

Past Superiors General Congregation of Holy Cross



Blessed Basile Moreau (1857-1866)

Moreau, the founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, was born on February 11, 1799, in Laigné-en-Belin (Sarthe), France. He was ordained August 12, 1821, for the Diocese of Le Mans. Moreau was serving as a professor in the seminary of the Diocese of Le Mans when in 1835 he was appointed the ecclesiastical superior of the Brothers of St. Joseph, founded by Rev. Jacques Dujarié. At the same time, he organized a band of Auxiliary Priests to preach parish missions. In 1837, he brought the two groups together as the Association of Holy Cross to serve as educators in the faith. In 1841, he added a group of women, known as the Marianites of Holy Cross. For Moreau, the religious family of Holy Cross was now complete, as he had seen as its model the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Moreau quickly began sending his religious to serve in missions in Algeria, the United States, and Canada. Moreau also made foundations in Italy and East Bengal and was rewarded with papal approval of his community's Constitutions in 1857 as a missionary congregation. Moreau had composed those Constitutions, along with the community's rule. He also had written *Meditations*, *Spiritual Exercises*, and a treatise on *Christian Education* to aid in the spiritual and ministerial formation of his religious. Although the Vatican in its approval in 1857 required the sisters to have their own separate community, the priests and brothers were now the Congregation of Holy Cross and Moreau was now its first Superior General.

In the 1860s, Moreau faced determined opposition to his leadership from several priests in the Congregation, which was then compounded by financial problems. He resigned as Superior General in 1866 and returned to preaching parish missions. He died in Le Mans on January 20, 1873.

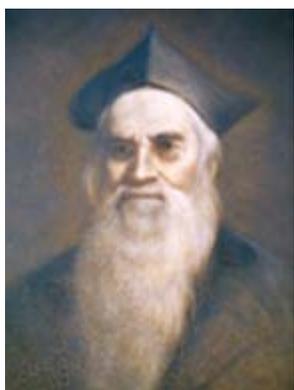


Bishop Pierre Dufal, C.S.C. (1866-1868)

Dufal was born on November 8, 1822, in Saint-Gervais d'Aubergne (Puy-de-Dome), France. He professed religious vows on August 15, 1852, and then was ordained a priest on September 29, 1853. Assigned to oversee and lead the Congregation's mission in East Bengal, India, in 1858, he was appointed Vicar Apostolic of Dhaka and ordained a bishop in 1860. He was the

first member of the Congregation to be elevated to the rank of the episcopacy. After the resignation of Moreau in 1866, the General Chapter sought someone as Superior General who had not been involved in the controversies surrounding Moreau. They elected Dufal, who resisted accepting the office for a year until ordered to take it by the Vatican.

A year in France convinced Dufal that he was not the man to resolve the community's problems, and he resigned as Superior General and returned to East Bengal in 1868. In 1875, the Congregation withdrew temporarily from East Bengal, and Dufal moved to Rome where he served as Procurator General for the community until 1878 when he went to Galveston, Texas, as co-adjutor bishop. He resigned that position in 1880 and returned to France, residing at the Congregation's college in Neuilly, a Parisian suburb. He died there on March 14, 1898.



Rev. Edward Sorin, C.S.C. (1868-1893)

Sorin was born on February 6, 1814, in Manor of La Roche (Mayenne), France. He was ordained on May 27, 1838 for the Diocese of Le Mans. After serving for a year as a parish priest, Sorin joined the Congregation of Holy Cross and made his novitiate with Moreau and three other priests. These five were the first priests to pronounce vows in the Congregation on August 15, 1840. The following year Sorin was assigned to lead six Holy Cross brothers in the community's first mission to the United States in the Diocese of Vincennes, Indiana. When the bishop offered the group a large tract of land in the northern part of the state if they would start a school there, the offer was accepted. Sorin and seven brothers established what would become the University of Notre Dame du lac in 1842.

