

(Address given by the Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., President, University of Notre Dame, at the 125th Anniversary Celebration of Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana, December 7, 1969)

When Saint Mary's College reached its centenary year in 1944, the United States - in fact all the world - was at war. Our centenary celebration at Notre Dame, in 1942, amounted to a special dinner, enhanced perhaps by steaks since the Navy was quartered at Notre Dame during this period. Elsewhere, most of us were eating Spam, a concoction I have never since enjoyed. The jejune observance of a centenary may well justify a larger celebration at the next milestone of 125 years. We at Notre Dame did this two years ago, and I am happy for this similar celebration here at Saint Mary's College today.

It is not unusual that, from the onset of my remarks, it is inevitable that I begin to speak of Saint Mary's and Notre Dame in the same paragraph, if not in the same breath. These two institutions of Catholic higher learning are and have been linked together, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do them part, hopefully never.

You all know the story of Father Sorin and his valiant group of Holy Cross Brothers coming to this area in November of 1842 to start, of all things, a university in the wilderness. Their only assets were some land and two lakes, a log cabin, \$300.00, and lots of faith. The last was the most important ingredient in explaining what has happened since. The name was also important. Father Sorin was not on the site

fifteen minutes before he decided that only one name could characterize his life's work (he was only 29 years old at the time): L'Université de Notre Dame du Lac (Our Lady of the Lake). We still have this as our corporate title, despite the fact that, if he had taken sixteen minutes to walk around, he would have seen that there were not one, but two lakes. Although he did not know it, the missionaries who had come here over a century before to work with the Indians had called the same place Mission de Sainte Marie-des-Lacs. So the name was and is important, both in Saint Mary's tradition and in ours. Personally, I believe that the name and, more importantly, the consecration account for more blessings than we will ever know.

What is most important for today's reflections is that, in one of Father Sorin's first letters back to the Founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, Father Moreau, he showed the great and good wisdom of requesting some Holy Cross Sisters to help him in this new endeavor. Father Moreau had founded a religious community of priests and brothers at Le Mans, France, in 1836 - the Priests called Salvatorists after the Saviour, and the Brothers, Josephites after St. Joseph. It was only logical that he would follow the Holy Family all the way by founding the Holy Cross Sisters, called Marianites, after Mary, in 1841. Given the slow communications of the times, and the financial difficulties of post-Revolutionary France, we can only marvel that within a few months of Father Sorin's wise request four Holy Cross Sisters were assigned to Notre Dame in July of 1843. Their names are typical of the Holy Family motif that Father Sorin gave to his new and tripartite religious

organization: Sister Mary of Bethlehem, Sister Mary of Nazareth, Sister Mary of Calvary, and Sister Sacred Heart of Mary.

At their arrival at Notre Dame, these valiant women were lodged in a temporary log cabin, and then graduated to the loft of the original log chapel, whose replica today on Notre Dame's campus is the tomb of Father Stephan Badin, the first priest ordained in the United States, an early missionary in this region, who bought the original tract of land comprising Notre Dame. This tiny chapel is a special symbol of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's, since it has witnessed countless marriages between Notre Dame and Saint Mary's graduates.

We like to think of ourselves today as leaders in the cause of Catholic higher education, but the facts of those distant days may yet inspire us in our present endeavors. These religious women were brought over from France for what today seems unexalted labor, to cook the meals, to nurse the sick, to do the laundry and all the housework for which men are so incapable and so indebted to the gentler sex. They did this, generously and superbly, for more than a century, but within a year of their arrival, they, too, were thinking of education, not unnaturally, for women.

It happened that the Bishop of the then Diocese Vincennes in Southern Indiana, took a dim view of another school. The only reason that Notre Dame was not founded in Vincennes by Father Sorin - since he first arrived there in 1841 - was that Bishop de la Hilandriere had already founded a school there. Besides, women's higher education

was about as popular in those days as in St. Thomas More's England where he himself had to educate his own daughters in the classics.

The Sisters were no less undaunted. Since they could not educate in Indiana, they moved to Michigan to do it, at Bertrand which was conveniently nearby - about six miles to the North. They established their Saint Mary's there in 1844, which gives us our opportunity of celebrating the 125th anniversary this year. The State of Michigan generously chartered the school in 1851, seven years later. I am tempted to believe that they might have had their charter several years earlier if they had interested a Methodist Senator in the matter, as Notre Dame did.

The Bertrand School flourished - amazingly, considering that these were French religious, new members of a new society, in a new land with a new language, and a wilderness milieu. They attracted students from several surrounding states and Canada. To get to Bertrand from the nearest large city, Chicago, one had to take a primitive steamer across Lake Michigan to St. Joseph, and go thence by stage coach to Niles, several miles from Bertrand. But students did come. Six years later, the Sisters had one of the most promising schools for women in the Midwest with 50 boarders. It is interesting to note that the total cost per semester was \$50.00 for board and tuition, with an additional charge of \$10.00 for those who wanted to learn how to play, of all things, the guitar. As far as I know, this had nothing to do with the Liturgy.

