

A M D G
Four Alumni of
The College of the Holy Cross
 Care of E. Kirby, 379 Harvard Street, Whitman MA 02382

September, 2001

Dear fellow alumnus,

We are sending this to alumni of the classes of 1930 to 1970, the last classes that experienced Holy Cross' intense core curriculum of religion and philosophy. We worry about the secularization of the college, begun in the 1970's and continuing today. The Jesuit Superior General, Peter Hans Kolvenbach, SJ, recently told Father John Henry Neuhaus, editor of First Things: "For some (Jesuit) universities, it is probably too late to restore their Catholic character."

Here are a few of many indications of secularization's growth at the college:

- Half or more of the faculty (which controls curriculum) is non-Catholic, as is the Dean of Students, good people, but symbolic of the change.
- The new President, able Father Michael C. McFarland SJ, faces faculty opposition to his hope of re-emphasizing courses in philosophy and religion, establishing a real core of studies for the 95% Catholic student body.
- The H.C. Magazine (Spring 2001) touts an alumnus' success as a disc jockey for MTV, that the Wall Street Journal (4/21/01) says broadcasts "gross humor, sex and worse to teenagers." The Federal Trade Commission reports that MTV targets children with ads for recordings with "adult lyrics" (Associated Press, by Gina Holland, April 2001).
- Homosexual and bisexual groups, whose constitutions are not in accord with a letter from Cardinal Ratzinger to the Bishops, are funded by the College while the Campus K of C council receives none. In October, a month the college traditionally dedicated to honoring the Virgin Mary each year the college now observes Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Week.
- Former Harvard Law School Professor Harold Berman has said he and his colleagues have been disappointed in their discussions at Catholic universities about moral issues (e.g. assisted suicide), because instead of presenting a Catholic perspective they offer the same opinions heard from Harvard faculty.
- See a student profile produced in 1999 by the Director of the Chaplain's Office, reproduced on the reverse of this letter.

We are proud of the widely recognized academic achievements, the welcoming atmosphere, the heritage shared by the students, their service to others, the recent athletic successes, all the wonderful things that are integral to the College of the Holy Cross, some old, some new. That's why we want to preserve its "Catholic character" and help the College to turn back from secularization. If you agree, please sign and return the enclosed postcard. Your comments, of course, are welcome, but if you agree please send the card too. The President and Trustees need to know your views.

Please help us in this endeavor!

Bill Cousins
 William M. Cousins, Jr., '45

Edward P. Kirby
 Edward P. Kirby, '49

Edgar L. Kelley
 Edgar L. Kelley, '49

Guy C. Bosetti
 Guy C. Bosetti, '49

Our students:

Do not go to mass regularly
 Do not go to confession
 See very little relationship
 between sex and faith/religion
 Do not hold themselves
 accountable to much church
 teaching
 Do not know much of what the
 Church teaches
 Do not have any devotion to the
 saints
 Come from families that do not
 attend mass regularly
 Are very active sexually
 Seldom experience the Church as
 healing
 Often experience the church as
 alienating

Do pray quite regularly
 Do yearn for intimacy
 Do yearn for community
 Are extremely generous
 Do volunteer regularly
 and love it
 do cherish group
 experiences
 do crave retreats
 are able to make great use
 of silence and
 reflection time
 when it is offered
 to them
 do pay close attention to
 homilies
 do like to talk one-on-one
 with Chaplains
 and other adults
 do get involved with
 liturgy when they
 are invited

Do find God in lots of places:
 music, friends, nature, the
 ocean, my journal, music, the
 Bible, praying, friends, music,
 family, the Chapel,
 Narragansett, music, the
 Eucharist, 11:00 Mass, music,
 boyfriends, girlfriends, candles,
 music.

*The above is a copy of a student profile written by Kim McElaney,
 Director of the Chaplain's Office at the College of the Holy Cross
 and distributed by her to those attending her lecture as part of the
 Spring 1999 event "Classroom Revisited", attended by alumni and
 alumnae.*

Response Card To Mr. Kirby

DATE _____

To the President, Trustees, Deans and Faculty of the College of the Holy Cross:

As an alumnus of Holy Cross I admire the progress the College has made in many ways, but I am deeply concerned about the extent of its secularization. I support appropriate measures to correct that condition and preserve Holy Cross' Catholic character. I support the re-establishment of a core of studies in philosophy and religion.

SIGNATURE AND YEAR OF GRADUATION

TELEPHONE

STREET

CITY

STATE & ZIP

Grads say school too secular now

Holy Cross alums decry changes

By **Emilie Astell**
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE STAFF

WORCESTER — Edward P. Kirby and three fellow graduates of the College of the Holy Cross are asking whether other alumni agree that secularization has taken hold at the college since 1970.

Mr. Kirby, Edgar L. Kelley and Guy C. Bostett, all of the class of 1949, and William M. Cousins Jr., class of 1945, put together a list of their concerns and sent copies to 10,400 alumni who graduated between 1930 and 1970.

About 1,500 of the letters were returned with comments. To Mr. Kirby's delight, only 30 of those disagreed with the men's premise.

"The content of the letters is very strong," he said yesterday. "Throughout their careers, these graduates believe

they were helped to lead good lives and to be successful. They feel they were helped because of their studies."

College officials, however, disagree with the four men, saying that the world has changed since Mr. Kirby and his peers were in school. The move to shed light on what the four men see as a steady movement away from Catholic teachings started when the class of '49 held its 50th reunion in 1999.