Sorin made Notre Dame his home for the rest of his life, even refusing an assignment to lead the Congregation's first group of missionaries to East Bengal. He launched numerous other foundations in the United States and was elected the first American Provincial Superior in 1865. During the American Civil War (1861-65), he sent seven priests to serve as chaplains with the Union army and more than eighty Sisters of the Holy Cross to serve as nurses in military hospitals.

The 1868 General Chapter elected him as Superior General to succeed Bishop Dufal, and he served in office until his death 25 years later. Sorin managed to pay off the Congregation's debts in France, sold the mother house in Le Mans, and eventually moved the General Administration to Notre Dame. The General Chapter of 1872, at which Sorin presided, closed the Congregation's missions in Algeria and East Bengal while retaining Canada and the United States. At the Vatican's insistence, the mission in East Bengal was reopened in 1886. When a disastrous fire in 1879 destroyed the main building at Notre Dame, Sorin immediately rebuilt and provided for a golden dome on the new main building topped by a statue of the Blessed Mother.

During his years as Superior General, Sorin made some 50 voyages across the Atlantic to deal with the affairs of the Congregation in France and Rome. He was invited to attend the Plenary Council of American Bishops at Baltimore in 1884, and Cardinal Gibbons, two other archbishops, and 12 bishops attended his golden jubilee celebration in 1888. Because he was gravely ill, the 1892 General Chapter provided for a co-adjutor with the right of succession. Sorin died at Notre Dame on October 31, 1893.



Rev. Gilbert Français, C.S.C. (1893-1926)

Français was born on February 4, 1849, in Loudéac (Côtes-du-Nord), France. His brother, Adolphe, also was a Holy Cross priest, dedicating most of his life to the missions in East Bengal. Français was a graduate of the Congregation's College of St. Charles in St. Briec in Brittany. He entered the novitiate in Le Mans in 1867 where he would have met Moreau. He pronounced vows on March 19, 1870, and was ordained May 25, 1872. Français was assigned to teach at the Congregation's college in Neuilly, a suburb of Paris. He was there in 1880 when the government attempted to dissolve all religious congregations in

France. He served for a year on the staff of the novitiate and then was appointed director of the Neuilly school when its founder, Rev. Louis Champeau, C.S.C., died.

At the General Chapter of 1892 he was elected co-adjutor Superior General with the right of succession. When Sorin died in October 1893, Français became the Superior General. As Superior General, he labored to revive the community in France, including moving the General Administration back to France, at Neuilly. Français was especially solicitous that religious who were teaching earn degrees to insure the quality of their ministry. In this spirit, he supported the opening of Holy Cross College in Washington, D.C., which was in close proximity to the Catholic University of America.

Responding to tension between priests and brothers, Français vigorously supported the move of the brothers into secondary education in North America where they directed the schools that they staffed. Français also promoted the religious life in his circular letters and several times visited the houses in Canada and the United States to encourage adherence to the Constitutions. He collaborated with other French religious to revive devotion to Moreau.

When the French government passed laws in 1901 and 1904 abolishing religious congregations, Français moved the General Administration back to Notre Dame. His attempt to resign in 1920 was denied by the Vatican, and instead he was given a co-adjutor, Rev. Andrew Morrissey, C.S.C., who died the following year. In poor health, Français was finally allowed to resign in 1926. He lived at St. Joseph's Farm, Notre Dame, Indiana, and died there on September 15, 1929.



Rev. James W. Donahue, C.S.C. (1926-1938)

Donahue was born on July 14, 1885, in Chicago, Illinois, in the United States. He professed Final Vows in the Congregation on July 14, 1906, and was ordained October 28, 1911. After ordination, he served on the Mission Band of the American Province, preaching parish missions. In 1920 he was appointed Novice Master for his province and in 1923 he became Superior of Moreau Seminary. He was named the acting Procurator General and Superior of the Congregation's house of studies in Rome in 1925.

