



Class of 1985
25th Reunion
June 4 – 6, 2010

April 2010

Dear Fellow '85ers,

Last week Tom Flynn asked if I'd write a letter to our class. I admit I balked a bit at first, but then supposed I've been prepping to write a paean to Holy Cross for most of my conscious life.

I'm a third generation HC grad. My grandfather, father, three uncles, sister and brother all preceded me on the hill. My nephew Matt is a junior there now. Growing up, I attended Crusader football games all over New England, and we spent a good deal of time with my dad's former classmates, a great group of intelligent, decent, hard-working, and fun men. From my earliest memory, I absorbed the lesson that Holy Cross is special, that the skills, friendships and character cultivated there are the tools needed for a life well lived.

I haven't forgotten that lesson. It's one that has been proved for me time and again in the years since Dr. Dave delivered his beautiful commencement address. (Someday I'll forgive him for the empty seat next to me at graduation.) I am always proud to say I went to Holy Cross. I just have a hard time acknowledging that it's been twenty-five years.

We will come together for reunion in June with redistricted hairlines and perhaps a few pounds, with spouses, kids, careers and hectic schedules. Many of us will carry burdens, some visible, others unseen. But when we meet, I suspect we will see not the faces of our mid-forties selves, but the friends from Carlin, Hanselman, Wheeler, Alumni, Mulledy and Clark we met nearly thirty years ago.

My memories of those early days at Holy Cross are vivid and happy, tinged perhaps by the sentimental streak that is the curse and blessing of those with an Irish heritage. I recall my parents' gratitude at the kindness of the Purple Key Society in lugging boxes and clothes up the Carlin stairs. I remember hearing "Lift High the Cross" for the first time at Mass on that August day. I loved my years in Carlin, rooming with Nancy Cangiano and getting to know a group of friends I credit with helping me grow up. I remember studying for Chris Augustiniak's Economics final with Leo Ardine, cutting John Crowley's hair, doing Jane Fonda with Mary-Beth Manning, learning how to write like a college student, sunning myself on the track, setting off the fire alarm making toast late one night, and spending countless hours in the hall with Bernadette, Maryann, Karen, Andréa, Joan, Joan, Peggy, Kim, Carol, Anne, Claire, Meg, Sarah, Karen and Rose.

Junior year brought a semester abroad. I spent time in London with LJ Mitchell, Sarah Burns and Mark Cronin, and traveled in Europe with Bernadette Keefe, Chris Weiss and Michelle Holland before coming back to room with Kathy McCloskey in Wheeler. Senior year found me at 11 Caro Street (long now a victim of the bulldozer), where my favorite of the many parties we hosted was the "bring your favorite faculty member" cookout held at the end of the semester.

It seemed the least we could do. Those men and women taught us to think deeply, read carefully and write clearly. They showed us how to open our minds and to live our lives informed by good principals. Even after all this time, I am struck by the passionate devotion to their craft evidenced by so many of the teachers I was privileged to know. I recall Dr. Reilly's love for Emerson, Thoreau and Melville, and Pr. Ireland's dry wit and single cigarette, precisely smoked, as he gave life to Faulkner and Robert Penn Warren. Fr. Desautels explicated Sartre and Camus, while Pr. Nagy and Fr. Reboli swept me along into the sumptuous world of Classics and Renaissance art. I fell in love with American history all over again with Fr. K's classes on the age of Jackson and immigration history. I remember Mythology with Fr. (just damn brilliant) Hamilton, and the strains of opera drifting from Pr. Callahan's storied class on James Joyce. It rivaled anything I took in graduate school.

Your memories are doubtless different, depending on your course of study, but I imagine there's a common thread of respect and gratitude running through them. If you attended one of the retreats in Narragansett, you likely also cherish the memory of Fr. LaBran's joy and the exhortation to let yourself be loved. Those are gifts.

I met Fr. McFarland at an HC event last summer, and we talked a bit about what makes Holy Cross special. Without hesitation, I offered that it's the people. At every pivotal point in my life, through joy and loss, friends from school have materialized in thought and word and deed. I have been blessed and humbled by the bonds.

