

HOLY CROSS HISTORY CONFERENCE

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UNIVERSITY OF PORTLAND

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PROPOSED FEDERATION

1992-7

OF THE

WOMEN'S CONGREGATIONS OF HOLY CROSS

SISTER MADELEINE SOPHIE HEBERT

MARIANITE OF HOLY CROSS

PROPOSED FEDERATION

OF THE

WOMEN'S CONGREGATIONS OF HOLY CROSS

When Father Moreau sent his Missionaries to America he wanted the Congregation to be represented by the three branches of the family of Holy Cross: priests, brothers and sisters. However, his women religious had not yet pronounced vows, so it was to the priests and brothers that he confided this first ministry in the New World.

In 1843, when the Marianites counted only a mere handful of members, they joined their brothers in Indiana, thus beginning the collaborative efforts of Holy Cross in North America.

In 1856 Rome intervened and Father Moreau's dream of a triple-branch Congregation took a turn. The men of Holy Cross were recognized by the Sacred Congregation, but Father Moreau was advised to separate the women from the men and to develop a separate Constitution for the feminine branch of Holy Cross. Eventually this was done, not however, without serious consequences. Foundations had been made in various parts of the United States and in Canada under the direct ministry of the Sisters. For reasons which have been told elsewhere in our history, the Constitutions approved by Rome in 1867 were not acceptable to the total Congregation of the Marianites.

Influenced by differences of locality, of customs, of language, of national and church needs, of disagreement in government, the sisters branched off into three separate and independent Congregations.

This paper will attempt to show how in the one hundred and fifty years that the Holy Cross women have been in the service of the Church they have tried, and in many instances succeeded, in realizing the spirit of union and collaboration so earnestly desired by Father Moreau.

After the separations, the history of the Marianites covered more than half a century before there is any record of friendly gestures or relations among the Holy Cross women's congregations. It was the Superior General of Canada, Mother Mary of Saint Julian , who, in 1919, took the first step in bridging the gap between the Marianites and the Congregation of the Sisters of Holy Cross and Seven Dolors .

Mother Mary of St. Matthew, while making the visitation in the United States, received a cordial invitation to come to Montreal.

The invitation asked that she bring to the Canadian community which, despite the separation, had always remained faithful to the teaching of our Venerated Founders, "the olive branch of peace and reconciliation in God." After receiving the approval of her Council, Reverend Mother and a companion set out for Canada toward the end of August. The entire expenses for the trip were paid by the Superior General of St. Laurent. In visiting with the administration and with the sisters in the various convents, Mother Matthew was able to testify to the truth of Mother Julian's statement. Everywhere she went she found that the Congregation had retained a deep and sincere attachment to the Founders.

In 1934 Mother Mary of Saint Bartholomew, Superior General of the Canadian Sisters, accompanied by three sisters, two destined for Bengal, visited the Motherhouse in Précigné. She

was met by Mother Mary of Saint Julian, Marianite, who eased the first moment of constraint by these words, " Welcome home, dear Mother, and you, too, dear sisters of Holy Cross. Welcome to the cradle of your congregation. We have long desired your return to this land sanctified by our venerated Founders and by our saintly predecessors." Soon a half century of separation was forgotten.

On the occasion of the transfer of the mortal remains of Father Moreau from the cemetery chapel to the Church of Holy Cross in Le Mans, the family of Holy Cross was reunited for the first time since the dolorous separation in the previous century. Reverend Father James Donohue CSC, Superior General of the Fathers and Brothers, arrived for the ceremonies accompanied by his council and the provincial superiors of the priests and brothers of Indiana, Canada, and Poland, two sisters of Holy Cross from Indiana and four sisters from Canada. This reunion was the beginning of many such visits among the various congregations of Father Moreau.

Probably the most momentous occasion was the gathering of the family of Holy Cross for the exhumation of the mortal remains of their venerated Founder. This was the first step in introducing his cause for Beatification. The General Superiors of the feminine branches of Holy Cross were invited to the Marianite Motherhouse to discuss the details of their responsibility in this undertaking. Mother Rose Elizabeth of St. Mary's, Indiana and Mother Mary Maximillienne of St. Laurent, Canada, arrived at the Motherhouse at Précigné and were welcomed by Mother Mary of Saint Julian.