As Superior General, Donahue worked to revive the Province of France, after the laws in 1901 and 1904 had abolished religious congregations. He arranged for the Congregation to buy the church in Le Mans built by Moreau and that had been confiscated by the French Government. He also promoted recognition of and devotion to Moreau as the founder of the Congregation.

Donahue became the first Superior General to visit the missions in Bengal in more than 70 years. He promoted the expansion of the American community in the northeastern states and in Hispanic ministry in Texas, and he approved the opening of a mission in Poland in 1935. Donahue also forcibly opposed the division of the priests and brothers into separate religious communities. The first Superior General in the Congregation elected to a term, rather than for life, Donahue returned to preaching parish missions after serving his 12 years in office. He died on June 30, 1943, at Notre Dame.



Rev. Albert Cousineau, C.S.C. (1938-1950)

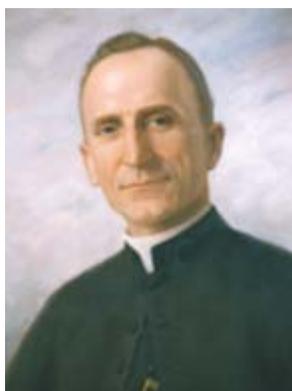
Born on January 4, 1895, in St-Laurent, Quebec, in Canada, Albert was the eighth of ten children. He professed Final Vows on August 15, 1916, and was ordained May 25, 1918. After earning a doctorate in theology, Cousineau began a teaching career at College Saint-Laurent in Montreal that was interrupted by further studies in Paris and then six months in Rome as acting Procurator General and Superior of the House of Studies. In 1928 he became Superior of College Saint-Laurent. He was named Pastor of the parish in St-Laurent in 1934 and then Superior of St. Joseph's Oratory in 1936.

The General Chapter of 1938 elected him Superior General, the first Canadian to hold that office. One of his first duties in 1938 was to preside over the translation of Moreau's relics from the community cemetery to a chapel in the conventual church, established as a parish that same year. In December 1939 he made the general visitation of the mission in Bengal and on his return managed to visit the religious in France in the spring of 1940 before the German occupation of the country during World War II. It was his last contact with the French Province until 1944.

In 1942, Cousineau travelled to South America and arranged for the Congregation to establish itself in Chile, Brazil, and Haiti. When India became independent from Britain in 1947 and the sub-continent was divided into Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan, the Holy Cross missions in Bengal ended up in both countries. Steps were taken to set up a formation program in India to provide for the Indian missions.

Cousineau was well aware of the tension between brothers and priests, and at the 1945 General Chapter he proposed to restructure the Congregation with autonomous provinces of priests and brothers in Canada and the United States. The chapter accepted this arrangement and also erected vice-provinces for Acadia and the English-speaking territories in Canada. In 1949, with the support of the three Holy Cross sisters' communities and Bishop Grente of Le Mans, he introduced the cause of Moreau for canonization. He convoked the 1950 General Chapter in Rome at the Canadian College, and the Chapter decided to establish the General Administration in Rome. Cousineau had previously moved the General Administration from Notre Dame to Washington, D.C., (1940), and then New York City (1943).

After leaving office, Cousineau was ordained co-adjutor bishop of Cap Haitien, Haiti, in January 1951 and became the titular bishop in 1953. He died in Haïti in 1974.



Rev. Christopher J. O'Toole, C.S.C. (1950-1962)

O'Toole was born on October 1, 1906, in Alpena, Michigan, in the United States. He professed Final Vows in the Congregation on July 2, 1928 and was ordained a priest on June 24, 1933. After advanced studies in philosophy, he served as Novice Master, Superior of Holy Cross College in Washington, D.C., and Assistant Provincial of the U.S. Province.

At the 1950 General Chapter, he was elected Superior General. O'Toole oversaw the moving of the Congregation's General Administration to Rome, opening the new facility, which included both the Generalate and an international House of Formation, on Via Aurelia Antica in 1954. During his tenure as Superior General, the Congregation opened missions in Ghana (1957) and Uganda (1958) in Africa. It also opened a school in northern Italy in an effort to recruit vocations. O'Toole's years in office witnessed a steady growth in the Congregation to more than 3,000 brothers and priests by 1962.

