

Spiritual Path for Dehonian Associates

Ninth Meeting

The Heart of Jesus: The Person and the Symbol

Objectives

1. to maintain a sense of welcome and belonging among the participants
2. to understand that the symbol of the Heart of Jesus represents the person of Jesus
3. to appreciate that there are many visual interpretations of the Heart of Jesus
4. to realize that every visual interpretation of the Heart of Jesus offers a different insight into the person of Jesus and his relationship with humanity
5. to acknowledge that devotion to the Heart of Jesus requires that our hearts gradually conform to Jesus' thoughts and actions.
6. to celebrate Dehonian spirituality that has the capacity to nurture and sustain a relationship of love and union with God

Preparation and Notes

1. If possible, arrange the seating in a circle with a low, circular table placed at the center.
2. Place on the table a candle, an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and perhaps some flowers or a plant. The candle should already be lit when the participants are gathering.
3. Choose a CD with soft, instrumental background music and decide on the best way to play the CD [either with a CD player or on a computer]. Have this music playing while the participants are gathering.
4. Have sufficient copies of the prayer card [the prayer, "My loving Jesus" on one side, and an image of the Heart of Jesus on the other] available for the participants.
5. Make sure someone can introduce and lead the sung mantra, "Heart of Jesus."
6. *Before the meeting*, ask one of the participants to prepare reading the witness of Fr. Dick MacDonald, SCJ, and three other participants to prepare the readings for the closing prayer.
7. The meeting should last no longer than two hours. It is important not to exceed this time limit. Meetings that last longer than advertised tend to be the last ones some people attend. The meeting should include a 10-15 minute break. One is suggested in the outline, but the dynamic of the group will suggest the most opportune time.

Welcome

A greeting and a welcome back, preferably from an SCJ, to all those attending the ninth meeting. If some participants are attending for the first time, welcome them warmly and invite the members of the group to introduce themselves to each other.

Prayer

- **Instrumental background music:** *if the music is not playing, begin it now without introduction. Allow about a minute before beginning the Centering exercise.*
- **Centering exercise:** *slowly move through these suggestions, allowing time for the participants to follow your suggestions.*
 - ✓ As we begin a short time of prayer, I invite you to quiet yourself and relax.
 - ✓ It may help to close your eyes.
 - ✓ It may help to fill your lungs with deep breaths, and then exhale slowly.
 - ✓ Find a comfortable position in your chair; let the chair safely hold you.
 - ✓ As best as you can in this moment, enter into the depths of your heart, which is a place where God dwells.
- **Guided meditation:** *slowly move through these steps, allowing time for the participants to follow your suggestions.*
 - ✓ Having arrived at the depths of your heart, or as close as you can come in this moment, what do you notice? It could be an image, a feeling, a color, or nothing at all, which is itself an image.
 - ✓ Bring to your awareness your favorite image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. What is it about this image that most attracts you? What does it mean for you?
 - ✓ Try to notice something new about this image, an aspect of this image that you never noticed before.
 - ✓ Ask Jesus to show you the most important aspect of this image.
 - ✓ Take a moment to be grateful for Jesus and for the image that reminds you of his loving Heart. Then allow Jesus to thank you for listening and being attracted to his Heart.
 - ✓ Gently bring your awareness back to this circle. When you are ready, open your eyes.
- When everyone has opened his or her eyes, turn off the music.

- Distribute the prayer card and invite the participants to pray this prayer in unison:

**My loving Jesus,
look how far your boundless love has gone!
Of your own flesh and most precious blood
you have prepared for me a divine food
in order to give yourself wholly to me.
What has impelled you to such heights of love?
Surely nothing else than your Heart,
filled with so great a love.
Adorable Heart of my Jesus,
burning furnace of divine love,
take my soul into your most sacred wound,
so that, in this school of love,
I may learn to make a return of love to God,
who has given me such wondrous proofs of his love.
Amen.**

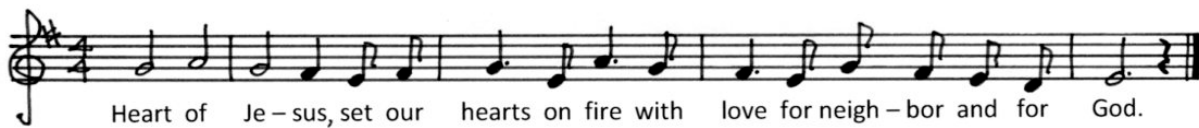
“Thanksgiving for the Institution of the Holy Eucharist,”
from the Night Prayer of the Priests of the Sacred Heart,
1954 Prayer Book

