

## Fr. Moreau's Zeal

Last week in this column, Fr. John wrote about the symbol for the Congregation of Holy Cross, the cross and anchors. He reflected how our founder, Fr. Basil Moreau, gave us this symbol to go with our motto that the cross is our only hope.

This week I want to reflect on the Mission of St. John Vianney parish found on the cover of the bulletin: “To know Jesus and to make him known.” I believe that it is appropriate to do so this weekend, Labor Day weekend. On Labor Day, we thank God for the contributions of all who work have made to this nation. As a Christian, I feel it is also important to reflect on the fundamental work of our lives: to know Jesus, and to make him known.

This past July, I finished my first full year at this great parish. As I reflected on the end of my first year here in light of the beatification of Fr. Moreau in two weeks, I realized something. I know that I feel so very much at home at St. John Vianney parish because of the hospitality of you, the wonderful parishioners here. But I also realized that I felt instantly at home because our motto very much matches the spirituality of Fr. Moreau, and therefore the spirituality of Holy Cross. I am sure that this is why so many of my Holy Cross brothers who served here always want to come back!

One charism of Holy Cross is to renew the faith of the people and to regenerate society. We do so by trying to attend to the pressing needs of the places and cultures we serve – while always attempting to educate people in the faith. We, as members of Holy Cross, want to make Jesus known in the world. Fr. Moreau spoke about that as he wrote to the first priests, brothers and sisters of Holy Cross about zeal.

Fr. Moreau wrote: “Zeal is that flame of burning desire to make God known, loved, and served and thus bring salvation to others.” In one of his sermons, he explained his belief that, “Once Jesus is known and loved in the world, everything will be renewed; the light of the Gospel will dissipate the darkness of the century. . . and justice will reign.” Fr. Moreau faced many obstacles and challenges. He did not see the world through rose colored glasses. Yet, even in the midst of the challenges, he knew the power of Jesus and the resurrection. He never wavered in his belief that if we truly love Jesus, we would strive to make Him known. If we let His love work through us, the world can be renewed.

But before we can try to make Jesus known in the world, we must know Him. In short, we must pray. For Fr. Moreau, zeal (the mission of making Jesus known) is fundamental for all Christians – not just for the priests and religious. He wrote: “To **become a apostle according to your vocation**, begin by being a person of prayer.” He would challenge people to fulfill that mandate in every situation or circumstance. It is the work of all people. Fr. Moreau had a trust in Divine Providence – a confidence that God is always present and active in our lives. It does not matter your vocation, God is present. God always wants us to know him more deeply. Fr. Moreau invites us to cultivate an awareness of God’s presence through regular prayer – especially through the Mass, through praying with Scripture, through time with the Blessed Sacrament. Prayer allows

us to really know the Lord. And when we know truly Jesus, we want to make Him known, loved, and served. May the intercession of Fr. Moreau help us to do so.