

Constitution 1¹

God's Call

- 1 "Come follow me." It was the Lord Jesus calling us.
- 2 We were already his, for we bore the name of Christians. We had already been initiated into his church. We had been washed in baptism and confirmed in our belief and given the Eucharistic nourishment in memory of him. But there seemed to come a time when the Lord was calling us to take some further step.
- 3 We heard a summons to give over our lives in a more explicit way. It was a call to serve all people, believers and unbelievers alike. We would serve them out of our own faith that the Lord had loved us and died for us and risen for us and that he offers us a share in his life, a life more powerful and enduring than any sin or death.
- 4 It was a call that came to us from without, but also one that rose up within us, as from his Spirit.
- 5 We asked how we might follow, and we found many footprints on the road. A great band of men had passed this way, men who had made and lived by their vows, men who had walked side by side in their following of the Lord. They beckoned us to fall in step with them. We wanted to be part of the family they formed in order to share in their life and work.
- 6 This family is the Congregation of Holy Cross, founded by Basil Anthony Moreau. We are a community of pontifical right: men living and working under the approbation and authority of the successor of Peter. We are a religious congregation composed of two distinct societies of clerics and of laymen bound together in one indivisible brotherhood. Ours is a common founder, tradition, rule, government, way of life and mission.

¹ The Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross are the current statement of values and mission of the Congregation from which the Holy Cross tradition has developed. These Constitutions were drafted and approved by the General Chapter of the Congregation of Holy Cross of 1986. They were approved by the Vatican Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes by a decree dated September 15, 1988, and signed by Jerome Cardinal Hamer, Prefect.

Constitutions 4 through 7 are not published here. They deal with the structures and issues internal to the Congregation of Holy Cross. Constitution 4 on *Brotherhood* outlines the common life of the religious; Constitution 5 on *Consecration and Commitment* outlines the responsibilities of the vows and religious profession; Constitution 6 on *Formation and Transformation* outlines requirements for initial and continuing formation among the members of the Congregation; Constitution 7 on *Authority and Responsibility* outlines the structures of the Congregation and the responsibilities of the members and those in authority.

- 7 Our commitment is an invitation for our fellow Christians to fulfill their vocation and for ourselves it is a concrete way of working with them for the spread of the gospel and with all for the development of a more just and human society.
- 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 wholehearted, 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.