

Constitution 1

God's Call

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What paragraphs or statements in this constitution struck or moved you in particular?
Why?
2. What were the circumstances surrounding that time when you "heard a summons to give over our lives in a more explicit way" as a Holy Cross Associate of the Midwest Province?
3. "We wanted to be part of the family they formed in order to share in their life and work." What first attracted, or in some cases re-attracted, you to Holy Cross? What were the circumstances by which the Lord called you to be an associate of Holy Cross of the Midwest Province?
4. What has been your experience as an Associate of Holy Cross of the Midwest Province?
5. How is your commitment as an Associate of Holy Cross of the Midwest Province "an invitation for our fellow Christians to fulfill their vocation"?
6. "We wished to abandon all to follow Christ. We learned in time that we still had it within ourselves to hold back. " In what ways do you experience yourself holding back --as a community? as individuals? What are some of the greatest challenges you have experienced in striving to "abandon all to follow Christ"?
7. How can we better live out our vocations as Holy Cross Associates of the Midwest Province today?

Constitution 2

Mission

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What paragraphs or statements in this constitution struck or moved you in particular? Why?
2. It was Father Moreau's conviction that our community life provides a valuable witness to the world in which we live and minister. What are some characteristics of your Associate community which serve as "a hopeful sign of the kingdom"? When reflecting on the quality of your Associate community/chapter, is it accurate to say that "others can behold how we love one another"?
3. "As disciples of Jesus we stand side by side with all people." In which ways does your experience of ministry verify this? In which ways is our identification with all people most clear? In which ways is it least clear?
4. Reiterating the words of the Second Vatican Council, our constitutions describe us as "educators in the faith. " How do you act as an educator in the faith for those with, and to, whom you serve?
5. The constitutions point out that "we ourselves stand to learn much from those whom we are called to teach. " What are some of the things you have learned through your service to others? What are the most valuable lessons you have learned from those you serve?
6. How do you, or can you, express "concern for the dignity of every human being as God's cherished child" through your ministry--service to others?
7. In what ways have you experienced the following:
 - " All of us ...are joined in one communal response to the Lord's mission. "
 - "[O]ur mission is the Lord's and so is the strength for it."
 - "Our work itself becomes a prayer: a service that speaks to the Lord who works through us."

Constitution 3

Prayer

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What paragraphs or statements in this constitution struck or moved you in particular? Why?
2. The constitution speaks of prayer in a variety of ways. Which of these describe or reflect your own experience of prayer? What descriptions--other than those cited-- would you use to characterize your own prayer?
3. Paragraph 25 notes that prayer is a struggle for us as an apostolic community; in particular, it points out that "our ministry can offer itself as a convincing excuse to be neglectful, since our exertions for the kingdom tempt us to imagine that our work may supply for our prayer." How do you avoid that "temptation" of giving priority to ministry in such a way that personal, family, parish and community prayer is neglected or minimalized?
4. How would you describe the relationship between prayer and ministry in your own life and experience?
5. As we live in different local communities, in different situations, and hold diverse spiritualities, no doubt our experience of personal and common prayer are different. How would you characterize your experience of communal prayer (with the brothers, parish, other)? What do you experience as the relationship between communal prayer and individual prayer?
6. What is your prayer relationship with the Congregation of Holy Cross (vowed and promised members)? How can you (and the associates and brothers) improve on that relationship?

Constitution 4

Brotherhood

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What paragraphs or statements in this constitution struck or moved you in particular? Why?
2. This constitution describes the effects of community in a variety of ways. Which of these describe or reflect your own experience of community as an Associate of Holy Cross of the Midwest Province? What experiences--other than those cited--would you use to characterize your own experience as an associate?
3. What do you see as the most important elements of community for the Associates?
4. This constitution opens by recognizing the communal nature of our mission and closes by recognizing the apostolic nature of Holy Cross. As an apostolic community, Holy Cross strives to maintain a close relationship between ministry and community. How would you describe the relationship between community and ministry in your own experience? In which ways do community and ministry support one another in your experience? What influence does your ministry have upon your life in your divers communities (Holy Cross, parish, ministry site, family, circle of friends, etc.)?
5. As reflected in this constitution, community involves coming to know our brothers and sisters, growing close to, and learning from, one another. What are some of the things you have learned from your sisters and brothers? How have we fortified one another? How can we grow in our mutual support for one another?
6. Paragraph 41 recognizes that "faults and shortcomings will make us each a trial to others from time to time. "This is simply a reality in community; the concern is that this "can and occasionally will unravel the peace in our community." What means do we use or have we used, to foster Christian "correction and apology to one another?"
7. How have we experienced our failures being "transformed by God's grace into closer comradeship?"

