

With Hope to Bring

A Resource in Spirituality for Holy Cross Associates



Holy Cross
Associates
Midwest
Province

through the study of theology. For centuries, theologians have striven to increase our understanding of our relationship to God. The combination of tradition enhanced by Theology can lead to a stronger and more abiding Hope. As Holy Cross Associates, we facilitate a Theology Book Discussion Group. This group meets monthly to review current books in Theology. We discuss and share our various opinions on the vital topics of the meaning of life and truths of existence. We read and discuss such offerings as Teilhard de Chardin's "The Phenomenon of Man", "Quantum Theology" by Diarmuid O'Murchu, and "the Heart of Christianity" by Marcus Borg. We continue our spiritual transformation through increasing our understanding of new concepts in science, scripture scholarship, and theology. Through these pursuits we have learned that there are many ways to a happy and hopeful life that supersedes the strict "reward and punishment" model of Christianity that has been prevalent for many years.

Quote from Scripture for the "Lectio" Process
Romans 8:24-28

Copies may be requested from:

Br. Richard Johnson, C.S.C.
Holy Cross Associates
Midwest Province
Provincial Administration
P.O. Box 460
Notre Dame, IN 46556-0460

rjohnson@brothersofholycross.com

Hope

Father Moreau challenges us to be people of hope, convinced by our way of life that God is ever present and active in our world, that God has not abandoned the people. This hope needs to permeate our ministries.

Circular Letter 23

Let us, then, continue with noble courage, my dear sons and daughter in Jesus Christ, on the difficult path which we have begun. We should rely confidently on God who has called us to so glorious a task, and encouragement in the hope of a better life, and keep our eyes fixed on that changeless eternity where no longer will there be succession of days, weeks months and years.

Constitutions, Brothers and Priests of Holy Cross, 118

We do not grieve as men without hope, for Christ the Lord has risen to die no more. He has taken us into the mystery and grace of this life that springs from death. If we like him encounter and accept suffering in our discipleship, we will move without awkwardness among others who suffer. We must be men with hope to bring. There is no failure the Lord's love cannot reverse, no humiliation he cannot exchange for blessing, no anger he cannot dissolve, no routine he cannot transfigure. All is swallowed up in victory. He has nothing but gifts to offer. It remains only for us to find how even the cross can be borne as a gift.

Bringing Hope to the Community

Connie and Dave Bannon

All humans desire the theological virtue of hope. This virtue describes the basic need of all to be in union with God now and in the future thus giving meaning and purpose to our earthly life. Hope strengthens us against despair, apathy, abandonment and fuels the soul to go on. One avenue for experiencing Hope is

Introduction

Purpose:

Father Moreau envisioned a clerical and lay community in which certain characteristics would emerge to create a family spirit. This unique family spirit would serve the church well as Holy Cross ministers throughout the world.



As associates receive the grace of their vocation in Holy Cross, these same characteristics need to be nurtured so that an authentic Holy Cross spirituality may blossom. In these suggestions for associate monthly meetings, it is hoped that individual associates and local chapters may grasp more completely their unique way of incorporating Holy Cross spirituality into their daily lives and ministry.

Themes:

In preparation for the commemoration of the bicentennial of Father Basil Moreau's birth on February 11, 1799, a committee of Holy Cross Sisters, Brothers and Priests met and chose eleven themes for reflection. As we await for Basil Moreau's canonization, it is appropriate for Holy Cross Associates to share in similar reflections.

Any consideration of virtue presupposes that each individual has made an underlying commitment to Christian discipleship through the promises made as a Holy Cross Associate. This commitment enables him or her to be open to God's unconditional love in a personal relationship with Christ in community. It is in the context of this relationship that these Holy Cross characteristics can be planted, nurtured and brought to fruition.

Format:

The format for these meetings consists in:

- Opening prayer
- Reading of quotes from Holy Cross resources
- Reading of the personal reflection by a Holy Cross Associate
- Using the “lectio” process for praying the Scriptures
- Concluding with announcements and a final prayer

Always provide some social time either at the beginning of the meeting or at the end of the session.

