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MESSAGGIO DEL SANTO PADRE AL SUPERIORE GENERALE DELLA CONGREGAZIONE DELLA SANTA CROCE

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Pubblichiamo di seguito il Messaggio che il Papa ha inviato al Superiore Generale della Congregazione della Santa Croce, Rev.do Hugh Cleary, in occasione del Capitolo Generale:

• MESSAGGIO DEL SANTO PADRE

To the Reverend Hugh Cleary, CSC

Superior General

and to all the Participants of the General Chapter of the

Congregation of Holy Cross

It gives me great pleasure to greet you affectionately in the Lord on the occasion of your General Chapter. I pray that the Holy Spirit will guide and enlighten you during these days of prayer and reflection, as you examine your identity as consecrated Religious and consider how best to preserve and adapt your spiritual patrimony to the changing historical and cultural situations of today (cf. *Vita Consecrata*, 42).

In 1837, your founder, the Venerable Basil Anthony Mary Moreau, responded generously and wisely to the needs of the turbulent times in which he lived, dedicating himself and his spiritual sons to the task of renewing and strengthening French society through preaching the gospel, education, and assistance to those in need. Beginning from a place providentially called "Holy Cross", the Congregation rapidly spread abroad, establishing missions and educational institutions across the globe.

The theme of the present Chapter is "Crossing borders of every sort". These words, taken from your own Congregation's Constitution, express the desire to capture anew that initial spirit of your founder and they

demand, in the first place, a personal commitment from every member of the Congregation to a life of holiness and joy in the vocation which the Lord in his goodness has given. In a world obsessed with material possessions and personal gratification, your witness of evangelical poverty, chastity, and obedience will shine for others, showing them what it means to follow Christ completely and unreservedly. Consequently, I invite you to set out boldly "into the deep". The more fervently you join yourselves to Christ by this gift of your whole self, "the fuller does the Church's life become and the more vigorous and fruitful her apostolate" (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 1). I am confident that your faithful witness to Christ's invitation to "come and see" (*Jn* 1:39) will inspire others to do the same.

The recent establishment of the Congregation's new provinces in Haiti and North East India is a clear sign of the fruitfulness of your apostolate for the life of the Church, demonstrating that the Gospel has taken firm root there. As the Second Vatican Council so wisely teaches, "Missionary activity extends the saving faith of the Church, it expands and perfects her catholic unity . . . and bears witness to her sanctity" (*Ad Gentes,* 6). As you consolidate your presence in these and other territories, you contribute to the growth of the Church, you enkindle the flame of hope in the hearts of God's children, and you carry out the Lord's injunction to "go out to the whole world and proclaim the good news" (*Mk* 16:15*)*.

I pray that the Blessed Virgin Mary, model of consecrated life, will continue to inspire and sustain you with her example and her powerful intercession. May she help you to live your religious vocation with increasing gratitude and joy in the knowledge that the consecrated life is a precious and necessary gift for the Church, "an intimate part of her life, her holiness and her mission" (*Vita Consecrata*, 3). As a pledge of grace and peace in the Lord, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing to all the members of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

From Castel Gandolfo, 21 July 2004

IOANNES PAULUS II

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