

Fourth, “Union is a powerful lever with which we could move, direct, and sanctify the whole world.” From Father Moreau’s perspective, the call to religious life in Holy Cross is also a call to community. As we draw sustenance for our life and mission from God in prayer, so we support and strengthen one another through community. Today, as in Moreau’s time, there is need for a witness of union in our world, a witness that people of different cultures and perspectives can live and work together for the good of all. Holy Cross offers such a witness and thereby continues to fulfill one of Basil Moreau’s most profound aspirations for the Congregation and vibrant hopes for the world.

Fifth, “Trials are the hallmark of the works of God.” Nowhere does Father Moreau indicate that any of this will be easy. In fact, he believes the contrary. Responding to God, continuing the mission, striving to remain faithful to prayer, and working together in community will lead, inevitably, to encounters with the cross. Moreau wanted the religious of Holy Cross to be fluent in the language of the cross so they could live and move and work among the poor, distressed, deprived, and those in any kind of pain or need. This is precisely why he situates us next to Mary at the foot of the cross and asks that we turn often to Our Lady

of Sorrows (Our Lady of Holy Cross) to continue to probe the meaning of the cross for our life and so welcome the transforming grace within it.

We can be people with hope to bring. That hope is firmly rooted in the conviction that God is present and active in our lives, that we are called to continue Jesus’ mission through the variety of ways in which we serve, that we can build and sustain a relationship with God in prayer as a powerful resource for our life and work, that our union with and love for one another can have a transforming influence on our world, and that the cross is not a burden to be avoided but a blessing to be embraced. We can be people with hope to bring.

Because God was so much a part of his life and work, Basil Moreau characterizes his own mission as a desire for God. “I have searched for nothing but the spirit of God, and the rest is always secondary to me.” Living with that desire to discover the spirit of God is truly a cause and foundation for hope. Such are the words and wisdom, the call and challenge of Basil Moreau, for today and tomorrow.

Brother Joel Giallanza, C.S.C., is a member of the Moreau Province of Holy Cross. He has served in administration and formation on various levels for the Congregation. He has served as a retreat master, spiritual director and parish director of religious education and has directed retreats on spirituality, religious life, and a variety of topics across the United States and around the world. In the Diocese of Austin, Brother Joel founded the diocesan Institute for Spiritual Direction in 2002, was named the associate vicar for religious in 2003 and became the vicar for religious in 2004. He continues to be involved in conducting retreats and workshops for the schools associated with the Holy Cross Institute, and for religious and other groups. He is a specialist in the writings and spirituality of Blessed Basil Moreau, and of the family of Holy Cross.



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A photograph of a stone archway with a street lamp and a banner featuring a portrait of Basil Moreau. The banner is blue with a white portrait of a man in a suit. The archway is surrounded by greenery and flowers.

MONTHLY REFLECTION  
SERIES

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Men with Hope to Bring  
The Call and Challenge of  
Basil Moreau  
Br. Joel Giallanza, C.S.C.

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The logo of the Congregation of Holy Cross, featuring a stylized cross with a central figure and the text "CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS EDUCATION · PARISH · MISSION".

CONGREGATION OF  
HOLY CROSS  
EDUCATION · PARISH · MISSION

In the Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross, the brothers and priests are described as “men with hope to bring.” We might react and respond to such a description with questions that call for a deeper probing. Can we be men with hope to bring given the many situations in our world that speak of discouragement and even despair? What is there to be hopeful about? As a religious of Holy Cross, I have reflected often on those words in the Constitutions and have raised similar questions. How can we be ‘men with hope to bring’ What is the basis for our hope?

The call and the challenge to be people of hope in today’s world is firmly rooted in a fundamental principle of Father Moreau’s spirituality. God is present and active in every situation at all times without exception. Moreau was convinced and indeed had experienced that God was guiding and blessing the work of Holy Cross, even during those times when circumstances appeared to be contrary to expected progress. Moreau refers to this presence and activity of God as Providence, “which guides all the events of this world for God’s greater glory and the salvation of all people.” For Holy Cross, it is Providence that has “inspired whatever has been undertaken up to the present for the completion of the important work that has been

entrusted to us.” The implications of this truth are significant for the Congregation of Holy Cross, now and for the future. Father Moreau himself offers some reflections on this, highlighting the main elements of his spirituality.

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## **Commemorating the 10th anniversary of the beatification of Blessed Basil Moreau, C.S.C.**

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First, “Holy Cross is not a human work, but God’s very own.” We can be men with hope to bring because we do not rely solely on our own resources to continue the mission of Jesus. This is God’s work. Often, when Father Moreau referred to the Congregation, he would speak of it as simply “the Work,” God’s work. He believed that God had brought Holy Cross into existence and so God would bring it to perfection.

Second, “Zeal is that flame of burning desire that one experiences to make

God known, loved and served and thus work for the salvation of others.” God’s Providence calls the religious of Holy Cross to continue the mission of Jesus. In the 180 years since their foundation, Holy Cross religious have responded to the church’s call by serving others in various places around the world. The boldness and effectiveness of that response has had a tremendous impact on local churches and has made the membership of Holy Cross an international and multicultural presence in ministry and force for good in our world.

Third, “To become an apostle according to your vocation, begin by being a person of prayer.” Responding to Providence and effectiveness in mission require a sustained relationship with God in prayer, as individuals and as community. Besides being a source of grace and strength, this relationship is a daily reminder that our own resources are insufficient for the important work that has been given to us. We need this relationship to remain true to what God is asking of us. Prayer marked Father Moreau’s life, whether he was petitioning for the necessities to assure the life and work of the members or giving thanks for what had been accomplished thus far.