The “Lectio” Process for Praying the Scriptures:

The desert fathers and mothers in the early church had a very unique way of spending an entire day in reflection on a passage of Scripture. Their method, known as “lectio divina,” has come down through the centuries as an important way of growing in the spiritual life. It consists in reading a passage of Scripture four times. Each time the passage will contain more meaning as the reader begins to apply its message to his or her own life.

Follow these instructions as you reflect on Scripture as part of your monthly meeting:

The group leader chooses volunteers to read the passage four times.

Spend a moment in silent prayer asking the Holy Spirit to be present in this discernment process

Before having someone read the passage for the first time, the group leader says, “We read the passage for the first time just to familiarize ourselves with its meaning.”

Before having someone read the passage for the second time, the

the biannual gatherings at Notre Dame.

Each time we have attended the biannual conference at Notre Dame, we have shared in community accommodations, and in the meals and parties put on by the brothers or one or more of the Chapters. The last few years we have been privileged to share in the jubilee celebrations of the sisters, brothers, and priests of the congregation of Holy Cross! We feel we are “part of the family.”

As we are continuing to strive for growth in our hospitality towards our neighbor and family, we have the insight and charism of our Holy Cross sisters and brothers to guide us – to be light showing us the way to trust God and open ourselves more to share the hospitality and forgiveness that God has so freely given us.

Quote from Scripture for the “Lectio” Process

John 2: 1-13

Hospitality

Father Moreau insists that the members of the family of Holy Cross be open to and accepting of all in our community. This hospitality should also extend to all peoples.

Circular Letter 174

Let us not limit our interest to the narrow confines of a particular house, a province, or our own country. This would be egoism and self-seeking. Rather let us be one with all our houses, and regard none as a stranger to the one in which we live.

Constitutions, Marianites of Holy Cross, 12

By straightforward and sincere interpersonal relationships, we witness to the Spirit of love, joy and peace dwelling within us. True to the hospitality that has always been a part of our heritage as Marianites of Holy Cross, our welcome for all persons is one of gracious courtesy.

Holy Cross Hospitality

Mary C. Pease
Joe Rithmeier

Holy Cross Hospitality is lived and practiced in Minnesota as we open our homes to each other for our monthly meetings. It is here in these homes that we come together to experience the hospitality of the heart. Besides our reflection and prayer we have helped each other carry the load of difficult times, shared the joy of good times, given encouragement, kept each of us connected to God and strong in our various ministries.

Our experience of becoming associates has embodied hospitality, from being accepted just as we are, to being received as family both in our local group, and in the warmth and enthusiasm of the brothers when they have led our retreats here in Minnesota and at

group leader says, “As we read the passage for the second time, choose a word or phrase that captures your attention.” After the passage is read, the group leader says, “Take a moment to reflect on that word or phrase. After a short period of the reflection, the group leader shares his word and then invites others in the group to share theirs. It is important to allow enough time for all to participate. After sufficient time the group leader says, “Would anyone else like to share?”

Before having someone read the passage for the third time, the group leader says, “As we read the passage for the third time, listen for a personal message God is giving you. It could have something to do with the word or phrase you have already chosen.” After the passage is read, the group leader says, “Take a moment to hear the message God has for you in this passage. I will begin by sharing first and then I will invite others to share.” It is important to allow two or three minutes before the leader shares his or her thoughts. Some members will need this time to receive the significance of the passage for them. After the group leader shares, he or she invites others to share. Stress the importance of sharing aloud. Each individual sharing is a gift to the group and has special significance for the community

Before having someone read the passage for the fourth time, the group leader says, “As we read the passage for the fourth time, listen for a call from God. What direction does God want you to take during the coming month? I will begin by sharing first and then I will invite others to share.” It is important to allow two or three minutes before the leader shares his or her thoughts. After the group leader shares, he or she invites others to share.

At the end of the process the group leader summarizes how God is leading the chapter for the coming month.