Stories are told of this visit, some amusing and some not so amusing; nevertheless, the women of Holy Cross were united once more in a spirit of sisterly love and acceptance.

This spirit led to a more realistic union when the Marianites were invited to join the mission band of the Indiana Holy Cross Sisters in Bengal; when the Canadian sisters and the Marianites were invited by Sister Madeleva to participate in the School of Theology at St. Mary's; when the Sisters of the Holy Cross at St. Paul's School in New York and the Marianites at the French Hospital celebrated together during Christmas holidays; and when, for the past several years, sisters of the three congregations have participated in the summer sessions at the Solitude of Father Moreau in France.

These experiences, while organized and directed by administrators, were and are enjoyed by members of all levels of the congregations. After Vatican Council II an important step was taken toward a closer relationship. This brings us to our discussion of the proposed Federation of the Women's Congregations of Holy Cross.

On September 5, 1967 Circular Letter #426 of the Superior General announced to the Marianites of Holy Cross that the General Council, in August 1967, had addressed to the General Chapters of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Indiana, and the Sisters of Holy Cross and Seven Dolors of Canada, the study of a Federation of the Women's Congregations of Holy Cross. The inspiration for this proposal was two-fold. First, the subject had been presented, discussed and accepted at the 1964 Chapter of the Marianites, and, secondly, Article 22 of *Perfectae Caritatis* called us to a serious consideration of such a proposal.

A model resolution, forwarded to the two other Congregations by the Marianites, read as follows:

"Be it resolved, in accordance with the wishes of the Church as expressed through the propositions on the Religious Life of the Second Vatican Council, Article 22, of Perfectae Caritatis, that definite steps be taken towards a Federation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, of the Sisters of Holy Cross and Seven Dolors, and the Marianites of Holy Cross, under the title of Holy Cross Federation; that in such a Federation the autonomy of each Congregation be preserved.

Furthermore be it resolved that this Federation be guided by a Central Executive Committee comprised of a President, a Vice-President, and a Treasurer.

Eventually the proposal would be submitted to the Sacred Congregation of Religious for approbation and benediction.

An article would be inserted into the Constitutions of each Congregation similar to the following:

"The Congregation of _____ is federated with the Congregation of _____ and the Congregation of _____ with a view to afford mutual help to one another in apostolic, spiritual, and missionary activities. Each Congregation will keep its juridical and financial independence.

The general purpose of the Federation is to promote the greater glory of God, to advance the beatification of the mutual Founder, Very Reverend Basil Anthony Moreau, to instill his spirit into its members, and by cooperation in the apostolic works of the Church, to further the sanctification of its members."

The proposal concluded with ____

"The ends that we propose to attain, with the grace of God, would be principally to strengthen our reciprocal bonds through specific programs of Masses and prayers for the several Congregations; solicitude for each and all Holy Cross communities and members; readiness to assist one another in all practical ways possible; and each year, a schedule of Masses for vocations to all branches of Holy Cross."

Canada and Indiana responded as follows: Mother Marguerite Galipeau, CSC wrote: "The members of our Chapter (Canada) were most interested in your suggestion regarding a Holy Cross federation - more than that - they were enthusiastic about the idea. Now that the Chapter is over we await further word from you ; the Chapter left it to the General Council to decide upon the form this Federation would take." Mother Olivette Whalen CSC wrote: It is my pleasure to inform you that the members of the General Chapter unanimously accepted your proposal for a Federation. It gave us great joy to respond to your proposal for a greater union of Father Moreau's daughters in our three Congregations." Mother included a copy of the resolution which the Marianites had proposed to which was added a further suggestion." In the event that all three Congregations of Holy Cross approve the resolution, it is suggested that the Superiors General , the Provincial Superiors, the Area Superiors of all three Congregations meet

to establish the procedure for establishing such a Federation."