While all was going well, you may be sure that it was a strain from Notre Dame's point of view. All the laundry was brought from Notre Dame to Bertrand once a week. The Sisters washed it in a borrowed boiler and rinsed it in the St. Joseph River - without the benefit of modern detergents and, thank God, no pollution in those days. Meals were cooked at Bertrand and brought to Notre Dame, lunch sometimes arriving at dinner time, cold rather than warm. I do not know how much men's stomachs have affected the course of history, but it will come as a surprise to no one that our redoubtable Founder, Father Sorin, dug up \$8,000.00 to buy the Rush property just West of Notre Dame, a beautifully wooded bluff above the St. Joseph River, and persuaded the Holy Cross Sisters to move their school nearer in 1855. Thank God for that move, otherwise we would have a six-mile shuttle bus schedule today with a 60¢ fare. Ten cents is bad enough.

Two years before the move, something happened that really explains and illuminates the future developments of Saint Mary's. In a day of committees, committees, and more committees, I happen to believe in individual and personal leadership. No country, or no human institution, religious or secular, is really explainable without personal vision, great dedication, and the ability to inspire others to share both. Most institutions are the long shadow of individual leaders who have inspired and guided others to create them, whatever the cost. In this case, it was an American girl, Eliza Maria Gillespie, sister of one of the original students and later priest of Notre Dame, Father Neal Gillespie. She joined the community at Bertrand. She

really was to become the foundress of the Holy Cross Sisters and Saint Mary's College in America. She was originally on her way to join the Mercy Sisters in Chicago when she visited her brother en route and met Father Sorin. He had not been in America very long, but could spot intellectual and administrative ability in women, as well as men. She was related to some of the most prominent American families of the times, such as the Blaines and the Shermans, and was equally capable. Needless to say, she never arrived in Chicago, her original destination. She made her novitiate in France, became, soon enough, Mother Angela, and for decades to come she was the heart and soul of Saint Mary's College, its first President until 1870. She also influenced another American woman of unusual talents, Ann Amanda Anderson, to enter the Community as Mother Augusta. Together in the years ahead they founded many schools and hospitals across the United States. If one wanted to write the history of Saint Mary's in persons, it would be Mother Angela and Mother Augusta in the early days, Mother Pauline and Mother Verda in the middle period, and Mother Madeleva in the recent past.

But we must return to the distant past and the change of Saint Mary's from Bertrand to Notre Dame in 1855. The move was spectacular, even for today. They literally dismantled the buildings and moved them to the new site. After this, I am sure that both the meals and laundry service improved at Notre Dame. Curiously enough, despite the educational endeavor across the road, the Holy Cross Convent at Notre Dame, thanks to Mother Angela's recruiting trips to Ireland, Germany, and France, flourished as never before with a high mark of 140 Sisters living and

working to keep the new University of Notre Dame du Lac well fed, well nursed, well laundered, yes, it must be said, well mothered as all male communities must be.

With all this collateral activity, Saint Mary's continued to grow and prosper. At Bertrand, the first formal Commencement Exercises had been held in 1848. At Saint Mary's, Notre Dame, ~~where~~ a new charter from the State of Indiana was forthcoming the same year as the move. We never will know what the Bishop thought of this end run. - The first diplomas and graduating medals were granted in 1860. There was continual academic upgrading - unusual for women's academies in those days and all within the European classical tradition. College level work, classed as post-graduate, was offered by 1870. Saint Mary's graduates were accorded advanced standing in all American universities. Under Mother Pauline's administration (Bridget O'Neill '71) (1895-1931), Saint Mary's began to give its own baccalaureate degrees. Agnes Ewing Brown won the first one in 1898.

Much else had happened in the meanwhile. Few know that during the Civil War Holy Cross Sisters from Saint Mary's, and its associated hospitals, inaugurated the U. S. Naval Nursing Corps by serving on Naval ships on the Mississippi River at Vicksburg. Over a hundred Sisters graves are marked with special insignia for nursing in wartime. During the same period, a former Notre Dame President, Father William Corby, was writing a new chapter in Catholic history by giving the first general absolution in America on the battlefield at Gettsburg. Together, both

institutions were growing up with the country during decades of our most difficult history and becoming thoroughly American in the process.

I should mention two incidents during this period which illustrate, as well as any, the close collaboration and understanding between the two schools. The Sisters had collected in 1869 a sum of \$3,500.00 to build a church at Saint Mary's. Somehow Father Sorin convinced Mother Angela that Notre Dame's church should be built first, so she contributed the money to his church which was built in 1872, and which all through the subsequent years was also, and still is, a favorite wedding place for Saint Mary's-Notre Dame graduates. If you think that I am overdoing the marriage reference, I can add that in a nine year period, including war years from 1942 to 1950, about 36% of all Saint Mary's marriages were with Notre Dame men. I would guess that the percentage is closer to 50% today.