Chapters of the Booklet

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We began our married life with daily Mass at the Sacred Heart Basilica on the campus of the University of Notre Dame. There we often walked around St. Mary's and St. Joseph's lakes, close to where Ken spent 27 years as an editor at Ave Maria Press. In our Holy Cross Parish, St. Joseph's in South Bend, we heard the word of God preached by priests imbued with the charisms of Holy Cross as articulated by Father Basil Moreau who was inspired by the Church's saints and spiritual writers. (It is largely the religious orders and communities who kept alive individual and communal spirituality.) We were buoyed up by the Holy Cross symbol imaging the charisms: an anchor for faith, an anchor for hope, and a cross of love.

So, after many years, when we discovered and were welcomed by a group of Holy Cross Associates in Coachella, California, at Holy Cross' Our Lady of Solitude Church community, we began to see the charisms enfolded in the daily lives and relationships in this unique cell within the Body of Christ. This new relationship became a reality when we came home and found a associate group forming in our own South Bend community.

In our sharing and praying together, brothers and lay people, we are beginning to grow in community. We see in one another the presence of God around and in one another. There is a continual emphasis on our **faith** as we share stories of God's fidelity and love.

After 30 years walking together in the light of God's grace in the Holy Cross community, we find renewed unity and strength of purpose in serving God and one another within the intimate setting of our Holy Cross Associates group. This indeed is Holy Cross alive in the Church, enriching encouraging, and blessing. May it always be so.

Quote of Scripture for the "Lectio" Process

1 Peter 1:21 to 2:3

Church

Father Moreau planted the roots of the family of Holy Cross deeply within the church, placing us at the service of the local and universal church. Through this placement and rootedness, we have become an international multicultural apostolic religious family.

We meet the needs of the Church by modeling the unity of men and women working side by side. This is the gift Holy Cross brings to the Church and to the world.

Circular Letter 54

For myself, as long as blood runs in my veins and my heart beats in my breast, I shall bless the Lord for having inspired the Vicar of Christ with so touching an interest in Notre-Dame-de-Sainte-Croix and its work.... I thank God also that the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda has sufficient confidence in our zeal to summon us to the apostolate of the foreign missions.

Constitution, Sisters of the Holy Cross, 4:1

In the spirit of our founder, we participate by our lives and by our ministry in the Church's mission to announce the good news of salvation to all people. We respond to the gospel demand to love our neighbor by accepting the challenge of the Church to give preference to works which alleviate conditions of poverty and oppression, involve us directly with the poor and modify unjust structures. These preferences give direction within our present ministries of education, health care and other pastoral services wherever we are missioned. These preferences also determine our choice of new ministries.

Role of Holy Cross in the Church

Eli and Ken Peters

Born into the Roman Catholic Church, Married into Holy Cross:

Providence

Father Moreau is convinced of God's constant presence and activity in our world, God's fidelity to us. We need to relate this conviction to our everyday life and ministry as well as what is happening in our culture and in our world.

Circular Letter 9

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 it most abundant blessings. To endure this, we must be constantly animated by the spirit of zeal and generosity which so holy an undertaking requires.

Constitutions, Sisters of Holy Cross, 74

The Holy Cross vocation is rooted in the gift of life, the grace of Baptism. Continued collaboration in the creative and sanctifying work of God allows each sister, through her commitment to grow and become strong until Christ is formed in her.

God Works In Our History

Don & Dorothy Rien

We started our journey with the Associates prior to 1985 in Palm Desert, CA. It was the way the Brothers and Priests treated the other people that intrigued us or gave us the desire to stay and build our own spirituality. By sticking to the formation process, (hanging in there) we watched our community grow, along with our own spirituality.

We were with the desert chapter for so many years that it was truly hard to say good-bye as we made arrangements to move to Minnesota. We had no idea how to start a new chapter here. We did know that we desired to be in a community from church. We volunteered to lead a discussion group as facilitators. As we look back we can almost see God's smile as we talked about Holy

Cross within the Lenten group we had over to our home. We already had Myra and her daughter in our group and now saw this as an opportunity to invite more people to walk with us on spiritual journey. Another year later we led another group and again used this means to bring in new candidates. We stumbled and floundered and made a few phone calls to Br. Carl and Br John. We were fortunate as all our members had a ministry already. We have also been blest with the natural leadership qualities of each our community members.