Since graduation, Carol Logan has hosted countless weekends on the Cape, where a group including Bernadette (Keefe) Dore, Joan (Cloherty) Sullivan, Kim Zimmer, Andréa (Lamarre) Carey, Karen (Sullivan) Shea, Peggy (Mason) Santhouse, Maryann (Cloherty) Casavant, Patty (O'Meara) Lee, Rose (Burns) Connolly, Claire (Kennedy) Judge, Anne (Schiffmann) Fink, and Meg (Millard) McGrath has gathered. In recent years, we've had Thanksgiving weekend dinners with many on that list, along with Kathy (McCloskey) and Myles Maguire, Maureen (Donfield) and John Nahill, and Chris (Boyle) and Russ Watson. Through kids, jobs, moves, illnesses and injuries, the formula hasn't changed much: lots of laughter, food and wine. And talk. Let's not forget the talk.

In many respects, friends like these are our memories. They share them, keep them, allow us to reconnect with our younger, perhaps more tolerant and elastic selves. They let us be our better angels. As I reflect back on my years at Holy Cross and those afterward, I have much for which to be thankful.

After graduation, I roomed with Kathy McCloskey, Andréa Lamarre and Peggy Mason, and worked for a software company in Dedham. I met my husband Larry there when he audited the company. Eventually, I went to grad school at BC, secure in the knowledge of the road not taken, and proceeded to teach English and writing there for a few years. Along the way, I got married, moved to Natick, and had three kids. I thought we would stay in the Boston area for good, but life is funny that way.

I write this from Annapolis, Maryland, a beautiful little historic city that is home to the US Naval Academy and now the Harding family. We moved here ten years ago for a job, and stayed because we like it. We are fortunate to have many visitors, and to spend time in Falmouth during the summer, so we stay close to our New England roots and our families.

Larry and I have been lucky in our kids. Despite all of the mistakes I so earnestly keep making, they are turning out fine. By the time September rolls around, I will have three teens: Tim 18, Meg 16 and Claire 13. They like books, tell good jokes, swim and ski, leave clothes and shoes all over the house, and still seem to like their parents. They are good friends, finishing each other's stories and spouting lines from *The Office* and *30 Rock* with great frequency. I will miss them terribly when they fly the coop for college, Tim in a year, Meg the one following.

Larry remains my closest friend, a good thing because we work together as well as try to keep the lid on at home. When he started a firm to help companies expand internationally in 2003, I came along for the ride to manage the communications. Since graduation, I've spent most of my career writing one thing or another, so it's been a good fit.

After the New England-style winter we had here, spring 2010 is particularly welcome. Visitors are starting to multiply, always a happy thing. Joan and Andréa have come to Maryland recently, and I'm looking forward to one of Peggy's annual jaunts to the area. All three are happy and doing well, incredulous of course, at the length of our acquaintance. I keep in touch with Dave Bishop and Brian Feeney only through Christmas cards now, but I'm hopeful they'll join the crowd in Worcester this June. I had a great time catching up with Tom Bacon on the phone recently, and Facebook has also brought me in touch with a number of other classmates. Like many of you, I was reluctant to sign up, but finally caved a couple of months ago, motivated in part by our pending reunion. I've since enjoyed reconnecting with Sara Burns Rapuano, Kate Richards, Neil Sullivan, John Driscoll, Tommy Ledwin and a host of others. While it's admittedly a potential timewaster (I had to pull the plug on myself one day after becoming a fan of Winston Churchill), it's a great way to reconnect with folks from your past. Please consider signing up and joining the HC Class of '85 reunion group. You can also put together a personal reflections page on the Holy Cross website in preparation for the reunion. The link is here:

<http://www.holycross.edu/alumni/events/reunion/1985.html>.

As I wind this letter down, I'm grateful to Tom for asking me to compile a few memories. I've enjoyed the exercise. I extend a heartfelt thanks to Jim O'Neill, Joanne Niland, Joe Terranova, and all the others who have served as letter writers for our class over the last twenty-five years. Thanks for keeping us in touch and reminding us of our special and shared history.

Hope to see you in June. God bless.

Lynne

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No letter would be complete without a request for your participation in The Holy Cross fund. Please do what you can to help the Class of '85 reach its fundraising and participation goals, and keep those green slips or Facebook updates coming. Thanks.