Getting back to the church, Father Sorin did later contribute all the funds for the foundations of the present Saint Mary's Church when it was subsequently built. In grateful remembrance, on the occasion of his 50th priestly anniversary, he gave a large part of his jubilee gift to help build Angela Hall, Saint Mary's Auditorium.

When Notre Dame's Main Building burned to the ground in 1879 (luckily the new church just next door was saved), Mother Angela wrote all the Holy Cross institutions in the States asking them to practice "the most rigorous economy" so that they might contribute their savings to help rebuild Notre Dame. When the new Main Building was rebuilt, within months of its destruction, and Father Sorin had pressured the

bankrupt community to put a Golden Dome atop it, it was the students, alumnae, and Sisters of Saint Mary's who provided the Golden Statue of Notre Dame, Our Lady, which still graces our campus.

From the earliest days, when Rome decreed that Father Moreau's Holy Cross Sisters be separated, jurisdictionally and financially, from the Holy Cross Priests and Brothers, there were two separate institutions at Notre Dame, but with the strongest familial ties back and forth across the Dixie Highway. The brother-sister pattern initiated by Father Neal Gillespie and Mother Angela was multiplied many times over: Father Corby had two sisters in the Holy Cross Community; Father Zahm one; Father Sherer two; Father Irving two; Father Hennessy three; and Father Cornelius Hagerty two. Living Holy Cross priests with living sisters today in Holy Cross include Fathers Putz, Heppen, McKee, McMahon, and Charles and Joseph Hauser with two sisters, as well as two brothers, in the Holy Cross Brothers.

The association of the two communities has, I believe, enriched both. From our side, one can only remember a few of the many who have crossed the highway to teach or act as Chaplains. The teachers were among the best at Notre Dame: Fathers Carrico, Quinlan, Wenniger, Nieuwland, Carrol, Crumley, O'Donnell, Donahue, Schumacher, Ryan, O'Hara, Cavanaugh. The long line of Chaplains from the beginning to Fathers Cavanaugh and Peyton today is perhaps forgotten in detail, but remembered with deep affection.

On our side, during the hundred years or so when this was a school run mainly by religious on a shoestring, little that happened

could have been possible without the great help of the Sisters. Father Sorin had them all in mind in 1879 when he promised that all Holy Cross Sisters, living and dead, would have a large share in the daily Mass offered at Notre Dame for benefactors "until the end of time". Another of the legendary priests at Notre Dame, Father Daniel Hudson, Editor for many years of the Ave Maria which Mother Angela helped Father Sorin found, expressed the thought well in a funeral sermon for one of the pioneer Sisters, Mother Mary Ascension. "The work of Father Sorin would have been impossible of accomplishment without the cooperation of the little band of religious women he had summoned to his aid. The students (of all those years) do not need to be reminded of the privilege and benefits and blessings that are there through the presence and prayers of those, whose ministrations are as manifold as they are unceasing and unselfish".

If I might add a personal aside, when I arrived at Notre Dame in 1934, there were still some of this valiant band working in the laundry. One of them, a large buxom German nun, said to me kindly on the day of my arrival: "From now on, to me you are 652", which was and still is my laundry number. Three years later when I was sent to Europe to study, I stopped by the laundry to say good-bye. She said: "652, it's cold over there, with not much heating in the houses. I put some long wool underwear in your laundry package". She was right! I did not see her again for six years, but I am sure her prayers were with me, and I did send her an occasional card signed 652. A few hours after my Ordination in 1943, I slipped over

to the laundry behind the Church to see her. Her greeting contained a simplicity and grace I have never forgotten. She kneeled down and said: "Now give me your blessing, Father 652". I should have asked her for her blessing, but I am sure we all had it - they gave much and missed little.

This past year we had two bronze copies made of a magnificent Mestrovic "Madonna and Child" statue. One copy went to the Holy Father, Pope Paul VI, for his new museum of Modern Art in the Vatican. The only other copy is in the courtyard of Lewis Hall as a grateful memorial to all the valiant Holy Cross Sisters who have served and are still serving in the Infirmary at Notre Dame. I have been tempted to sneak over some night and scratch a small inscription of my own on some obscure part of the statue, saying simply: "Thanks, 652".