Quote from Scripture for the “Lectio” Process
Ephesians 1:4-10

grate into our daily lives. As lay people in this time in our history, we are being given much more responsibility in carrying out the Church’s mission. No longer can we sit in the last pew expecting all to be given to us. Christ calls us to develop and use our talents to bring fulfillment and purpose in our own lives and to help in continuing Holy Cross’ mission in the world. One of Father Moreau’s gifts was to see that all of the religious be educated and dedicated so that their ministry would bear much fruit.

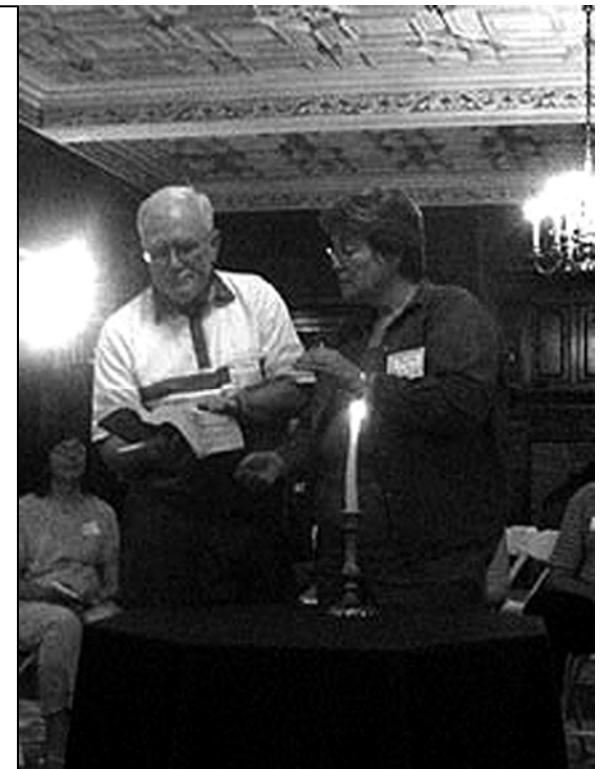
As we mature in the faith we go through many stages of life. Through our monthly meetings, retreats, leadership training, gatherings, spiritual direction, classes we take in our dioceses we fulfill that promise we renew each year to grow in our spiritual life.

Quote from Scripture for the “Lectio” Process
Ephesians 3:14-21

**Leadership
Conference**

2005

**At
Prayer**



Formation

Father Moreau regularly emphasizes the importance of remaining faithful in religious life and professional in ministry. As people develop physically, psychologically and morally they also go through stages in their spiritual and faith life. Understanding these stages and having the means to navigate through them successfully requires on-going spiritual formation. Associates need to continue their formation through opportunities offered by Holy Cross and their dioceses including national gatherings, retreats, workshops, classes and spiritual direction; this includes offerings that help them become more qualified in their ministry.

Circular Letter 14

The important work which has been entrusted to us is not yet completed. It still calls for many sacrifices and much labor. I am well aware of all that still remains to be done to form our members to the religious life, to afford them an intellectual formation in keeping with the needs of the times, and to establish continuity on their conduct and their teaching methods.

Constitutions, Sisters of Holy Cross, 101

Ongoing formation is intrinsically bound to the very dynamism of our life. It encompasses all the initiatives taken by each sister and by the Congregation itself in order to live in a manner that is docile and firm in faith, attentive and open to the calls of Christ and his Church, adaptable and efficacious in charity.

Formation

Br. Carl Sternberg, C.S.C.

Formation comes with the territory. Vatican II proclaims that ours in a Pilgrim Church. We are on the way but never fully arrive. There is always more to learn, more to understand, more to inte-

Zeal

According to Father Moreau, our presence and activity are to be characterized by a passion, an inner fire, which urges us to serve God's people. Zeal is my response to God's unconditional love and acceptance on the call of Jesus to discipleship

Moreau's writings of Christian Education, 1:1

By zeal is understood that flame of burning desire which one feels to make God known, loved, and served and thus save souls. Apostolic activity is therefore the essential character of this virtue, and all (ministers) who are animated by it will fulfill the duties of their state with eagerness, love, courage, and perseverance.