After leaving office, Fr. O'Toole served as Superior of the District of Texas and then the first Provincial Superior of the Southern Province (Austin, Texas) when it was established in 1968. In later years, he was a hospital chaplain and campus minister at Cardinal Newman College in St. Louis, Missouri. He died October 16, 1986.



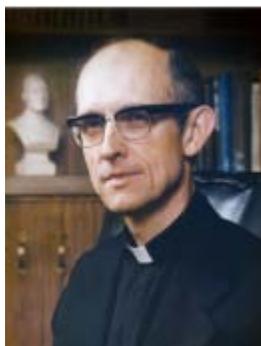
Rev. Germaine-Marie Lalonde, C.S.C. (1962-1974)

Lalande was born on March 22, 1911, in St-Placide (deux Montagnes), Quebec, Canada. He professed Final Vows on August 16, 1934, and was ordained January 31, 1937. His first assignment was to work with the Young Christian Students movement in Quebec. In 1943 he moved to College Saint-Laurent where he served progressively as Prefect of Religion, Assistant Superior, and Superior. In 1956 he was elected Superior of the French-speaking priests' Province of Canada. In that capacity he attended the 1962 General Chapter, which elected him Superior General.

By virtue of the size of the membership in the congregation, Lalonde was invited to attend the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) with the right to speak but not to vote. He frequently attended meetings of the council fathers and extended the hospitality of the Generalate to the Holy Cross bishops participating in the Council. In 1964 he closed the school in northern Italy established under his predecessor, but in 1968 he approved a new foundation in Peru.

The international House of Studies in Rome, located on the same property as the Generalate, was closed in 1968 as an emphasis was placed on seminarians studying in the countries in which they would serve. With the House of Studies closing, Lalonde persuaded the 1968 General Chapter to sell the property on Via Aurelia Antica and move the Generalate to a simpler location in a middle class suburb of Rome. The move was completed in 1969. The 1968 General Chapter also began the revision of the Congregation's Constitutions to bring them into accord with the reforms of Vatican II. A more definitive revision was completed by the General Chapter of 1974.

After leaving office, Lalonde served as Director of Residence Maria Goretti in Montreal. In 1979 he became Superior of Maison Basile Moreau in Montreal, the infirmary of the priests' Province in Canada. He died in Montreal September 14, 1996.



Rev. Thomas O. Barrosse, C.S.C. (1974-1986)

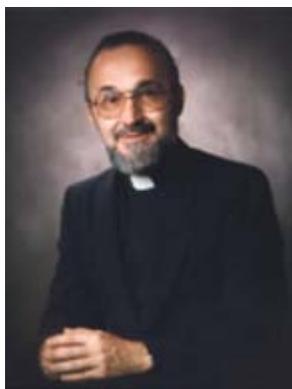
Barrosse was born on June 3, 1926, in New Orleans, Louisiana, in the United States. He professed Final Vows in the Congregation on September 6, 1947, and was ordained a priest on December 23, 1950. After biblical studies in Rome, he taught at the University of Notre Dame and at Holy Cross College, Washington, D.C. From 1969 to 1974, he served as Novice Master in the common novitiate of the six American provinces in Bennington, Vermont.

Elected Superior General by the General Chapter in 1974, Barrosse visited all the houses of the Congregation, trying to meet personally with every religious to reassure them of the Congregation's mission and future in the wake of the

Second Vatican Council. It was a time when numerous religious were seeking dispensations from their vows. He composed several circular letters addressing the meaning of religious life and the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Barrosse oversaw the establishment of the Province of India in 1984 and encouraged the brothers and priests in Bangladesh to seek provincial status. He promoted devotion to Moreau as the Congregation's founder, writing a biography on him and putting together a compendium of his circular letters. He also worked for the beatification of Br. André Bessette, C.S.C., which happened in 1982. He played a large role in the revision of the Constitutions by the General Chapter of 1986, which is the version that remains in effect today with minor alterations. Barrosse also stressed collaboration with the Holy Cross sisters' communities and pressed the Congregation to recognize its international character.