Correspondence between the three Congregations treated of goals and purposes which would be discussed when we met to prepare Statutes for a Federation. The points proposed were:

1. To preserve the spirit of Father Moreau in the Congregations' members, and to work seriously to advance the cause of beatification and canonization of the Founder.
2. To draw on the resourcefulness of all the members of the Federation, to make recommendations that would promote continuous development, improvement and excellence in the works entrusted to their care.
3. To cooperate, in as far as possible, in the planning of spiritual, intellectual, professional and apostolic growth of the sisters in formation, the sisters in domestic service, and the sisters assigned to the active apostolate.
4. To serve as a channel of communication, inspiration, and information for creating in the minds of the major superiors an awareness of areas in need of study, necessary adaptations and changes warranted in keeping with the mind of the Church.
5. Through all of this, to project a HOLY CROSS (Moreau inspired) Image capable of attracting desirable candidates to the different communities; sharing mutual benefits by emphasizing the virtues of apostolic charity and the "union of love" stressed by the Founder, the Very Reverend Basil Anthony Moreau.

After the Marianite Chapter of 1968, at which there was a report on the Federation and an affirmative vote taken, a request was forwarded to Father Edward Heston, CSC, Procurator

General in Rome. This request consisted of a copy of Directive 41 of the Marianite General Chapter and a letter to the Holy Father asking for his blessing and for permission to form the Federation of Holy Cross. I quote from Father's reply;

"I think that at the present time it would be premature to approach the Sacred Congregation on the question of the Federation of the three Congregations of Holy Cross. The usual procedure of the Sacred Congregation is not to grant any authorization until things have reached practically the final step. Consequently, I would suggest that, through meetings or correspondence or other means there would be a thorough on-going discussion of just what would be the nature and the aims of the Federation, and that likewise, you should prepare a text of Constitutions or Statutes governing the Federation. I would suggest that you would contact other Congregations which have already had this experience, since, like general constitutions of religious communities, the Statutes of Federations have come to be substantially identical in most cases. Consequently, you would be ready to make application to the Holy See only at the time you were also ready to present your statutes and thus be able to give the Sacred Congregation a clear idea of just what you have in mind."

Undaunted, the three Superiors General continued to support the idea of a Federation and met, as planned, in November, 1969. This meeting was held at the Solitude in Le Mans with Mothers Olivette, Marguerite and Sister Madeleine Sophie present. The chief topic of discussion was suggested Statutes which contained the essential elements of such documents.

The Preamble to the Statutes read:

"The Marianites of Holy Cross, the Sisters of the Holy Cross and the Sisters of Holy Cross and Seven Dolors desirous of fulfilling the wishes of the Church as expressed in Perfectae Caritatis of Vatican Council II, have taken steps to establish a Federation of their Congregations, organized and governed according to the Statutes herein set forth, that shall be adopted after a favorable absolute majority vote of the voting members."

The elements included were:

Title and Membership

Patroness

Purpose

Functions

Meetings

Administrative Structure

Records and Minutes

Parliamentary Procedure

Dues

Amendments

Purpose and Administrative Structure contained some elements which may be interesting to talk about:

Under PURPOSE the reasons for a Federation as originally proposed were given. Not only did we want to preserve the spirit of Father Moreau, but we wanted specifically to PROMOTE UNITY. An addition to the purpose read: To foster the spirit of unity and cooperation with the Fathers and Brothers of Holy Cross.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE included: Board of the Federation.

This article read: "The Federation shall be administered by a Board comprised of the Superiors General and General Councillors of each Congregation and one additional major Superior elected from each Congregation." Functions of the Board were specified and officers were designated as President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer. The Superiors General would rotate annually in these offices.

The Executive Committee comprised the Officers of the Board. The duties of the officers were delineated. Meetings of the Executive Committee would be held as necessary.

COMMISSIONS: "The Board of the Federation or the Executive Committee may authorize the President to create commissions in accordance with the needs of the Federation."

COMMITTEES: "The President may appoint committees to carry out special policy assignments for the Federation."

ADVISORY BOARD: "The Superior General of the men of Holy Cross shall be an ex-officio member of the Advisory Board. Priests and Brothers of Holy Cross may be members."

At a later meeting the Advisory Board was deleted, and at the meeting of the Enlarged General Council of the Marianites in February, 1970, it was recommended not to include the Fathers and Brothers of the Congregation of Holy Cross as members of the Federation of Holy Cross.

In October of 1970 the members of the proposed Federation of Holy Cross met at the Provincial House of the Marianites at Magog, Quebec, Canada. At this meeting the Congregation Representatives of the Councils and Elected members had not yet been decided upon.