A profile of current students, written by an administrator, caught the attention of Mr. Kirby and others because of some of the issues raised. Among them were that students do not go to Mass regularly, do not go to confession, see very little relationship between sex and faith, are very

Professor explains college's secularization

Secularization/iron Page One active sexually, do not hold themselves accountable to much of church teaching and do not know much of what the church teaches.

The profile also stated that students pray quite regularly, yearn for intimacy, pay close attention to homilies, yearn for community, are extremely generous, volunteer regularly and cherish group experiences.

While Mr. Kirby, 73, who lives in Walkman, agrees that Holy Cross is not responsible for cultural changes derived from the turbulent 1960s, he said the direction of the college shifted in 1970 when Jesuits relinquished control to the board of trustees.

Trustees, he said, accepted principles of academic freedom drawn up by university professors. Core course requirements were abandoned, he said, which meant students no longer had to study the Catholic religion in depth as he and his peers had done.

Mr. Kirby said he had had discussions about secularization with administrators and faculty at the college, but believed that a survey and its results would have a greater impact. He expects to have a summary of opinions ready in the spring to deliver to the Rev. Michael C. McFarland, S.J., president of Holy Cross.

Rev. McFarland was in meetings yesterday and could not be reached for comment.

Mr. Cousins, 77, said that when he was a college student, he was required to take multiple philosophy and religion classes. Today's requirements, he feels, are much less stringent. "What we hope to gain," he said from his home in Jupiter, Fla., "is to present the college with the fact that many alumni here very concerned about this."

College spokeswoman Katharine B. McNamara said Holy Cross wants a diverse student body and faculty, although about 90 percent of students are Catholic. While students may not attend Mass every week, she said, they are questioning and looking to understand more about their Catholic upbringing.

"It's a complex world," Ms. McNamara said. "We're in the 21st century. In order to survive, we have to meet our students where they are. These writers are back in the Catholic church of the '60s."

The college is involved in a \$175 million capital campaign. She said the letter written by the four men should not have a negative impact on alumni contributions.

Among other objections the men have raised are that more

than half the college's faculty is non-Catholic, while a majority of the student body is Catholic; there is faculty opposition to the president's hope of re-emphasizing courses in philosophy and religion; homosexual and bisexual groups are funded by the college while the campus Knights of Columbus council does not receive funds; and the college's magazine, touted an alumnus' success as a disc jockey on MTV. The four men quote The Wall Street Journal as saying MTV broadcasts gross income, sex and worse to teenagers.

In response to the concerns, Rev. Philip C. Rule, S.J., an English professor at Holy Cross, said there is nothing wrong with secularization of the faculty. The college has many more lay faculty members than Jesuits because there are fewer Jesuits than in previous years.

"Hiring practices do not allow you to ask for a person's religious affiliation," he said, "but our mission statement is often used as a conversation piece with people who are interviewed." The mission statement concerns questions about human responsibilities, obligations to others and meaning in life.

Rev. Rule also said that some faculty, but not all, oppose re-

emphasizing courses in philosophy and religion. As for the MTV disc jockey, he said, perhaps the employee would have a positive influence.

A portion of student activity fees, as chosen by the Student Government Association, is used for homosexual and bisexual groups on campus, he said. The Knights of Columbus chapter is an independent, outside, national organization that does not receive money from student fees.

As for the profile of students from 1989, Rev. Rule said Holy Cross does not create such students. "It inherits them from their families, just as it inherits the drinking problems some students bring to campus. The solution to the pervasive turn away from worship and sacramental life will not be found in the knowledge gathered in philosophy and theology classes, he said. The answer is found in home life before coming to college and in genuine self-discovery through retreats and other religious activities while at college.

"I suspect that the daily Mass attendance that our generation experienced had far more to do with what we have become than did any formal instruction to philosophy and theology," the 70-year-old professor said.

Funds for disabled won't return to education bill

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The needs of disabled students remained an issue during yesterday's Senate debate on President Bush's education bill, two weeks after aid for such students was stricken from the bill. The Senate is expected to con-

measure, giving Bush a key victory on his top domestic priority. The House last week approved the bill on a 391-41 vote.

Yesterday, several Democrats criticized what they called inadequate funding, pointing to a GOP move that excluded a guaranteed rise in special edu-

more than they can afford. "There is a gap here, and we ought not to delude ourselves about it," said Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn.

Democrats proposed a guaranteed annual increase of \$2.5 billion in special education, but Republicans blocked it last

from drug possession to a and battery, he said.

The program's curriculum features group discussion presentations by speakers on topics related to fatherhood, including childhood development, self-esteem in child setting limits and discipline, financial support and a drug-free life.

Except for the program participants "would never be exposed to the information that's available," Mr. Engdahl said.

The most recent graduation class was the second in the program, which is coordinating probation officers Jose M. Timothy Dupree and Anthony Gigliotti.

"Basically, in a nutshell, we're just trying to build responsible fatherhood," Gigliotti said. "Twelve we course, isn't going to teach everything they need to but we try to give the foundation on which to build a solid."

"Being a father is probably the most important thing these guys are going to do their lives, and we're just trying to instill that in them," he said.

Many of the participants apart from their children the children's mothers, a "weekend fathers."

"We try to teach some tools to fathers who are involved with their children full-time basis," he said.

Humans are latecomers

The insignificance of humans in relation to the history of Earth can be seen in the fact that humans have been on Earth less than 2 percent of the planet's existence. Earth existed billions of years without humans. The many fossils of life th-