After leaving office, he went to Bangladesh where he taught in the major seminary. After falling sick, he died in Bangladesh on June 14, 1994.

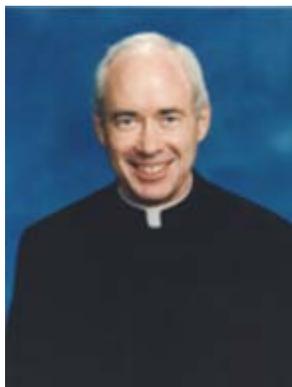


Rev. Claude Grou, C.S.C. (1986-1998)

Grou was born on November 16, 1941, in St-Laurent, Quebec, in Canada. He professed Final Vows in the Congregation on September 25, 1966, and was ordained on April 20, 1968. After completing his theological studies for Ordination at the Papal Atheneum in Pune, India, he taught at that institution until 1980 when he returned to Canada. In Montreal he directed the seminary program and the Fund for Justice and Peace for his province. From 1982 to 1986 he served as Assistant Provincial.

As Superior General, elected by the 1986 General Chapter, Grou submitted the Constitutions approved by that Chapter to the Vatican, securing their approval in 1988. He published a commentary on the Constitutions in 1997. Grou initiated a congregational planning process that laid the groundwork for restructuring in later years. He presided over the establishment of new districts in East Africa and Northeast India and oversaw the merging of jurisdictions in Canada and France. During his tenure, the Congregation celebrated the 150th anniversaries of the Fundamental Act of Union (1987), the arrival of Holy Cross in the United States (1991), and the beginning of Holy Cross in Canada (1997). He also advanced the work related to the beatification of Moreau and the canonization of Br. André Bessette, C.S.C.

Since leaving office, Fr. Grou has worked at St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal, serving currently as its Rector.



Rev. Hugh W. Cleary, C.S.C. (1998-2010)

Cleary was born on August 4, 1946, in New York City, New York, in the United States. He professed Final Vows on February 11, 1972, and was ordained on April 28, 1973. Cleary served as Pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel, a parish in inner-city Brooklyn, New York, for 10 years before earning a Doctorate in Spiritual Theology from Duquesne University. He was serving as Novice Master in Cascade, Colorado, when he was elected in 1994 as Superior of the Eastern Province of the Priests in the United States. In 1998 he was elected Superior General.

In his circular letters, Cleary called the community back to the basic values of religious life. He travelled extensively giving retreats and visiting the sites in the world where the Congregation worked to emphasize the internationality of Holy Cross. He sought to strengthen the Congregation's relationship with the hierarchy and the Vatican, including attending frequently papal functions in Rome. He promoted the restructuring of the Congregation and convoked an extraordinary General Chapter in 2006 to effect the merger of some provinces and the transition of others to the status of vicariates dependent on the General Administration. He developed a Solidarity Fund and an international Finance Committee to share the Congregation's resources more equitably and to engender a congregational perspective.

As Superior General, Cleary worked actively to advance the causes of Moreau for beatification and Br. André Bessette, C.S.C. for canonization. Moreau was beatified in 2007, and André was canonized just months after Cleary left office in 2010. Cleary also approved the introduction of the causes of Fr. Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., Archbishop Theotimus Ganguly, and Br. Flavian LaPlante, C.S.C. He moved the general archives of the Congregation to the University of Notre Dame in order to preserve these primary sources of the Congregation's history and charism, and he successfully promoted a recognition by the General Chapter of Notre-Dame de Sainte-Croix (the Congregation's conventual church in Le Mans) and St. Joseph's Oratory as the community's heritage and patrimony.

After leaving office, he served as chaplain at the retirement house of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Ventura, California. In 2012 he became Director of Campus Ministry at Stonehill College in Massachusetts.