Representing the Marianites were Sister Madeleine Sophie Hebert, Sister Dolores Dolan as General Councillor and Sister Raymonde Marsollier as Elected Representative. The Canadian Congregation was represented by Mother Marguerite Galipeau, Sister Suzanne Bertrand, Councillor and Sisters Laure Therien and Eveline Swaile as Representatives. Mother Olivette Whalen and Sister Olivia Hutcheson, Councillor, represented the American or Indiana Congregation.

At this time Mother Olivette explained that since the Statutes had not yet been accepted, she did not believe it in order to hold an election of the Representative of her Congregation before this meeting.

Mother Marguerite explained that an election had not yet taken place in her Congregation, but the two Provincials, who were in attendance, were interested in being better informed on the proposed Federation so that they could more effectively communicate the matter to their English and bi-lingual Provinces.

A synthesis of the Revised Statutes was received from each Congregation.

Mother Olivette observed that UNITED STATES and not INDIANA, should be used to designate the American Congregation.

The entire meeting centered around the Statutes and among the most important points were the following:

Mother Marguerite stated that her sisters did not want "superfluous structure".

There was general agreement that the Statutes should be on an experimental basis.

That the Federation should represent a meaningful form of cooperation among the Congregations.

These and other suggestions were inserted into the document.

The Secretary would forward to each member a copy of the revised Statutes. The members would vote by mail on acceptance of the Statutes.

Dues were \$35.00 per year.

The Secretary-Treasurer would be of the same Congregation as the presiding President.

The President could appoint a corresponding secretary as needed.

We must have considered our efforts toward a Federation important, because we continued to meet. Some meetings lasted several days, which was the case when we met in 1971 from March 2 to 5 at St. Mary's Indiana. Sister Cecilia Honer, Councillor and Sister Davida McKenna, substituting for Sister Olivia Marie, joined us. Sister Eveline Swaile, Canada, was absent.

The purpose of this meeting was to explore possibilities of sharing experiences through information, projects and programs of development.

Important to all of us was that, after discussion, the revised Statutes were approved on an experimental basis.

New business included a suggestion of the Canadian Congregation:

That there be a gradual approach to possible exchanges. Such mutual assistance should result from a thorough knowledge of the background (professional or otherwise) and the giftedness of the sisters.

Sister Laure observed that if the sisters have information on, and a general picture of the three Congregations, their ministries, their locations, and other pertinent information, they would be

more interested and, perhaps, motivated, to suggest other ways of accomplishing the purposes of the Federation.

The Board agreed with the suggestion and discussed the following as possible items of communication:

1. Parallel charts of personnel statistics and information
2. Graphic illustrations of Congregational locations and works
3. Periodic bulletins to share information and experiences

Under Statistics should be included Congregation orientations, initiatives in renewal programs, and experimentations in religious and apostolic life. This presentation should reflect the general picture of the Congregation and at the same time give regional specifics.

The following details were decided upon:

The first bulletin would contain:

1. Number of personnel, Congregation works, geographic locations
2. Types of apostolic activity
3. Location of Provinces and/or Regions
4. Organization Chart of government and functions

Since the proposal was still in the first stages of organization it was decided that some suggestions on the Federation from members of the three Congregations be gathered before the next meeting. The following decisions were taken:

To provide all sisters with general and specific information concerning the three Congregations by means of four communiqués during the coming year.

An invitation was extended to increase the sharing already taking place in the missions/developing countries.

All original documents would be preserved in the Solitude du Sauveur, Le Mans, France. Copies of said documents were to be sent to each Congregation and to the incumbent secretary. Each Board member would receive copy of the minutes of each meeting.

Each Congregation should be assured of three votes at each meeting, and to insure this, a proxy could replace a voting member.

At the conclusion of this meeting Mother Olivette assumed the Presidency and Sister Olivia Marie became Secretary.