Constitution, Sisters of the Holy Cross, 2

As a congregation whose missionary charism is to respond to the needs of the Church, we determine our types and places of service based on these needs. As members of the Congregation we are sent to participate in the Church's mission of evangelization through our ministries of education, health care and other pastoral services. It is in a spirit of faith and sustained by prayer that we strive to live our commitment to Jesus and to witness to the infinite love of his Father through our life in community and through our apostolic service

Zeal for Mission

Terry Lee

Zeal is the passion and enthusiasm we inject into the mission that guides our work. At Moreau Catholic High School, the zeal for mission is evident in the relationships we build with each other as educators and with the students we serve. I try to model that enthusiasm and passion everyday, in the hope that my actions will inspire others and serve as encouragement when things may get difficult or stressful. I feel it is easy to have zeal for our mission

because the benefits are so apparent - students learning and growing in front of your eyes, every day. The transformation that takes place in young people in a Holy Cross school is amazing; it fuels the zeal for mission and challenges us to be better at what we do every day.

Quote from Scripture for the “Lectio” Process

Romans 8:31-39



Some Members of the Palm Desert Chapter

and support in times of need. We trust one another to keep personal matters confidential. We share a common belief in the Lord Jesus as our savior and as our role model.

As a layperson in the Church of today, I am in a constant state of developing interdependence in my thoughts, words, and actions. Being a Holy Cross Associate has helped me in this journey. I make an effort to think of others before I think of self. I have adopted a practice of praying for others, much more than I did before I became an Associate. I attempt to think in more charitable ways. I try not to gossip, to be friendly and charitable to all that I meet in my daily life. I endeavor to reach out to others less fortunate. Instead of having a garage sale, I donate unused items. I volunteer at the food kitchen where I greet the homeless men and women with enthusiasm, courtesy and respect.

As a group, the Chicago Associates practice community interdependence by coming together in our monthly meetings, at our bi-annual conference, at our retreats, and on other special occasions. The Chicago Associates practice spiritual interdependence as active participants in our local parishes. Some of our chapter members are Eucharistic ministers, Church Choir members, or Co-coordinator of the Ministry of Care. Associates practice social interdependence as Ministers of Care when they visit parishioners who are sick, elderly, homebound, or in hospitals and extended care facilities, and by being members of their parish Arts & Environment Committee.

Quote from Scripture for the “Lectio” Process

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 and 22-26

Interdependence

Father Moreau's vision for the family of Holy Cross includes interdependence as a quality and a way of life, marking all my relationships. The maturation process involves going from dependence and independence to interdependence. This process is specifically seen in how provinces in Holy Cross are formed. Moreau gives us the vision of how Holy Cross will grow into the future.

Circular Letter 65

There will not be a single member of our association who will not make a personal contribution according to strength, intellectual ability and particular aptitudes. One will do intellectual work and another, manual labor; this one will teach, that one will administer; and all the while this activity of the individual will help the community, and the activity of the community will, in turn help each individual. Joys and sorrows will be mutual.

Constitutions, Brothers and Priests of Holy Cross

The same Spirit moved Father Moreau to found the community of Holy Cross in which we have responded to the call to serve Christ. We live and work as priests and Brothers together. Our mutual respect and shared undertaking should be a hopeful sign of the kingdom, and they are when others can behold how we love one another.

Interdependence as an Associate

Kolinskis & Doyles

As a Holy Cross Associate, I continually learn more about the importance of interdependence. As associates, we depend on one another. We look to each other for support in our spiritual growth and in our ministries. We rely upon one another to offer prayer

The Cross

Father Moreau frequently reminds the members of the family of Holy Cross that experiences of the cross are inevitable in life and ministry. Our response can be a means of transformation or a means of running from the cross. To allow the cross to have a transforming effect in our life, we need to be open to God's gifts of faith, hope and love.