Review of Eighth Meeting

- Each participant shared what s/he sensed God is calling her/him to be and to do, and what will help her/him be faithful to this calling.
- Dehonian spirituality is rooted in the faith experience of Fr. Dehon, who sensed God’s love personally and felt called to model God’s love for people.
- Fr. Dehon’s faith journey unfolded gradually through both missteps and a deepening awareness of his vocation.
- Spirituality is equal parts “inspiration” and “perspiration”.
- Dehonian Associates are called to make Fr. Dehon’s spirituality live by responding to the urgent needs of the Church and the world.

Sharing

- Invite each participant to share their reflection upon these two questions:
 - ✓ What does the image of the Heart of Jesus mean to you?
 - ✓ What do you think Jesus wants to tell us with the image of his Heart?
- After each individual shares, the group sings this mantra:

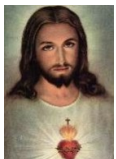


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Presentation: Heart of Jesus: The Person and the Symbol

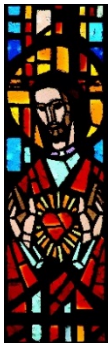
This presentation is keyed to a Power Point Presentation format of photos as indicated in the text.

1. [Title:] Heart of Jesus: The Person and the Symbol
2. Image of the Heart of Jesus from the Priests of the Sacred Heart



No doubt, you recognize this very familiar image of the Heart of Jesus, which the Priests of the Sacred Heart have made popular. Yet, there are many images of the Heart of Jesus and each one helps us appreciate a specific understanding of God's unconditional love. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then many different images of the Heart of Jesus can serve to awaken a new consciousness, expand understanding, and deepen our faith regarding the person of Jesus and how he is asking us to follow him.

3. Stained glass window in Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology Chapel



This modern interpretation of the Heart of Jesus, executed in stained glass, serves as the focal point in the chapel of Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology, in Hales Corners, WI. Notice the halo of light behind Jesus' head and the halo of flames radiating from his heart. The position of Jesus' hands invites us to contemplate his Heart, the source of intense love and tender compassion.

4. Cross Icon by Charles Brown, SCJ



The Priests of the Sacred Heart prefer to meditate upon the wounded body of the crucified Jesus, particularly his pierced side that symbolically opens a pathway to his Heart. It is their goal to be totally united to the thoughts and sentiments of the Heart of Jesus so that they might be, in today's world, the incarnation of Christ's compassionate and healing love, particularly among people who feel shunned, invisible, or oppressed.

5. Cross: mosaic image displayed in the SCJ Generalate in Rome



The SCJ *Rule of Life* states, "The open side and the pierced Heart of the Savior most wonderfully expressed for Fr. Dehon a love whose active presence he experienced in his own life. He expected his religious to be prophets of love and servants of reconciliation of people and the world in Christ. Thus involved with Christ to remedy sin and the lack of love in the Church and in the world, they shall render the worship of love and of reparation that his Heart desires through their whole life, their prayers, works, suffering and joys."

6. Oscar Howe crucifix in Our Lady of the Sioux Chapel, St. Joseph's Indian School



This tapestry is based on a painting by a famous Native American artist. Jesus crucified is clearly presented as a Native American with his tawny skin tone, facial features, and long, straight black hair. Hanging in Our Lady of the Sioux chapel, at St. Joseph's Indian School, this image reminds Native American children that Jesus sacrificed himself for all people.

7. Margaret Mary image interpreted by Angelico Kohler, SCJ



This stained glass image is an interpretation of a pen and ink drawing by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque that tries to capture the visions she received from Jesus. She explains, "The Divine Heart was represented to me as on a throne of fire and flames shedding rays of light on every side, brighter than the sun and transparent as crystal. The wound which He had received on the cross was clearly visible. A crown of thorns encircled the Divine Heart and it was surmounted by a cross." In one vision, she heard these words, "Behold this Heart which has so loved humanity that it has spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming itself to prove to humanity its love."