The first communique sent to the sisters was an abbreviated form of the official minutes. It included place and time of the meeting, names of participants and the following concise statement:

"The Federation Statutes have been studied since the first meeting of the three Superiors General in Le Mans, France in November, 1969. At the October, 1970 meeting in Magog, Canada, the statutes were presented for acceptance by the body. The March, 1971 meeting at St. Mary's, Indiana, began with a review of specific points of the Statutes arising from discussion on the minutes of the previous meeting. The points included proxy voting, preservation of documents, succession of officers, and information to be disseminated to the sisters. These points were voted upon at the closing session and the Statutes were unanimously accepted. The members received the revised Statutes. The preamble remained the same. Article I - Name and Members read as follows:

"Under the title of Holy Cross Federation this organization includes in its membership the

Congregations designated in the preamble. The autonomous Congregations which compose the Federation remain and keep their proper denomination, their autonomy, their independence, their immediate government by their major superiors, their present relations with the Holy See and with Diocesan authorities. Each Congregation remains free to withdraw at any time from the Federation."

Article II stated: The Patroness of the Federation is Our Lady in the Mystery of the Redemption.

Mother Olivette Whalen presided at the March 20, 1972 meeting at Pierrefonds, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Sister Hyacinthe Patry replaced Sister Dolores Dolan as General Councillor of the Marianites, and Sister Margaret Cronley substituted as Representative for Sister Raymonde Marsollier, who was unable to come from France. Sister Agnes Eccles was the General councillor from the Canadian Congregation.

Discussion centered upon making the Federation workable. With full time positions in their respective congregations, accomplishing the goals of the Federation presented a problem.

This was exemplified by a failure to carry out the previous decision to exchange chapter decisions and congregation addresses. It must be remembered that all of this was taking place during the years after the close of the Council. All congregations were occupied with many and various internal affairs.

The group also discussed the apparent lack of knowledge, understanding and interest on the part of the sisters. This led to discussion of the celebration of the centenary of the death of Father Moreau as a Holy Cross Congregation project. Suggestions included: Liturgy, prepared by the sisters, to be celebrated in Holy Cross Church, Le Mans on January 29; a brochure prepared

as a Centenary souvenir. A committee was appointed to bring suggestions for the celebration to the assembly: Sisters Agnes Eccles, Laure Therien, Ceciliansa Honer and Margaret Cronley. Reports from the Congregations included Mother Olivette's discussion and explanation of the Moreau Institute - an annual pilgrimage giving the Sisters an opportunity to visit places connected with the life and works of Father Moreau; a corporate renewal program which was in progress; summer programs being offered at St. Mary's College; sisters serving in Foreign missions; sisters in pre-retirement serving in various apostolates.

The Marianites were sponsoring Renewal programs on the provincial level; intercommunity sharing of programs in Louisiana and France;

leprosy control program in Jalchatra under the auspices of the Damien Foundation was growing; missionaries in Haiti were continuing their ministry in health and education; and one sister was in Africa working with French Missionaries in Africa.

Mother Marguerite described the governmental structure of her Congregation: decisions were being made on the province level, the General Council was then informed; interchange of information between provinces; apostolate of teaching in the civil system required retirement as early as age fifty; the impact of the civil system on community living and group support; present emphasis was on spiritual life and building community; the younger sisters in Canada were spending a year of intense study on Doctrine.

A lengthy discussion was held on the report and suggestions of the Centenary committee: multi-media presentation; brochure on works and history of the Congregations to include the priests and brothers of Holy Cross; and suggested researchers on the life of Father Moreau. Outcomes of the last item were Father Mork's "Moreau Spirituality", and Sister Ita O'Sullivan's "Son of

the Wine Merchant".

Priority was to be given to the liturgical celebration.

The planning committee suggested that the multi-media presentation be accomplished as an inter-congregation project. It should, and it did, include a map of the world showing the locations of the family of Holy Cross and their ministries; a special presentation of the deceased sisters in the spirit of "the communion of Saints" was to be included.

Following this meeting a committee was named to prepare the multi-media presentation. This committee met during the summer of 1972. I must admit that we were ambitious, but, to some extent we were not realistic. For various reasons the committee found it difficult to work together on the proposed project. However, the outcome of the plan did bring about some collaboration on the grass roots level and the final product was a magnificent tribute to their talent, goodwill and cooperation.

The principal result of the 1972 meeting was preparation for the Centenary celebration in France, in which all the Congregations participated in effort and finances.

In 1973 the proposed Federation saw one of its most desired projects realized. Holy Cross, as a family, came together at the Solitude of Father Moreau to strengthen their bonds of relationship and to honor him, who is their inspiration, as well as their Founder.

Previous to the celebrations the Federation met on January 16 and 17. Mother Marguerite presided. The meeting was opened with a prayer taken from the liturgy prepared for the Centenary.

