

Constitution 8

The Cross, Our Hope

- 112 The Lord Jesus Loved us and gave up his life for us. Few of us will be called to die the way he died. Yet all of us must lay down our lives with him and for him. If we would be faithful to the gospel we must take up our cross daily and follow him.
- 113 The cross was constantly before the eyes of Basil Moreau, whose motto for his congregation was *Spes Unica*. The cross was to be “Our Only Hope.”
- 114 Jesus entered into the pain and death that sin inflicts. He accepted the torment but gave us joy in return. We whom he has sent to minister amid the same sin and pain must know that we too shall find the cross and the hope it promises. The face of every human being who suffers is for us the face of Jesus who mounted the cross to take the sting out of death. Ours must be the same cross and the same hope.
- 115 To struggle for justice and meet only stubbornness, to try to rally those who have despaired, to stand by the side of misery we cannot relieve, to preach the Lord to those who have little faith or do not wish to hear of him . . . our ministry will hint to us of Jesus’ suffering for us.
- 116 To spend ourselves and be spent for the needs of neighbors; to be available and cheerful as a friend in Holy Cross and to give witness while others hesitate; to stand by duty when it has become all burden and no delight . . . community too can draw us nearer Calvary.
- 117 Whether it be unfair treatment, fatigue or frustration at work, a lapse of health, tasks beyond talents, seasons of loneliness, bleakness in prayer, the aloofness of friends; or whether it be the sadness of our having inflicted any of this on others . . . there will be dying to do on our way to the Father.
- 118 But 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 the grace of this life that springs up 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.

- 119 Resurrection for us is a daily event. We have stood watch with persons dying in peace; we have witnessed wonderful reconciliations; we have known the forgiveness of those who misuse their neighbor; we have seen heartbreak and defeat lead to a transformed life; we have heard the conscience of an entire church stir; we have marveled at the insurrection of justice. We know that we walk by Easter's first light, and it makes us long for its fullness.
- 120 There stood by the cross of Jesus his mother Mary, who knew grief and was a Lady of Sorrows. She is our special patroness, a woman who bore much she could not understand and who stood fast. To her many sons and daughters, whose devotion ought to bring them often to her side, she tells much of this daily cross and its daily hope.
- 121 If we drink the cup each of us is poured and given, we servants will fare no better than our master. But if we shirk the cross, gone too will be our hope. It is in fidelity to what we once pledged that we would find the dying and the rising equally assured.
- 122 The footsteps of those men who called us to walk in their company left deep prints, as of men carrying heavy burdens. But they did not trudge; they strode. For they had the hope.
- 123 It is the Lord Jesus calling us. "Come. Follow me."