While all I have said had to be said to be honest with the past, I cannot leave the impression that this mutual interest, cooperation, support, and affection was simply between the members of the two religious families that inaugurated both schools. There were and are increasingly laymen and women who shared the family affair and increasingly became the largest part of it. Back in April of 1899, two months after Marconi's successful wireless experiments in London, Professor Jerome Green transmitted the first wireless signals in America, from Notre Dame to Saint Mary's, naturally. Many years later, after World War II, I remember two Notre Dame students, ex-Air Corps radio men, who established an hourly walkie-talkie connection between

Then Professor Green's arrangement,

Badin Hall and Le Mans. I should add that it was more efficient, but greeted with less enthusiasm since it interfered with radio transmissions at the South Bend Airport. Our lay professors, from earliest times, also taught Saint Mary's girls and, as in the case of George and Doris Shuster, sometimes married them.

One cannot reminisce about the early and continual lay contributions without mentioning Miss Marion McCandless who received her degree in 1900, was the first resident secretary of the Alumnae Association - the seventh oldest such association in the land - founder and Editor of the Courier, and a person held in deep affection on both sides of the road for more than 70 years.

I might conclude this section on the lay dimension in the early days by quoting the program for the 1916 track and field day at Saint Mary's: The Timer: Mr. Rockne.

There is so much more that could be said in reminiscence: Like the Scholastic being founded in 1867 - over a hundred years ago - for both Notre Dame and Saint Mary's - a tradition only recently being resurrected with the joy of new discovery; Father Sorin admonishing the girls at Saint Mary's in 1897 for not making enough noise -- shades of our new cheer leaders; Saint Mary's building an annex to their tool shed, which might house an automobile if there were ever to be one at the school; the Editor of the Scholastic in 1868 - its second year - criticizing a play at Saint Mary's with these grim words: "One who dies of cholera should do so off stage".

There comes a time in an anniversary celebration when we must say that the past is prologue and move on to the present and the future.

The immediate present is, I believe, a watershed in this long and deepening relationship. Where precisely we are heading, no one can yet say with precision, but we are certainly on the way and both institutions are likely to be profoundly changed by the new relationship that is presently developing between them.

The new movement between our two schools began in the Fall of 1965 when about six students from Saint Mary's and fifteen from Notre Dame took classes at either school. In the Spring of 1966, the number rose to 52 from Saint Mary's and 148 from Notre Dame, for a total of 221 for the year. The totals for the next three years were 461, 621, and 1152. This Fall, there are 1366 students involved in the Co-Exchange Program, with the number likely to increase in the Spring Semester. Certainly, we are going somewhere - usually called coeducation.

I am sure that all of you have heard the usual arguments that support coeducation in our day: that education is better in mixed classes; that the general cultural life is better when men and women share it together; that the all-male or all-female society is unnatural, artificial, and noxious to personal development; that social life is sterile when only one sex is present; that men in class discussions need the female point of view and vice versa, and etc. I am inclined to agree with all or most of these reasons, but we are still

left with the problem of how to best resolve the problem or opportunity of coeducation at Saint Mary's and Notre Dame.

Some solutions irk me at the moment. I have been told by our students on occasion: It's a simple matter. Just admit girls to Notre Dame, charge them as you charge us, treat them as you treat us, judge them by the same academic standards for admission and graduation, and the problem is solved. My response has been that this may make sense for Princeton or Yale, but these schools do not have a girls school a mile distant, with the historical relationship that has characterized Notre Dame and Saint Mary's for 125 years. The solution they suggest might be simple for us, but disastrous for Saint Mary's. This ^{answer}~~argument~~ is meaningless if one doesn't respect history. Sadly, most who argue this way reason as if the world began at nine o'clock this morning.

At the other extreme, there are those who argue for merger between the two schools, which would mean that we would today be celebrating the demise of Saint Mary's after 125 years of existence. I cannot believe that this is the ideal solution.

Somewhere in between there must be an answer. I am intrigued by the thought that between us we might create a total educational opportunity that will be greater than the two separate opportunities that have existed thus far. There will be a lot of new realities in this equation, probably common registration and admissions, some composite academic departments shared on each side and some representing a primary responsibility on one or the other side, common academic calendar, grades, standards, many academic facilities and programs

planned and shared in common, and an equitable distribution of the true academic costs.

I believe that all of this can be accomplished without submerging Saint Mary's or bankrupting Notre Dame, or lowering the academic standards of either school. Degrees could be granted by either or both. We could join our strengths and eliminate our weaknesses.

What I am proposing is that we should continue to grow together, neither losing or diminishing our individual strengths or identities, but merging those realities that will be strengthened by a common effort and collaboration.

I would hope that the lessons of the past will continue to give us confidence and affection for each other, and the flexibility to enlarge upon the vision that has so superbly flourished in the past on both sides of the road so that, in the future, we might continue to grow, less conscious of what divides us and grateful for what enables us to create a composite reality that enriches each school and submerges neither.

I probably won't be around to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Saint Mary's, but, from some distant shore, I hope to be cheering in the wings and not ashamed of what I have said today.

St. Mary's
125 up Annual

Send to Jack Puggan