A summary of the principal joint activities of the three congregations was distributed and discussed. Each Superior General gave a report on the initiatives taken by her congregation to celebrate Father Moreau's Centenary. It was noted that these preparations and participations aroused in the sisters a real interest in all that pertains to Father Moreau, if not in the Federation itself. It was specifically noted that on the missions in Bangladesh collaboration was an actuality. Resolutions taken at the meeting included the use of Federation funds for an appropriate plaque commemorating the centenary of the death of Father Moreau. Later a plaque was placed in the crypt of Holy Cross Church.

The minutes of the meeting closed with the statement: "The Federation members greatly appreciate the privilege of being together at Le Mans on the occasion of the Centenary Celebrations marking the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Our Founder and Spiritual Father."

In March of 1974 the meeting was planned for St. Mary's with the newly elected Superior General, Sister Kathleen Nelligan, as hostess and Sister Jeanne Dusseault, newly elected Canadian Superior General, as Presiding Officer.

In her invitation to meet in Indiana, Sister Kathleen included a proposal to be voted upon before the convocation of the Federation. The proposal requested a broader participation at Federation meetings, that is, that the members of the General Council of the hosting Congregation be allowed to be present, to have the right to speak without the right to vote. Sister concluded her request thus, "I would like them to be present for the spiritual and cultural enrichment that could take place by having the opportunity of being with our sister congregations from two other countries."

The proposed agenda included the following:

1. That the General councillors of the hosting Congregation
be permitted to participate in discussions.
2. Topics for discussion:
Apostolic collaboration especially in mission countries.
Increased communication among the member congregations.
3. Sharing 1973 General Chapter Material -
as a basis for research
method of election of Superior
eventual changes in form of Government
General Chapter decisions
4. Is the spirituality of Father Moreau accepted, or is there a tendency to put Congregation
and/or religious life aside and think only of Church - even if that thought is vague?
5. Membership of the Fathers and Brothers of Holy Cross in the Federation.
6. Beatification of Father Moreau.

At this time there were two newly elected Superiors General and after several unsuccessful attempts it was impossible to set a date for a meeting.

The following communication was sent to Sisters Jeanne and Kathleen by Sister Madeleine Sophie:

"Following our communications concerning the annual meeting of the Federation of Holy Cross
I wish to inform you of the following:

The 1974 meeting of the Federation of Holy Cross is canceled.

The 1975 meeting will be held in Le Mans, France.

The presiding officer will be Sister Jeanne Dusseault.

Proposed dates are July 10, 11, 12, 1975."

The Marianites invited the members of the Federation to participate in their annual pilgrimage to Notre Dame de Chartres on July 8, 1975.

The date of the 1975 meeting was changed to November 3, 1975 when Sisters Jeanne Dusseault, Kathleen Nelligan and Madeleine Sophie met at the Solitude. The opening prayer centered around Father Moreau. Each member received a copy of the financial report.

The principal object of the meeting was to clarify the future of the Federation according to the experimental statutes accepted in 1971. Sister Madeleine Sophie was asked to give an explanation and clarification of the beginnings and objectives of the Federation. By mutual consent the greater part of the meeting was given to sharing. The principal topics concerned the value of a Federation according to statutory regulations as compared with informal meetings of Superiors General and General Councillors who happen to be present at national and regional gatherings; the development of a spirit of union as part of Father Moreau's heritage; the value of Federation meetings for our Congregations in general and for our sisters in particular. It was agreed that the sisters, through the general councils, should be informed of the following:

1. "That the underlying principles of a Federation of Holy Cross are agreed to and accepted by the three Superiors General.

2. That the said principles are recognized as supporting a spirit of unity and communication, such spirit being desired by Father Moreau for the Congregation of Holy Cross.
3. That recognizing the difficulties of distance, cost, Congregation and Community commitments, meetings and other engagements, structured meetings according to statutes are practically impossible.
4. That cooperation of the three Congregations in the missions abroad be supported.
5. That each Congregation will endeavor to develop a spirit of union through prayer, fraternal sharing and visiting.
6. That each Congregation will endeavor to make the sisters feel that we are "One Family in Holy Cross".

