



# *Saints today. Saints for all eternity.*

## From the desk of Dr. Marco Clark

*"Our mission is the Lord's and so is the strength for it. We turn to Him in prayer that He will clasp us more firmly to Himself and use our hands and wits to do the work that only He can do. Then our work itself becomes a prayer: a service that speaks to the Lord who works through us." (Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross, Constitution 2, 20)*

Dear Holy Cross Family and Friends,

Happy Advent! From my first day at Holy Cross College, I pledged that I would spend the first several months of my presidency being introduced to the community, meeting with the various members of the HCC family, and listening and learning about this special place I now call home. There are many words that I could use to describe these initial meetings, but the ones that resonate the most are inspirational and hopeful.

What has inspired me and given me hope are the many special people that make up this community. From our talented faculty and staff, our committed Board of Trustees, the Brothers and Priests of Holy Cross and the Sisters of the Holy Cross at Saint Mary's, presidents Fr. John Jenkins, C.S.C. and Dr. Katie Conboy, presidents of the University of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's College respectively, the mayor of South Bend and the many leaders in the greater Michiana region, our friends at Holy Cross Village, the business and non-profit community, and most importantly, our students, each of these meetings have inspired me in my ministry and made me even more committed to my calling as the new president of Holy Cross College.

One group that I'd like to mention for this month's newsletter are the men who are enrolled in the Moreau College Initiative at Holy Cross College. From the Holy Cross College website, we read "MCI is an academic collaboration between Holy Cross College and the University of Notre Dame, in partnership with the Indiana Department of Correction. College students incarcerated at Westville Correctional Facility earn credits towards a Holy Cross College Associate of Arts (AA) degree. Students who complete the AA degree have the option to seek admission to a Holy Cross Bachelor of Arts degree program either at WCF or, upon release, at the Holy Cross College main campus. Classes are taught by Holy Cross and University of Notre Dame faculty. MCI is a member of the Bard Prison Initiative's Consortium for the Liberal Arts".

Visiting our students at the Westville Correctional Facility was among the highlights of my first six months at Holy Cross College. These men, our students, are committed to forming themselves as engaged scholars, courageous citizens, virtuous leaders, and hopeful disciples. The rigor of their coursework meets the same rigor as any course at Holy Cross. These courses, taught by faculty members from Holy Cross and Notre Dame, prepare these men to reenter society, with an education in hand, and hope in their hearts.

Constitution 2 on Mission in the Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross, speaks directly to the work and ministry we are called to as Holy Cross "educators in the faith." Blessed Basil Moreau, founder of the Congregation, referred to our form of education as a "work of resurrection" (Christian Education, 1856). During this season of Advent, a time in which we await the coming of the Lord Jesus, I am reminded that Jesus comes to us everyday through the people that we meet. During my visit to Westville, I saw the face of Christ in our students, their teachers, and in the prison staff.

As the semester ends and our students return home for a few weeks for the Christmas break, while we prepare and await the coming of our Lord, I urge you to look into the eyes of those around you, those you know and those you don't know. Consider especially those who are on the margins of society, or as the Constitutions state, "victims of all injury: —prejudice, famine, warfare, ignorance, infidelity, abuse, natural calamity..." and heed the call of the Constitutions to see the "dignity of every human being as God's cherished child" (2: 15-16)) and the call to action that Jesus laid out for us in Matthew 25:

"Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome, lacking clothes and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me." Then the upright will say to him in reply, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome, lacking clothes and clothe you? When did we find you sick or in prison and go to see you?" And the King will answer, "In truth I tell you, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me" (New Jerusalem Bible, 1985, Matthew Chapter 25: 34-40).

Thank you all once again for your warm welcome to Holy Cross College and to the greater Notre Dame/South Bend/Michiana region. My wife Peggy and I consider it a tremendous honor and privilege to serve this great college and the noble mission for which we are called. May God bless you this Advent season and may your lives "become a prayer" as disciples with hope to bring.

Ave Crux, Spes Unica,

Marco J. Clark, Ed.D.

