

**On the Meaning of the University of Sudbury
Sword of Loyola Award**

**Remarks by Dr. Andrii Krawchuk, President and Vice-Chancellor
University of Sudbury Students' Year-end Banquet
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Honored guests, ladies and gentlemen: I am honored to speak about the significance of the Sword of Loyola, which is being presented tonight as an award. It is a task for which I am grateful, because it gives me the opportunity to think about, and to share with you, the basic principles of the university and the values which we uphold and try to transmit in our work with the students.

The story of the original sword begins with a birth in a Spanish castle in 1491. One year before Columbus' voyage, a boy is born in the castle of Loyola. Neither prince nor pauper, he grows up and is raised in the courts of royalty. In his teens, he serves as a page to the king's treasurer, and later becomes a knight in the service of a Duke. In 1521, as he turns 30, there is trouble – and a transformation. At the fortress in Pamplona, during a siege by the French, he is wounded in the leg. The wound does not heal, and a month later he is so ill that last rites are administered. But a few days after that, his health begins to improve. He reads a book – a life of Christ – and converts to Christianity. His conversion is so profound and his religious experience so intense that he has visions.

This survivor, whose name is Ignatius, will live another 35 years, he will write a book that will inspire a new religious order – the Jesuits. And will see the day when the first Jesuit missionaries are sent to Brazil, and the day when India becomes a Jesuit province under the leadership of Francis Xavier. Before many people stop believing that the world is flat, this new religious order will be hard at work throughout most of the known world. Century after century, that work will continue and grow. Long before the internet, the telephone and our automated means of transportation, a human network of communication is put into place throughout the world to spread the message of the faith. And, in 1913, here in Sudbury, those same Jesuits will establish the Collège du Sacré-Coeur, which will later become the University of Sudbury.

Today, on the façade of our main building, there is a sculpture of Ignatius with a sword. And in the office of the President, a sword also hangs on the wall. Once a year it is removed for the purpose of this ceremony. It is not a weapon, but a symbol. It is not a symbol of war, although wars can still wound us today, just as the siege of Pamplona did Ignatius. Rather, this Sword of Ignatius Loyola is a symbol of human service that is transformed into service and dedication to a higher purpose. Having served the king with his sword, Ignatius converts to Christianity and renounces the path of living and dying by the sword of war. He takes up a new service – a service to the world, to all of humanity and to its Creator. The new, symbolic sword is no longer a weapon – it does not divide people through warfare, but unites them through service. It does not convert through power and destruction, but by an appeal to the heart and by respect for human persons.

At the University of Sudbury, our most important purpose is education, the constructive transformation of minds through knowledge. And the true value of that education is always measured in light of what is given back to the human community. The process of education at this university always has the higher goal of applying knowledge towards the good of others. In this way, through dedication to this higher purpose, each individual person has the capacity to make significant contributions in the world, and to be part of the transformative project of all humanity.

And so this Sword of Loyola, our symbol for the ideal of knowledge at the service of others, is presented to the student who has best understood both that ideal and the values attached to it – integrity, tenacity of purpose, devotion to duty, and sound leadership.

L'université attribue l'épée à l'étudiant(e) ayant le mieux démontré sa signification et son idéal – par l'intégrité de son caractère, la ténacité de ses intentions, le dévouement à la tâche, la mise en œuvre de l'habileté à organiser – mais, avant tout, comme l'exprimait si bien le Père Arrupe, ancien Supérieur général de la communauté des Jésuites, « le désir de s'offrir en sacrifice pour servir autrui. »