An informal meeting was announced in conjunction with the meeting of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in August 1976. Sister Kathleen Nelligan presiding.

Following this meeting the Superiors General met with the General Council of the Holy Cross Fathers in Rome. Consciously or not, the substance of the meeting centered around the objectives of the Federation. The status of Father Moreau's cause was explained. Two important questions were opened for discussion: "How can Father Moreau be made better known in the Congregation?"

Is there a place for structured occasions to bring the religious of Holy Cross together?"

To the first it was suggested that the question be treated in conjunction with the issue of developing a sense of HOLY CROSS TODAY, stressing collaboration within Holy Cross. Other questions were posed in response to the second. "Are we using opportunities such as January

20, congregation meetings, province gatherings, chapters to bring Holy Cross together?"

On the following day Father Barosse took the three Superiors General to the Vatican offices for first hand information on the cause of Father Moreau.

Post Vatican II days, even as late as the mid-seventies, were hectic for Religious Congregations and Holy Cross was no exception. Administrators were looking for ways and means to meet the personal needs of the sisters who were adjusting to new life styles. Institutions were being studied and outside influences were pressuring communities to look to other and new fields of ministry, especially where schools and hospitals were coming under government regulations and control. There was lots of home work and lots of work to be done at home, so there was little time for administrators to be working outside their proper communities. The Federation suffered as each Congregation of Holy Cross women struggled to put its own house in order.

The 1976 meeting took place at a dinner gathering at the LCWR meeting held in Boston in August. The minutes of this Federation meeting read: "The annual meeting of the Federation of Holy Cross took place at an evening meal and social gathering at which the Superior General of the United States was hostess. No formal matters were discussed, but informal sharing took place."

In 1977 I left the General Administration of the Marianites, hence my connection with the Federation came to an end.

It is interesting and encouraging, however, for me to read in the Marianite Congregational Superior's reports at the conclusion of their terms in 1981, 1985, and 1989, that collaboration, cooperation, concern, support and planning among the branches of Holy Cross, men and women, have played an important part in their administrations. Such united efforts indicate that they,

and I trust we, also, recognize the need for our Congregations to be strongly influenced by and dedicated to the spirit of union and unity which was such an essential part of Father Moreau's plan for his family of Holy Cross.

FEDERATION OF THE WOMEN'S CONGREGATIONS OF HOLY CROSS

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**CHRONICLES OF THE PROPOSED FEDERATION OF THE WOMEN'S
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1967 - 1977, Le Mans, France

**MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE THREE SUPERIORS GENERAL AND
COUNCILORS OF THE WOMEN'S CONGREGATIONS OF HOLY CROSS**
1967 - 1977

**CIRCULAR LETTER #426 OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE MARIANITES OF
HOLY CROSS**
September 5, 1967

This presentation has no footnotes per se. Direct quotations are noted in the manuscript.

COLLABORATION

The following is taken from the reports of the Congregational Superiors given at the Congregation Chapters of 1981, 1985, 1989 of the Marianites of Holy Cross.

1981

Invited to and attended as observer-participant annual meetings of the Council of the Congregation together with other women leaders of Holy Cross Congregations, Valatia '78, '79, and Hayward '81

During these meetings participated in special ones of the four Holy Cross superiors general for special consultation and/or to discuss issues of common concern.

Met informally with other two women leaders of Holy Cross, Sister Olivia Marie, CSC, Indiana, and Sister Jeanne Dussault, CSC, Canada while visiting American Roots in Indiana/Michigan, and our Canadian roots in Ste. Laurent, as well as during the various Holy Cross gatherings mentioned earlier and at other times for sharing with them and on some occasions with some of their council members.

Received through courtesy of Holy Cross Regional Superior in the East and Indiana leadership, facets of Holy Cross Shared Services for use of MSC CA.

Received specific requests for collaboration in ministry with Canadian Holy Cross men (college) and women in Haiti and other requests related to discussions regarding intercongregational possibilities.

Began some ministry research during Chapter '80 and later gave letters to superiors general of Holy Cross and provincials present at meeting at Hayward in an effort to have examples of possible collaboration to present to Chapter '81; received responses from several asking if there were sisters available for this year. (e.g. Chile, Ghana, D.C., Delaware, New Hampshire, etc.)