8. Five suns mandala, David Schimmel



In another vision, Margaret Mary saw Jesus' five wounds shining like bright suns—sources of life, energy, and warmth—and symbolic of the transforming power of God's love. Humanly speaking, the experience of being wounded often encourages people to react by wounding others. Yet, the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus honors wounds as a reminder *not* to wound others. Indeed, wounds can teach how to love others deeply, gently, and compassionately.

9. Christ the King in Divine Heart Seminary chapel



In the Litany of the Sacred Heart, we pray, *Heart of Jesus, king and center of all hearts, have mercy on us*. Although Jesus taught extensively about the reign of God, he never directly identified himself as king. He did, however, claim to be shepherd, a role closely identified with Jewish kingship from the time of the Shepherd-King David. As the Good Shepherd, Jesus reminds us that he came that we may have life and have it in abundance.

10. Christ the King banner in SCJ Generalate chapel



The text on this banner asks, "Who would not love in return the One who loves him?" These sentiments summarize the goal of Fr. Leo John Dehon's priesthood and religious life, and remain a challenge to every Priest of the Sacred Heart. At the top of the crucifix, the crown, and at its sides, the *alpha* and *omega* [the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet], signify Jesus' reign over individuals and society. Failure to acknowledge Christ's reign of love results in an abuse of power and unnecessary misery, which is quite evident in today's world.

11. Jesus with Congolese children



In this mural at a school in the Congo, Jesus comfortably moves with a crowd of young children, who sport school uniforms. Inevitably, these Congolese children run toward him, follow him, move in close to him, and hug him. They sense that Jesus cares for them and has their well-being "at heart." By his presence, Jesus teaches the value inherent in these young people; by loving them as they are, he strengthens their self-image. Using his hands, he communicates with a touch of acknowledgement, affection, and blessing.

12. Jesus with Native American children



Two Native American children willingly gather under the arms of the Heart of Jesus, who blesses and protects them as they move into the promise of the future. Wearing traditional Lakota dress, the boy and girl represent an abiding respect for nature and faith. The girl holds a cross, fashioned from branches and adorned with flowers, as she contemplates the beauty of a single blossom. The boy, with a bird singing on his shoulder, carries a quiver filled with arrows, suggesting the Native Americans' sacred dependence on their animal relatives for sustenance. The halo encircling Jesus' head and heart suggest his divinity; his delighted facial features suggest his humanity and his love for children of all nations.

13. Jesus with a young seminarian



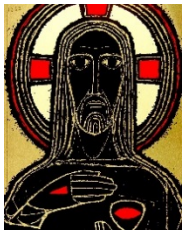
Although the message seems straightforward, the image suggests what the words, "Come, follow me" involve. The boy looks up to Jesus, as he would to a hero or mentor. Jesus returns his gaze. The traditional image of Jesus' heart—with cross, crown of thorns, and flames—highlights the call to follow with a love passionate enough to be inclusive, strong enough to overcome obstacles, and faithful enough to endure the cross. By resting his right hand on the boy's shoulder, Jesus affirms his vocation and awaits his response. Using both of his hands to clasp Jesus' other hand, the boy willingly commits himself to this collaboration of love and service.

14. Jesus with his beloved disciple



The soft glow of this painting and the sense of contentment on the faces of these two figures suggest an intimate union. The subtly painted suggestion of a heart, surmounted with a cross, identifies the person of Jesus. The young man, leaning in toward Jesus, calls to mind "the one whom Jesus loved." In John's Gospel this unidentified individual probably serves as a symbol of the faithful Christian.

15. Cover image on an SCJ German periodical



This is a somber image of the Heart of Jesus, rendering minimal detail in black and white with red highlights. Perhaps the most striking feature of this image is Jesus' eyes—wide open and looking directly at the viewer, as if waiting for a response. Jesus's bodily wounds signify his willingness to prove God's love for us "while we were still sinners." His left hand cups his heart, reminding us that what is essential is not suffering, but rather the love by which any act is undertaken for the sake of others. This image seems to ask, "Do you understand what is important here?" and "Are you willing to follow my example?"

16. Image outside the entrance to Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology



A unique image of the Heart of Jesus greets residents and guests of Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology. With the look of stained glass, but constructed with colored sheets of metal, this figure is mounted on an outside wall close to the main entrance. The intended iconography is traditional—Jesus' left hand holds his heart surmounted by a cross, and his right hand, held up with two fingers raised, indicates his human and divine natures. The unintended iconography is the addition of a nest that birds build every year behind Jesus' heart. The Psalmist prays, "How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God."

