of St. Joseph so that we, too, may obtain the grace of sincere esteem of our state of life, deep conviction of its duties, and the strength to manifest these sentiments in all times and places. Through St. Joseph’s example, we see how a vocation to marriage, single life, priesthood, or religious life requires more than just duty, more than just putting in our time and fulfilling our obligations. It requires love, a love for the One who calls us and a love for those we are called to serve. After all, a vocation not rooted in love is a vocation not rooted in God. Fr. Moreau knew this. Br. André knew this.

That is why we need to go to Joseph, and not just with our prayers of intercession and petition. We need to go to him so that we can learn how to live our own vocations well. By deepening our devotion to St. Joseph and learning how to love as he loved, we will be able to embrace more fully the holiness that is integral to our own vocations. In so doing, in the words of Fr. Moreau, we will honor him as he desires. We cannot wait. We must go to Joseph.

Brother Paul Bednarczyk, C.S.C., was born in New Haven, Connecticut, and is a 1975 graduate of Notre Dame High School in West Haven. In 1975 he began his formation at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts. He professed his First Vows in 1979 and his Final Vows in 1985. He has a Bachelor’s Degree in English from Stonehill College and a Master’s Degree in Religion and Religious Education from Fordham University. Brother Paul has worked as a teacher, administrator and campus minister, the Vocation Director for his Province and as a Formation Director. In 2002, he assumed the role of Executive Director of the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC), where he oversaw this professional organization of religious vocation directors consisting of over 900 members in 15 countries. Within this capacity, he served as a consultant to the U.S. Bishops Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. He has served as a member of the Advisory Board of Praesidium Religious Services, the Corporate Board of Holy Cross Family Ministries, and on several international Holy Cross commissions. Br. Paul has published several articles on vocation ministry. In 2016, the General Chapter of the Congregation elected him First General Assistant and Vicar. In this new leadership role, he now resides in Rome in the Holy Cross Generalate, where he works fulltime.
The religious spirit consists in the knowledge and love of the duties of one's vocation and has as its effect to make us increase in the love of our vocation, fulfill its obligations with exactitude, and defend as we ought its honor and interests. The dispositions that I have just mentioned were never better illustrated than by our glorious patron, St. Joseph. Let us then have recourse to him in order that we may understand the sentiments which we should make our own evermore wholeheartedly and obtain, by his powerful intercession before God, the grace of sincere esteem of our state of life, deep conviction of its duties, and the strength to manifest these sentiments in all times and places. If, however, we are to honor him as he desires, it is not enough to invoke him; we must further devotion to him and, above all, imitate his virtues and set them in opposition to the spirit of the world. This it is which makes devotion to him so timely.

—Basil Moreau

At the foot of Mount Royal in Montreal, there is a statue of St. Joseph that greets the millions of pilgrims who come to St. Joseph’s Oratory every year to pay homage to this glorious saint. On the statue’s pedestal, we read the words: Ite Ad Joseph — Go to Joseph. These words were the mantra of Br. André Bessette, C.S.C., the founder of St. Joseph’s Oratory, whose legendary holiness and healing powers gave him the name, “Miracle Man of Montreal.” Br. André’s stalwart devotion to St. Joseph was partly attributed to the esteemed position that the foster father of Jesus holds in the heart of every Holy Cross religious. It was Fr. Moreau who declared St. Joseph as one of the glorious patrons of his newly formed Congregation of Holy Cross.

But why should we go to Joseph? What is so special about St. Joseph that we, in the spirit of Fr. Moreau and Br. André, should go to him with our aching souls, our hearts’ desires, and our longings for holiness?

The answer is simple. In all of his ordinariness, St. Joseph embodies the religious spirit for which all Christians long – integrity, fortitude, fidelity, and yes, sanctity. In living out his foreboding vocation of being the husband of Mary and the foster father of the Messiah, St. Joseph remained unwavering in his loyalty, faithful to his mission, and unselfishly open to the will of God. St. Joseph did this not out of blind obedience or ignorance; he did it simply out of love.

“In all of his ordinariness, St. Joseph embodies the religious spirit for which all Christians long – integrity, fortitude, fidelity, and yes, sanctity.”

For those who are discerning their vocation in life and for those who are already living theirs out, St. Joseph remains a model of how to live out our baptismal call to holiness and how to do it well. Fr. Moreau recognized this and encouraged us to seek the intercession