Eucharistic Celebration offered one day each month for all members of Holy Cross in Father Founder's Oratory at the Solitude, Le Mans.

Increased and multiplied joint Moreau feastday celebrations as well as jubilees and other socials since united celebrations sponsored by the Federation of Holy Cross held at Solitude and worldwide January 20, 1973.

Agreed to participate in proposed joint Holy Cross project to produce a History of Holy Cross and a brochure to provide a pictorial presentation of Holy Cross worldwide.

Questioned father Barrosse about possibility of Holy Cross Federation. Response: A Federation is a juridic structure.

The question is: Do we form a juridic structure and then look for things to do together, or do we do things together and then look for a structure to express that unity which exists?

Invited to share vision of "Future of Religious Life and "Women of Holy Cross" with novices of Congregation of Holy Cross (men) at their novitiate in Watertown, NY.

1985

Organization of the annual international session for spiritual renewal at the Solitude: invitations extended to members of other branches of Holy Cross as animators and as participants at these sessions; positive responses received.

Participation of two members of the congregational administration in an intercongregational program in the U.S.A.

Participation of the Congregational Superior in the Council of the Congregation of the Priests and Brothers at New Orleans (1981), Dhaka (1982, Niagara Falls (1983), Santiago (1984).

Participation of the members of the congregational administration in the meetings of the four general councils at St. Mary, Indiana, (1983), and at New Orleans (1985).

Participation of the Directress of Novices, novices and temporary professed in the Holy Cross International Program of Formation.

Certitude that the sisters desire unity in the Congregation and envision with joy collaboration with the whole family of Holy Cross.

We envision for the future --

Patient and realistic acceptance of the spirit of collaboration which is developing more and more at the heart of the family of Holy Cross.

Collaboration among men and women as a prophetic sign in the Church where all members must assume their responsibilities.

We must clarify our convictions and take concrete resolutions concerning: collaboration in Holy Cross and with the laity.

1989

One of the goals of this General Administration was:

To propose that the Solitude in Le Mans become a spirituality center for the family of Holy Cross.

Information was gathered and a position paper was developed proposing the establishment of a Holy Cross Spirituality Center at the Solitude. The proposal was sent to the five provincial superiors for discussion with their administrations and for distribution to the sisters for their reflection and comments. The paper was also sent to all of the Superiors General of Holy Cross for their reflection and feedback.

The General Administrations of the other three Holy Cross Congregations requested that the development of a Spirituality Center at the Solitude be placed on the agenda for the 1987 meeting of the four General Councils. At that meeting it was decided that a spirituality center was not feasible; but that a committee (made up of one representative of each congregation) would study the possibility of establishing a Holy Cross Heritage Center at the Solitude. The committee was established; it gathered information from the four congregations, and met four times during November 1987 through June 1988.

At the meeting of the four general councils in January 1989, one of the decisions was:
.... that no collective action be taken at this time regarding the proposal to convert the Solitude into a spirituality center. The spirituality center is unrealistic due to:

- a. insufficient interest of present membership
- b. dwindling numbers
- c. prohibitive costs --- especially travel.

International sessions in Holy Cross Spirituality have done much to promote a greater and deeper appreciation of our Founder and of our founding charisms.

One of the key points emanating from the 1989 meeting of the four general Councils:
For collaboration, planning together must be done first so that there are common goals and objectives, agreement on implementation, clarification of expectations, clearly defined financial responsibilities, mutuality and equality among the groups. Most of the members (Marianites) have been sensitized to the question of collaboration and realize the need for it to become a reality.....

The General Administration have served as a model for collaboration in the recent decisions taken concerning the Heritage of Holy Cross and in the biennial meetings.

Ministry in underdeveloped countries:

Collaboration

Bangladesh: direct collaboration with the Sisters of the Holy Cross (Indiana)

Chile: direct collaboration with the Fathers and Brothers of Holy Cross

Haiti: Priests, brothers and sisters of Canada share community gatherings with the Marianites.

One Marianite collaborates with Sisters of Holy Cross (Canada) in hospital in Pilate

India: One Marianite with Father and Brothers of Holy Cross in Bangalore.

International Sessions of Holy Cross Spirituality, participated in by Priests, Brothers, and Sisters of the four congregations have been held at the Solitude in 1986, 1987, 1988
(These sessions have been held annually since 1988)