17. Heart of Jesus with one hand raised high



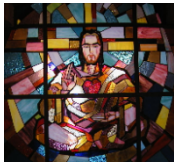
This Heart of Jesus is not serene. His backward-streaming hair and the folds of his clothing suggest that Jesus is walking at a brisk pace. Also notable is his gaze, which is not fixed on the viewer, but directed beyond, perhaps inviting the viewer to observe what he sees. His pierced left hand draws attention to his Heart that is surrounded by emanating rays. The human heart pumps blood throughout the body; the Heart of Jesus sends accepting, forgiving, and transforming love throughout the universe. His pierced right hand is lifted high in a gesture at once witnessing to his presence in the world and rallying his followers to action.

18. Heart of Jesus in a Buddha pose



To a Westerner, it might seem strange to see an image of the Heart of Jesus in a meditative pose favored by the contemplative traditions of Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains. The pose is one of a guru or teacher, so highly revered in the culture of India. With a simple outline of the heart on his chest, this image calls to mind Jesus' words to his disciples. "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

19. Stained glass image in SCJ Novitiate chapel in India



In a similar image, but executed in stained glass, Jesus is sitting in a cross-legged or lotus position, which supports meditation by encouraging proper breathing and bodily alignment. His eyes remain open, but focused downward. His left hand, resting on his lap, depicts a traditional gesture of meditation, while the open palm of his right hand, raised at chest level and facing outward, indicates fearlessness, spiritual power, and a blessing of deep inner peace. The Heart of Jesus is simultaneously meditating and sharing the benefits of his prayer with all believers.

20. Sacred Heart interpreted with Hindu iconography



This Indonesian depiction of the Heart of Jesus uses the language of Hindu symbolism. Here, Jesus is not seated cross-legged in the lotus position, but with both of his legs down. This indicates that he is ready to help, with great compassion, those who call upon him. His feet rest upon a pedestal of lotuses, signifying the creative forces of the universe. The crown symbolizes supreme authority over the world, but also the unknowable reality, which this image is trying to represent. For Christians, this image suggests the mystery of God's loving compassion for us and the transforming power of the Heart of Jesus reigning over our lives.

21. Compassionate Heart of Jesus



In a talk that Fr. Leo John Dehon reflected on the Church, “as the common mother of the rich and poor.” Although he was working with an image of St. Yves, his description mirrors this image of the Heart of Jesus.

“It is said,” Fr. Dehon explained, “that in a stained glass window in a church in Brittany, the good St. Yves is depicted standing larger than life, between a rich person and a poor person whom he has the mission of bringing together and reconciling; but his head is inclined and his expression directed visibly toward the poor person. Is that not the Church’s role? She loves all her children, but she has a preference for the small and the weak. In the sphere of social economy, let us protect the interests of the weak and re-establish, particularly in their favor, the reign of justice and charity.”

22. Heart of Jesus at Prayer



What might make this image of the Heart of Jesus appealing to some and not to others is its simplicity. The heart is a simple open space without the accompanying symbols of thorns, cross, and flames. Additionally, in the standard iconography of the Sacred Heart, Jesus is looking directly at the viewer, but in this image, Jesus’ eyes are closed.

This is a depiction of the Heart of Jesus at prayer. In contemplation, Jesus is aligning “the thoughts of his heart” [*Psalms* 32:11] with those of his Father. The visual is at once peaceful and fierce. Whether praying in the desert while being tested by Satan, praying on the mountaintop before choosing his twelve apostles, or praying in a garden on the night before his execution, Jesus concentrates all his love and devotion toward faithfully accomplishing his Father’s will. Rooted in this prayer, Jesus ministers with love.

23. Ink drawing



Similarly, in this drawing, Jesus’ Heart is an open space, around which everything else in the image swirls. The Heart of Jesus is the center of all hearts. A traditional prayer of the Priests of the Sacred Heart imagines the wounded side and pierced Heart of Jesus as a school of love into which we enter to learn how to make a return of love to God who has given us such wondrous proofs of love. We are invited into this expansive space within Jesus’ Heart.