Circular Letter 28

The cross is God's choicest grace, a grace reserved for purifying and strengthening the saints....After the example of the saints, let us thank God for having initiated us into the secret of providential action on those God loves, because, as you well know, this is how God's goodness deals with us

Constitutions, Marianites of Holy Cross, 3

We unite ourselves with Mary who stood at the foot of the Cross and we imitate her in her union with her crucified Son. We participate in the redemptive mission of Christ by accepting the crosses in our own lives and by demonstration a true spirit of compassion for all those who suffer..

Taking Up Our Crosses

Jack & Margaret Berges

The Passion and Death on the Cross is surely beyond human endurance, but we all are sent crosses of some kind to bear, many greater than others.

The challenge is to take up our crosses and shoulder them as He did, with love for our fellow men, especially the poor and the marginalized.

We have found that many of the things that seemed to be crosses have turned into blessings.

For instance: during World War II Jack was sent to North Africa as a lieutenant in the Army Ordinance to direct maintenance of anti-aircraft equipment. He sailed from New York two weeks after our wedding. Several months later he was sent back to Frankford Arsenal in Philadelphia to be updated on some new equipment. I was able to join him there, supposedly for a few weeks.

As it turned out, another “cross” arrived when, after having a tooth extracted he had an attack of malaria, which had lain dormant. He was treated at Valley Forge Military Hospital not too far away for me to visit when I could get enough gas for the drive. After he recovered sufficiently he was assigned to Frankford Arsenal and couldn’t be sent back. We were able to stay in Philadelphia for the duration! What a BLESSING!

Quote from Scripture for the “Lectio” Process

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Family Spirit in Holy Cross

Myra Rocheford

June, 1998. The associates of Holy Cross, Midwest Province, were going to Notre Dame to meet with many other associates from across the United States and we would also be meeting some of the Brothers. The un-promised associates in Minnesota had not met any of the Brothers of Holy Cross. We were welcomed warmly and were awed to discover that some of the associates were former brothers, and yet they were welcomed as if they were still brothers. We had a wonderful conference, and left feeling like we were leaving family behind. Two years later, our Minnesota Chapter returned to Notre Dame for the second bi-annual conference, and we too were greeted and greeting the others, as family. This Family Spirit is present in our Hospitality, in our Ministries, in our Community and in our everyday lives. Every time I meet a member of Holy Cross, I am aware of the Family Spirit that dominates the greeting and fellowship. It is as family meeting family. Oh how I have come to cherish my extended family in Holy Cross.

Quote from Scripture for the “Lectio” Process

1 Cor 13: 4-13



Family Spirit

In founding Holy Cross, Father Moreau formed a family of men and women, lay and ordained to be a sign of love and unity in a world of division. Today, that family comprises four congregations of Holy Cross. As I experience the family spirit in Holy Cross, I will broaden my horizon and continually grow in my understanding of how men and women from all cultures, races, and nationalities can achieve that union which is so essential to Moreau's vision.

Circular Letter 65

The members of the association are to form but one same family, united by the sweet bonds of mutual charity. In this way, Notre-Dame-de-Sainte-Croix will grow like a mighty tree and constantly shoot forth new limbs and branches, which will be nourished by the same life-giving sap. If this is to be so, however, all the members must cultivate the spirit of mutual love and cooperation, and have at heart the welfare and success of the association as a whole rather than the private interests of egoism and self-love.

Constitutions, Marianites of Holy Cross, 2

Our Founder, Father Basil Moreau, wished that the Congregation of Holy Cross be characterized by its witness to the world of authentic Christian community. We strive for a congregational sense that encompasses not only our local communities..., but all our sisters throughout the world. Our spirit of unity likewise extends to all the members of the family of Holy Cross and to our brothers and sisters in the Church.. The strength that results from such unity enables us to accomplish together our common mission of love and service.

Fidelity

According to Father Moreau, fidelity is fundamental in responding to God's call. My fidelity to God is a sign and a witness of God's constant fidelity to me. God puts many opportunities in my life to help me remain faithful to the promises I renew each year.

Circular Letter 79

There is one condition which is essential for the future of the Congregation of Holy Cross, a condition without which not even Providence will act: the cooperation of our good will, the fidelity to correspond to the grace of our vocation.