Constitution 5

Consecration and Community

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What paragraphs or statements in this constitution struck or moved you in particular? Why?
2. The vows professed by members of Holy Cross are to assist them in living a life of "single-hearted intimacy with God, trusting dependence upon God, and willing surrender to God." Such a life is the call to all baptized Christians. In what ways has your association with Holy Cross fostered your journey in these goals?
3. This constitution declares, "We want our vows, faithfully lived, to be witness and call to (other Christians)." How have the brothers' "commitments, faithfully lived, (been a) witness and call to you? How have you, and your sister and brother associates, reflected that same witness to which you are called?
4. This constitution states that the vows mark the life of the Congregation of Holy Cross. In particular, Holy Cross religious must be:
 - "open and generous and hospitable"
 - "committed to the use of few belongings and to simple living"
 - "at the service of the universal church. "

How do you as an associate reflect these same Christian values as Jesus declares them in the gospels? In what ways can, and should, Associates of Holy Cross of the Midwest Province live out these values articulated in the Way of our Lord and brother, Jesus, the Christ?

5. In this vision of lifestyle, how do you as an Associate of Holy Cross lead a life that is communal, apostolic and prophetic? How can Associates world-wide articulate this fundamental call?

Constitution 6

Formation and Transformation

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What paragraphs or statements in this constitution struck or moved you in particular. Why?
2. Paragraph 57 reminds us that the fulfillment of our vocation "demands the conversion of our habits, our character, our attitudes, our desires." How has your association in Holy Cross facilitated that conversion? In what ways has your association enhanced your growth? Are there aspects of your association with Holy Cross which has mitigated your growth? In what other ways have you seen your growth (your conversion) taking place within you? In what ways can your local associate community form and transform into a stronger community?
3. "If we delight in our vocation, we will share it with others." How have you shared the vocation of the Brothers of Holy Cross with others? How have you shared your vocation as an Associate of Holy Cross of the Midwest Province with others? How can the Associates promote their specific vocation in Holy Cross?
4. What efforts have you made to "cultivate an inquiring and well-nourished mind broadened by (your) experience and reflection?" How have those efforts been of benefit to you personally? How have those efforts been of benefit to others?
5. What has been your own experience of the "life, suffering and hopes of the poor?" How has that experience formed and transformed you?
6. By what means do you assure accountability in your personal, communal, and apostolic life?
7. What have been radical formative experiences for you as an individual? For your local associate community?
8. How have you experienced God's gift of transformation in times of failure? How do you, can you, assist one another in the Lord's gifts of transformation?

Constitution 7

Authority and Responsibility

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What paragraphs or statements in this constitution struck or moved you in particular? Why?
2. In which ways do you accept individual responsibility "for the conformity of our lives to the gospel ... [and] for harmony of our ministries with the mission of Christ?"
3. How have you experienced the fact that "the Spirit of the Lord may choose any of us to speak the truths we all need to hear?"
4. In which ways have you experienced those in authority providing "a ministry among us and to us" as individuals? As a community?
5. How do you articulate and act upon the call for "each of us to take appropriate responsibility for the common good" in you local community/chapter.
6. Though it is the obligation of leaders "to preach and to witness the gospel," each of us must respond, in sincerity of heart, to the Lord and fulfillment of our duties to our sisters and brothers. How do you assist those in leadership in fulfilling their obligation to minister for the best of the community? How have you experienced your current leadership (or your leadership)?
7. Though it is the obligation of leaders to pastor, each of us is responsible for the development of our local chapters, as well as the growth and sanctification of our association with Holy Cross. How can you assist your leadership in this endeavor?
8. How has your participation in local chapter meetings been an experience of discerning and deciding upon "the largest issues of the common good?" How can your communal efforts in discernment be enhanced?
9. In what ways can you foster a deeper appreciation and understanding of what it means to be an Associate of Holy Cross of the Midwest Province?

Constitution 8

The Cross, Our Hope

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What paragraphs or statements in this constitution struck or moved you in particular? Why?
2. In the light of your experiences, what significance does *Spies Unica* have for you as an Holy Cross Associate of the Midwest Province.
4. In what ways have your experience/ministry "(hinted) to us of Jesus' suffering for us?"
5. How have you experienced that "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?"
6. How does your presence and activity characterize Holy Cross as a community "with hope to bring?" How have you experienced the resurrection as a "daily event?"
7. How have you found--through which means--that "how even the cross can be borne as a gift?"
8. What roles do Mary and Joseph have in your personal and communal spiritual life'? How have you experienced their patronages as a source of hope?
9. "It is in fidelity to what we once pledged that we will find the dying and the rising equally assured." What ways have you experienced the truth of that statement as an individual? As a member of the Associates of Holy Cross of the Midwest Province?