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CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

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SUPERIOR GENERAL

**Homily delivered on the Occasion of the
75th Anniversary of the Founding of
St. George's College, Santiago, Chile**

11 November, 2011

First of all, I would like to greet and welcome our distinguished Presider for this special Mass marking the 75th anniversary of the foundation of St. George's College, His Excellency, Monsignor Ricardo Ezzati, Archbishop of Santiago. Thank you for honoring us on this special occasion with your prayers and your presence among us.

A warm word of welcome and gratitude, as well, to my brothers and sisters in Holy Cross, to the twenty young people from the United States who collaborate with us in our ministries in Chile, dedicated faculty and staff of St. George's College, and so many of the seventy distinct generations of distinguished graduates of St. George's and their families.

Two exceptionally important events for the Congregation of Holy Cross took place within the last three years, and they will mark our Congregation, its members and our ministries in 17 countries forever. Just three years ago, our Founder, Basile Moreau, C.S.C., was beatified in Le Mans, France. The, just a little more than one year ago, the first Holy Cross religious, Brother André Bessette, C.S.C., was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI.

The beatification of our Founder marked a special moment, 175 years into our history, when the charism he gave to us, the cross as our only hope, a love for the Eucharist, service as educators and missionaries after the example of Jesus, and a burning love and desire to make God known, loved and served, placed the Church's official recognition of who we are and what we do on us as well as our ministries.

The sanctification of our first Holy Cross religious, Saint André Bessette, has led us to redouble our efforts as Holy Cross religious, to live our lives as religious as fully and as faithfully as we can, because living our life well has earned for one among our number the ultimate public declaration of holiness on the part of our Church.

In the sixty-first chapter of the book of the prophet Isaiah, he writes that he has been anointed by God and sent to deliver good news to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted and to announce a welcome return for those living in exile. His words further develop and

reveal the depth of God's saving love and power for those who are faithful to his laws and decrees. They also underscore, within the context of what we today understand as a universal call to holiness, words of hope-filled encouragement and acceptance for those who are most in need of God's saving grace and mercy.

A young man currently studying at Boston College, Patrick Manning, who holds three Notre Dame degrees in undergraduate studies, and master degrees in education through the Alliance for Catholic Education program and theology, recently wrote a beautiful article on the role of a teacher in a Catholic educational institution.

As at St. George's for all these years and under very diverse religious, social and political circumstances, teachers have not only offered an intellectual and human formation in the Holy Cross tradition, but they have tried to communicate a knowledge based on truth which leads students to an exposure to the wholeness of Catholic life, practice and virtue. Blessed Basile Moreau wrote that "the art of Christian teaching is to bring about in the lives of young people in as complete a way as possible, the very life and the teachings of Jesus Christ."

In another place, he wrote that "Christianity, and with still greater reason the religious life, is nothing else than the life of Jesus Christ present in our conduct." As parents, the first teachers on the faith, and as teachers in our educational institutions and at Colegio St. George, accept the mission of Jesus Christ because we are called to teach as Jesus did. The founder of the University of Notre Dame, Father Edward Sorin, urged teachers at Holy Cross institutions to "find our greatest consolation and ever our delight, in spending ourselves in the glorious task of training young souls for heaven."

In imitation of Christ the Teacher, we emulate the fact that Jesus loved those he taught, he met their human needs and he cared for the poor. Basil Moreau urged teachers to be all things to all people, "like Saint Paul, little with the little, great with the great, seeing in all people only the image of God imprinted within them like a Sacred seal which must be preserved at all costs."

It is fitting as the Church comes to the conclusion of another year of grace, the this evening's Gospel from the 25th chapter of St. Matthew, which recounts how at the last day, in the presence of all people, Jesus will separate the sheep from the goats and offer the former eternal life for whatever they did for the least of their brothers and sisters, they did for him. Those on his left, however, will not have earned a place in the kingdom because they did not recognize the traces of the face of Jesus in those in need.

A Holy Cross scholar, Father Nicholas Ayo, C.S.C., wrote a beautiful reflection on this coming Sunday's Gospel on the talents, in words applicable to all of us and indeed to all seventy generations of St. George's graduates.

"Success", he wrote, "is hard to pin down. Financial success may mean wealth. Vocational success may mean fame. Social success may mean influence. Emotional success may mean

happiness. Family success may mean spouse, home, and children. Spiritual success no doubt means knowing, loving, and serving God.”

The encounter with Jesus which the guidance and sacraments of the Church and Catholic education should prepare us for is how well we have learned to cooperate with the gift and grace of faith, the good works we bring with us as St. James speaks about in our second reading, and all our success, measured mostly in terms of our response to God’s loving presence in our lives.

In the words of our holy Founder, “I am convinced that Providence, which has in the past done everything necessary for the development and perfection of its work, will continue to bestow on us most abundant blessings. To ensure this, we must be constantly animated by the spirit of zeal and generosity which so holy an undertaking requires.”

As we celebrate this special moment, may this be our pledge to God, to the Church, to our fellow Holy Cross religious and to each of you. In this way, together we will continue to develop this providential work, St. George’s College, with effective zeal, with a deepening of all our respective commitments, and in loving service to the Catholic Church in Chile as more and more generations of Georgians take their place in a long line of men and women who on these rounds will learn “to make God known, loved and served.”

Amen.