



Dear Holy Cross Family,

Competence to See, Courage to Act

This phrase, which is at the heart of the mission statement for Holy Cross College, derives directly from the Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross (2:14). Nested in Constitution 2 on Mission, the full verse reads:

The mission is not simple, for the impoverishments we would relieve are not simple. There are networks of privilege, prejudice, and power so commonplace that often neither oppressors nor victims are aware of them. We must be aware and also understanding by reason of fellowship with the impoverished and by reason of patient learning. For the kingdom to come in this world, disciples must have the competence to see and the courage to act.

Last week the College celebrated two significant events: Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and the Feast Day of the founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, Blessed Basil Moreau, C.S.C. From the public reading of Dr. King's 1963 *I Have a Dream* speech, to 40 hours of Adoration and the celebration of the Holy Mass at the end of the week, this week reminds us of the ideals we hold high at Holy Cross College, that is, our commitment to educating and forming engaged scholars, courageous citizens, virtuous leaders, and hopeful disciples.



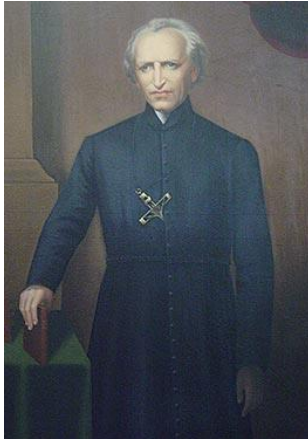
Throughout this year of the 150th anniversary of Blessed Basil Moreau's death, the Congregation of Holy Cross has engaged in worldwide efforts to remember a man who, in the wake of the French Revolution, saw Catholic, Christian education, as the hopeful force for the transformation of the world. This ministry first began in the rural towns and villages in central France, many of which I've had the distinct pleasure to visit. As I pondered the vast distances that were traveled to bring the Good News of Christ to the people of France, and particularly to the children who were educated in our schools, my appreciation for the courage of these men and women with hope to bring grew. Soon after the founding of the Congregation of Holy Cross, with missionary zeal, Father Moreau began sending Holy Cross priests and brothers from France to Algeria (1840), the United States (1841), Canada (1847), Italy (1850), and East Bengal, or present-day India and Bangladesh (1852).

Throughout the history of the Congregation of Holy Cross, the mission has been to share in the Church's mission by working as educators in the faith. Through missionary outreach and social justice, Holy Cross religious sought to serve "side-by-side" with all people educating hearts and minds and building communities of the coming kingdom. In Constitution 2:12 we read:

As disciples of Jesus, we stand side by side with all people. Like them we are burdened by the same struggles and beset by the same weaknesses; like them we are made new by the same

Lord's love; like them we hope for a world where justice and love prevail. Thus, wherever through its superiors the congregation sends us we go as educators in the faith to those whose lot we share, supporting men and women of grace and goodwill everywhere in their efforts to form communities of the coming kingdom.

Similarly, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. responded to a time of racial injustice in our country by envisioning a "beloved community." In King's words, it is "creative and redemptive;" it "builds up and unites;" it is "agape which is understanding goodwill for all men. It is an overflowing love which seeks nothing in return. It is the love of God working in the lives of men. This is the love that may well be the salvation of our civilization" (from "*The Role of the Church in Facing the Nation's Chief Moral Dilemma*," 1957).



Like Moreau, King also saw the transformational power of Christian education. In a 1947 address to students at Morehouse College, Dr. King stated, "We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education" (from *The Purpose of Education* speech, 1947). In *Circular Letter 36*, Father Moreau similarly wrote: "We shall always place education side by side with instruction; the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart. While we prepare useful citizens for society, we shall likewise do our utmost to prepare citizens for heaven." Both emphasize educating the mind and the heart. Both believed that at our core a Christian education should be centered on the life of Christ, preparing His coming Kingdom, and grounded in virtue.

Although their historical time, place, and context were different, there are many parallels between Fr. Moreau and Dr. King. Both responded with courageous leadership at a time in which division and despair were commonplace in society. Both envisioned a world in which love and justice prevailed. Both saw Christian education and Christ's witness as the catalysts for change. Both were deeply committed to a life of prayer. Both were imperfect but found grace and strength in Christ's incarnational love. Both faced numerous challenges, experienced ridicule, and faced a tragic ending to their lives and ministry—Moreau was excommunicated from his own congregation and King was tragically murdered.

Despite this, there was no greater priority for Blessed Basil Moreau and for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. than to live in complete conformity to Christ. Through their examples, they both consistently and insistently call each of us to discover ways in which our daily lives can reflect Jesus' example and teaching. Both men lived these values passionately. Both men had a dream. Both men had an enduring capacity for hope. Both wanted to make a difference in the world. By their lives and personal witness, they indeed did.

As we begin a new semester and a new year, like Dr. King and Fr. Moreau, we are called to build God's Kingdom passionately and prophetically through the powerful witness of courageously loving all people in search of a world where love and just prevail, living virtuously, engaging in Christian education for the common good, and being hopeful disciples of Christ. That conformity will transform the world and will lead us to live as Saints today and saints for all eternity!

Ave Crux, Spes Unica,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marco J. Clark".

Dr. Marco J. Clark
President