

MORAVIAN MOMENT #25...
JOHN HUS- REFORMER AND MARTYR

A Youth and Young adult convention was held in August 2006 entitled, "TAKE IT BACK." The convention was held on the campus of the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad, and was attended by over 200 young people from throughout the Eastern West Indies Province. It was a deliberate move on the part of the Youth and Young Adult of our Church, to call back and indeed, to take back our Church from a part of SIN, FORMALISM AND SECULARISM, back to the path of RIGHTEOUSNESS, HOLINESS. It seems as if John Hus over 500 years ago championed the same cause. Who was he and what led him to the path that he took?

John Hus was a Professor of philosophy and Rector of the University of Prague in Czechoslovakia. Greatly influenced by the English reformer John Wycliffe, he advocated change in the Roman Catholic Church. Following ordination as a Priest he was appointed preacher at the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, whose foundation stated that CZECH, and not Latin, was to be used in worship. Hus, who was an extremely good preacher, attracted large crowds and in his sermons was not afraid to attack evil in any quarter, whether the sins and vices were committed by Kings, Bishops, other Pastors or members of the Church.

Eventually John Hus was excommunicated and summoned to a Council in Constance to defend himself. In spite of a promise of safe conduct he was condemned to death without a trial and subsequently burnt at the stake on July 6th 1415, his 46th birthday. Hus wanted to Reform the Roman Catholic Church, but they objected vehemently, saw him as a Heretic or an upstart and tried to suppress and kill that Reformation spirit that he brought, to see God's Church cleansed and restored.

Points of protest arising from the teaching of Hus:

- That the sale of indulgences was iniquitous.
- That the Laity should be allowed to receive the Cup at the Holy Communion.
- That worship should be conducted in the language of the people.
- That Christ alone should be recognized as Head of the Church.
- That the authority of the Bible should take precedence over the authority of the Church.

Martyrdom turned John Hus into a national hero; his followers swore they would revenge his death. His followers banded themselves together and called themselves the Hussites. They were so convinced a convinced about the move that God was making through them, that 42 years after their leader, John Hus, was burned at the stake, the Moravian Church was born. It is this wonderful institution of which we are a part. One verse of a hymn by G. Komarovsky written in 1467 speaks powerfully to the work of the Church:

He gave us faithful men to lead
And help us, in our time of need;
But, Lord, all power is thine alone,
And thou the work must carry on.

1 July, 2007