24. Baileys Harbor chapel image



In this image of the Sacred Heart, Jesus displays his wounds as if they are a badge of honor. The simple, strong lines, bright background, and vibrant colors of the stained glass suggest the delicious joy proceeding from a loving faithfulness, no matter how battered, that cannot be eliminated.

As we gaze upon this Pierced One, we recognize that “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” In our fear of being wounded, the Pierced One offers us peace; in our preference to avoid conflict, he sends us forth to fight for justice; and in our doubts, he strengthens our belief.

25. Cameroun sculpture



This image of the Heart of Jesus comes from an area of Cameroon known for its tradition of carving. The face of this image of the Heart of Jesus seems to have the quality of a mask, which for African sensibilities does not hide, but rather reveals. Masks can represent the spirit of the ancestors or deities. The masks, and the sacred ceremonies in which they are used, yield power that the viewer is either attracted to or repelled by. For the Catholic viewer, this image of the Heart of Jesus reveals a compassionate power that is at once alluring and challenging. Indeed, to express devotion to the Heart of Jesus simultaneously demands a devotion to all of God’s people.

26. African painting



This muscular and tender image of the Heart of Jesus as a Black African man employs the imagery popularized by the visions of Margaret Mary—an anatomical heart surrounded by thorns and flames, pierced and bleeding, to which Jesus calls attention by pointing with his pierced hand.

Compassionate eyes, a glowing complexion, and a subtle smile, all framed by the energy of a halo, seem to echo the love, intensity, and willing sacrifice symbolized by the heart. Out of proportion to the rest of the image, the heart and the raised right hand are rather large. Perhaps it is the artist’s intent to suggest the connection between the heart “that has loved humanity so much” and generous acts of healing, forgiveness, and sharing that characterize Jesus’ ministry.

27. Hands extended



This image displays a plain but large heart, which appears even larger as subtle rays of energy emanate all around it. Surmounted by a cross, this universal symbol of love suggests that great love always involves great sacrifice.

What is most striking about this image, however, is not Jesus' heart, but rather his arms held out as wide as possible. This expansive gesture is gracious and generous, open and available. Jesus' body language welcomes and invites, and anticipates an intimate embrace. His vulnerable pose is inclusive and unconditional, loving and forgiving. Jesus' arms begin to tell the story of his heart and await our response to complete it.

28. Italian elongated



Similarly, this image of the Heart of Jesus focuses, not on the heart, but on the hands. Jesus' hands are completely open in a gesture suggesting not only a warm invitation to come near, but also a generous sharing of his unconditional love, which has its source in his Heart.

29. Italian ceramic tiles



This image, painted on ceramic tiles, seems to emphasize the face of the Heart of Jesus. The chiseled features of his face and the intense gaze of his eyes visually invite the viewer into a personal relationship with Jesus. The rays of light circling Jesus' Heart and head suggest an intensity that characterizes union with Jesus—in both words and actions.

30. Italian painting



This modern depiction of the Heart of Jesus has the look of graffiti, which may be intentional since graffiti is a very public art form. It also has the look of an icon with the use of gold leaf and the Greek letters at the top which are an abbreviation of the name, "Jesus Christ." Added to the traditional imagery of the heart with cross and thorns, is the river of salvation, formed by the blood dripping from Jesus' wounds. Swimming in the river are fish, an early designation of Christian believers.

31. Indonesian wood carved statue



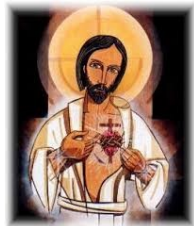
This carved wood statue from Indonesia copies the traditional depiction of the Heart of Jesus. The gesture of Jesus' hands is clearly drawing the viewer's attention to his Heart, encircled by rays of light, burning with flames of love, and surmounted by a cross. Jesus' gentle and compassionate face mirrors the sentiments of his Heart. This image invites us to meditate upon the tremendous love of God symbolized by Jesus' Heart.

32. Gold mosaic background



Even more explicitly in this image, Jesus points to his Heart. While the three-rayed halo signifies divinity and the golden mosaic background suggests a sense of awe, it is the loving Heart of Jesus, who brings humanity and divinity together. God's love created us, God's love redeemed us, and God's love sends us to be witnesses of this love in a world much in need of authentic, self-giving love.