Constitutions, Brothers and Priests of Holy Cross, 8

We wished to abandon all to follow Christ. We learned in time that we still had it within ourselves to hold back. We wish to be whole hearted, yet we are hesitant. Still, like the first disciples we know that he will draw us along and reinforce our loyalties if we yield to him.

The Virtue of Fidelity

Pete Huber

“Nothing is more noble, nothing more venerable than fidelity. Faithfulness and truth are the most sacred excellences and endowments of the human mind.” (Marcus Cicero, 106-43 B.C.)

If someone of the magnitude of Cicero placed such emphasis on fidelity so long ago, and in just a secular sense, how much more important it is to us as Associates! Our faithful and loyal devotion to our Promises to God will lead each of us to be faithful to our fellow Associates as well. As we continue to know each other on a more personal and more spiritual basis, our trust in one another will grow---which in turn will allow us serve one another

and the Lord in an even greater way.

Fidelity to God is our core commitment, and fidelity to our fellow Holy Cross members is an excellent manifestation of our fidelity to Him. Our Promises include being faithful in our attendance to monthly Chapter meetings, being faithful to our personal ministry, and being faithful to our spiritual life. If we accomplish each of these, not only will we grow in the sight of God, but we will grow in our service to His followers!

I view my personal journey in life as a trail with many turns and forks, from beginning to end. Along the way God has tested my fidelity to Him and to His other servants, allowing me the freedom to miss turns and select wrong forks. But He always gives me the ability to find my way back, and He faithfully trusted that I would do so. He has taken me into darkness, and waited patiently until I realized that I needed His help, and then I said to Him “not my will, but yours be done: show me the way.” Without my fidelity to Him, I would not have asked for help; without His fidelity to me, He would not have given it.

My fidelity to God has shown me the way back to Holy Cross; our fidelity to Him has led us to each other. As we grow in knowledge together, we grow even closer to Him!

Quote from Scripture for the “Lectio” Process

2 Corinthians 4:7-16

project which grows and develops as the spirit and the heart grow – and as the child grows too, from self-centered greedy grasping, to love and compassion for “the Other,” – the beings and the world outside of self indulgence.

Love grows from the garden we tend and cultivate within. As Associates we receive enrichment and support from the community of Holy Cross Brothers, who have been on the journey of family spirit since Father Moreau initiated the idea of lay and religious emulating the Holy Family and the Tree of Life, with its many branches. Further, we receive enrichment and support from the Holy Cross Constitutions and our yearly Promises, which guide us in relating in community and as lay ministers of the Faith. And as lay Associates, we also learn “in the trenches” – living in the world with our own families, lay brothers and sisters, and “the Other” – people very different from ourselves. From all this, we grow and learn the ‘do’s and don’t’s of creating a loving community life from which a certain peace can flow out into the world.

“What does most reveal God’s presence is: the brotherly charity of the faithful who are united in spirit as they work together for the faith of the Gospel and; who prove themselves a sign of unity. *” – as when Kay brings the Holy Eucharist to our shut-in Larry; or when the Bannons open their home and hearts and share their gifts with all.

*GAUDIUM ET SPES, Pope Paul VI, 12/7/65, Documents of Vatican II

Quote from Scripture for the “Lectio” Process

Acts 1:42-47

Community

Father Moreau understands community to be a powerful and prophetic force shaping life and ministry. My community gives me life and I give life to my community.

Circular Letter 14

The one aim of the glory of God and the salvation of souls inspires almost all the members and gives rise to a oneness of effort which tends toward the more perfect union of hearts which constitutes the Congregation's bond and strength....Union, then, is a powerful lever with which we could move, direct, and sanctify the whole world.

Constitution, Sisters of the Holy Cross, 11

We live these promises in community and strive for the spirit of union which reflects the love of Father, Son and Spirit. We are responsible the creating a climate which promotes the personal growth of each sister, openness to others, and the well-being and apostolic vitality of the community. As members of the local community, we form together the local chapter. Individually and communally we are accountable for decisions which affect our lives.

Community Life

Roberta Gittens

In the community of Holy Cross Associates, we try to develop a family spirit amongst lay brothers and sisters – a compassionate and loving society, guided by the wisdom and insight of the Holy Spirit, which reaches out into the world.

