Examinations. Qualities like - integrity, sincerity, punctuality, and above all, morality are essential parts of who teachers are and what they teach.