



Moreau Moment

January 22, 2007

An Historical Note from the Constitutions and Statutes of the Congregation of Holy Cross

Father Moreau founded the Congregation of Holy Cross in the troubled period following the French Revolution.

To supply certain needs of the devastated church throughout the countryside, he planned to organize some clerics as Auxiliary Priests. By August, 1835, he had recruited priests for this purpose. They were but few in number and they assisted the diocesan clergy by preaching parish missions. He intended also that they would be educators and that some should be prepared for that work.

Only days after this group was first assembled, at the request of his bishop Father Moreau accepted the responsibility for the Brothers of St. Joseph, who had been founded fifteen years earlier by another priest of the same diocese, James Francis Dujarie, pastor of Ruille'-sur-Loir. They were zealous laymen who had been meeting the need for elementary education in the villages of the region. What led to an unusual venture in the history of the Church was Father Moreau's decision to unite these two groups, which he did by the Fundamental Act of 1st March 1837. Priests and brothers were united within a single association to minister to the pastoral and educational needs of the French Church.

Events moved still further and began to display a pattern and a purpose that emerged as a distinctive proposal. In 1838 Father Moreau gave a rule of life to a small band of laywomen he had gathered to provide domestic services to the priests and brothers. He would later direct them also to the work of education. At Sainte-Croix, a suburb of Lemans, he gradually formed the three groups into a single religious congregation composed of three autonomous societies. Each had its own authority structure, but all were united under a single general administration. He introduced the practice of making vows first among the brothers, then among the priests and lastly among the sisters. On August 15, 1840 Basil Moreau himself became the first priest to publicly profess vows as a religious of the Congregation of Sainte-Croix, or Holy Cross.

Please stand for our Moreau Monday Prayer...

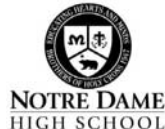
And so together, let us pray: In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, amen.

Provident God,

We give you joyful thanks for the life of your servant and our Founder, Venerable Basil Moreau. His vision of service to the Church and the world is enlivened in us today and calls us to continue the works entrusted to us.

Grant us your generous grace to meet the challenges of this day with zeal and generosity.

May our family of Holy Cross, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Sorrows, grow in unity through ever-stronger bonds of love and service. We ask this grace through your Son, Jesus the Christ. Amen.



Moreau