“Try” is the operative word here because the desire to implement a community whose members have a spiritual and loving connection with each other, with the world and with God, is an ongoing

Compassion

The example of the compassionate Jesus, for Father Moreau, is the basic model and foundation for our life as ministers. It requires the ability to listen, to learn and to walk in the shoes of another. As I experience Jesus, the Compassion of God, I am able to share with others His compassion in my family, in my many communities and in my ministry.

Exercises

Jesus had compassion for those who suffered all kinds of afflictions and he comforted those who were sad... he shows compassion for the widow of Naim...with great tenderness he encounters the Samaritan woman...he weeps with Lazarus' sisters and calls him back to life....he embraces little children with fatherly care...in love he prays on the cross for his most malicious enemies.

Constitutions, Sister of Holy Cross, 39

Compassion in the face of suffering humanity awakens and sustains the apostolic zeal of the Sister of Holy Cross. The compassionate God is enfleshed in her. Thus, with the very tenderness of the heart of God, she cooperates in the liberation of the inner person. As Mary did, she carries the weight of evil with love and forgiveness and transforms it into a way of salvation.

COMPASSION

L.S. (LES) RADWANY, JR.

“Gwandad, it's really howd to tell when you awe having a good time because you have such a stewn look.”

Rush Radwany Age 7

Did my grandson's comment mean that I lacked compassion? If it did, then Sr. Regina Claire, HHM – 7th grade teacher at St. Martha's, and Br. John Benesh, CSC – Prefect of Discipline at Hoban High School lacked compassion. **NO!** They had it, but you had to see thru the gruff exterior. See the smile lines of either side of their mouth and the edge of their eyes. Look into their soul to determine if they had/have compassion.

Hopefully, we all have people in our life that were/are stern because they practice tough love. Did they shape your value system? Did you recognize their compassion when they were stern with you? Did you see the Jesus in them?

I didn't until my late twenties. It was then that I started to better understand God and the concept of God within each person. My wife, Linda, and I taught CCD and attended a retreat where the retreat master, an ex-seminary instructor, explained that God was the sum of all the best qualities in each human being with whom we have contact. It helped me put my arms around God and, more importantly, made me work at finding God in each person.

Linda and I proceeded to take our first foster child, a teenager, who was with us for over a year. We were too young to deal with teenagers, but continued the journey by taking sixty-three foster children, 80% newborns from the Catholic Service League, prior to adoption. The last 20% were the tough ones, abused or neglected children from Family & Community Services. We never intended to adopt, but A biracial infant whose mother was in prison was with us four years before eligible for adoption. Whose child was she? Ours, of course. Theresa was/is a gift from God and is now 22.

The second adoption, Kristen, was not as easy. Our foster child from age 3 months to 2 ½ years, she went to another couple to be adopted. Five days before her fifth birthday, she came back because she “was too difficult and seeing a psychologist.”

Do you want to test your compassion? Adopt a mentally ill child.

I had to go to counseling because, “She's doing this to me. Can't tell the truth about anything.” It was only after Linda's continually saying, “She's a sick kid,” for five years that I transitioned from mad to sad.

Multiple, non-specific diagnosis for thirteen years, led us to multiple professionals and courses of treatment. Professionals will not label a child, but after two serious suicide attempts and turning age 18 last year, “Kristen is borderline personality disorder.” Medication can help, but little treatment is available. Pray for Kristen and us, her parents.

How do you deal with this in compassion? How do you keep your sanity? A loving, compassionate wife, Cursillo, Christ Renew His Parish, Renew 2000, RCIA team and sponsor, taking time to listen to others' problems, studying and growing in your faith, volunteering for groups that support your values and helping them raise needed funds.

Oh! By the way, I am president of a successful company that I started thirty years ago. We employ eight people who have to depend on our mutual success for their families. Yes, it's difficult to have so many balls in the air and live compassion.

I pray that my epitaph can say, “He was stern, but you could see his smile lines. He tried to find God in every encounter. He was a compassionate man.”

Quote from Scripture for the “Lectio” Process

Luke 7:11-17