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A Vice President's Perspective



I glanced at my watch.

6:28 p.m. *Good*, I thought, *I'll be on time for this meeting*. I entered the door of an Italian restaurant on Kenmore Avenue only to find him already there, sipping a glass of San Pellegrino water.

Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, S.J., president of Canisius College, is partial to Tuscan cooking and we had arranged to meet in this tiny restaurant to talk about the possibility of my coming to Canisius as a vice president.

It was June 1997, now four years into his term as president of the college and Father Cooke was looking at the possibility of launching the public phase of the college's largest fund-raising effort ever without a chief development officer. Still, there was little look of desperation or concern. He was fully confident that he and Canisius would be successful.

Over the next two hours, he charted his vision of the college for me. Using a line he has repeated scores of times to alumni and friends, he stressed the basics: "Quality, quality, quality," he said. "If you pursue quality, you can never go wrong."

By the time coffee arrived, he had whetted my appetite for the challenge. I was actually thinking about changing careers and helping this ambitious Jesuit to make all of this happen. Within six weeks, I was at my desk at the college as vice president for college relations.

Whether it's recruiting a vice president, a prospective student or a million dollar donor, I've seen him use this unique blend of vision and confidence countless times over the past six years. The results have been amazing.

In this issue of *Canisius College Magazine*, we mark this extraordinary decade of growth and progress under Father Cooke's leadership. Every project on his priority list from his 1993 Facilities Master Plan has been completed. He even added a few along the way for good measure. In all, \$90 million has been invested in the college's physical plant, from residence halls to a performing arts center. Today, he is preparing to welcome another large, talented freshman class. In Buffalo, Canisius is the toast of the town. It is seen as a place that is progressive, results-oriented and above all, committed to quality.

The vision of Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, S.J., has taken root — in the hearts and minds of Canisius alumni and friends, trustees, faculty, staff and students and indeed, in the entire Western New York community.

There are days I enter the campus that I shake my head in disbelief. I recall some earlier days in the 1970s when resources were scant, when the campus looked more than a bit dowdy, when a vision had not yet taken root. I would have never dreamed that the place could look so good.

His drive and his ambitions notwithstanding, Father Cooke remains a most modest man. He is proud of what Canisius has accomplished, but realizes that he and we are not finished. "The best is yet to come," he proclaims, "and failure is not an option."

My appetite for the challenge is whetted once again.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John J. Hurley". The signature is written in a cursive style.

John J. Hurley '78
Vice President for College Relations

As You Were

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Canisius College Magazine would like to thank those Canisius alumni who wrote in to help the editors identify the people pictured in the spring 2003 **As You Were** photo, featuring the 1963 ROTC Drill Team. Pictured front-and-center is Drillmaster Martin F. Idzik '63 (white sash). To his left is Glenn Lazarus '65; to his right is Norman Getz. The flag holder is Francis Lazarus '66. The other Drill Team members, who are less recognizable in the photo, are: Fran Brobeil Jr. '63, Tony Laformara '63, Mike Ryan '64, Jed Dietrich, Dick Hall '64, Mike Zdrojewski '64, Norm McTigue '64, Pat Aquino, Joe Sorci '65, Paul Laformara '66, Joe Leary '66, Tony Buscaglia '66, John Bondanella '66 and CPT George J. Schneider '62, the Drill Team moderator that year.

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Student Spotlight Outstanding Senior Leaders

Meet three Canisius seniors who distinguished themselves academically, socially and through service to humanity, and ultimately excelled as leaders in the Class of 2003.

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Cover Story A Decade of Change

As Canisius President Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, S.J., marks a decade of leadership, *Canisius College Magazine* takes a comprehensive look at the college's 10-year progression, which evolved from a new vision for Canisius.

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Alumni Profile A Degree — Decades in the Making

They left Canisius early to pursue professional school. Years later, these former Canisius students, from the 1930s through 60s, receive their undergraduate degrees from the college they always considered *alma mater*.

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