33. Philippines



This traditional image of the Heart of Jesus has a modern look. Jesus is clearly inviting us to contemplate his Heart and what it means for Christians. The light radiating from his Heart and the wounds in his wrists symbolizes the power and peace that flow from his wounded body. Devotion to the Heart of Jesus entails becoming like him and trusting that our wounds, borne with love, can also lead to abundant life.

34. 100th anniversary US Province logo



In 1978, the Priests of the Sacred Heart celebrated the centenary of their founding as a religious Congregation. The United States Province used this logo, an adaptation of the traditional shield of the Congregation, as part of their celebration. The cross is marked by the five wounds of Jesus' body. The central wound of the heart is pierced and is surmounted by a flame. The

Priests of the Sacred Heart prefer to meditate upon the wounded body of the crucified Jesus, particularly his pierced side that symbolically opens a pathway to his Heart.

There is a story told by Rev. Alan Boesak, who ministered in South Africa during apartheid. He says that we will go before God at the last judgment and God will look at us and ask, "Where are your wounds?" Puzzled, we will answer, "We have no wounds." And God will reply, "Was there nothing worth fighting for?" The Priests of the Sacred Heart think there is. Devotion to

the Heart of Jesus is demanding because it requires an intimate union with Jesus that expresses itself in a self-offering that is open to God's will for a just, peaceful, and loving world—what Jesus called the Reign of God.

Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, touch our hearts and make them like your own.

Break [10-15 minutes]

Personal Witness of Fr. Dick MacDonald, SCJ

For over forty years, the people living in south Texas and especially those in Willacy County knew the SCJs. I was graced to be part of their lives for a majority of that time. I wish to reflect here on the mutual sharing that came from being with these wonderful families and how we both came to know the love of the Sacred Heart, even though the language was not always the words of Leo John Dehon.

When I arrived in Texas, I saw material poverty and great injustice in the community and I came with the enthusiasm to repair their lives. Still in my 30s, I had lots of energy and in my head I knew what my vocation as a Dehonian meant. Go to the people, of course, and teach them, and give them all that they lack. How foolish that turned out to be! But I learned so much from the people and was able to see better what a Dehonian minister should be and the spirituality that should motivate him.

The greatest poverty, as I learned the hard way, was not material but personal. The greatest need was for the people to see themselves as worthwhile and loved. Dehonian spirituality called me to a ministry of presence and to teach by my actions. The SCJs that I lived with in community, saw as I did that the people must become teachers for the local Church.

Adveniat regnum tuum, [Your kingdom come], was not the SCJs building up the Church and forming community as much as it was to evangelize people to the love of the Sacred Heart so they would believe that they were the Church. The unconditional love of the Sacred Heart for all people, no exception, has been so important to me. In my own sinfulness, I can hold the hand of the crippled and poor and lift them up to the open side of the Sacred Heart. I can also say to others that you too are so loved by him that you can do the same. Dehon wants us to be with the poor, not to save them as much as to evangelize them to such love in their personal lives.

- Provide a few moments of quiet to allow the participants to reflect on these words.

Reflection on Dehonian Associates Rule of Life

- Invite the participants to reflect upon selected numbers from the Dehonian Associates *Rule of Life*, which focus on the spiritual heritage we have received from Fr. Dehon. With each number, ask the participants to follow along in their personal copy of the *Rule*. The amount of time available and the level of response will suggest how many of these you can discuss. With each number, ask the following questions:

- ✓ What does this paragraph mean to you?
- ✓ Give a specific example of how you might live this out in your daily life.

20. With St. John, we see in the open side of the Crucified the sign of love, which, in the total gift of self, re-creates humanity in the image of God. We are strengthened in our calling by contemplating the Heart of Jesus, the special symbol of this love. We are actually called to enter into this movement of redemptive love by giving ourselves, with and as Jesus, for our brothers and sisters. *The way we came to understand love was that he laid down his life for us; we too must lay down our lives for one another* [1 John 3:16].

33. We consecrate ourselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in order to unite our whole life with the oblation of Christ. He helps us love in the spirit of the beatitudes. Our effort to live this way is a witness for others, and a never-ending task.

34. Christ gave himself entirely to the Father and to people in a love without reserve. By our consecration, we promise to follow Christ faithfully in his love for God and for every person, and in his way of being present to people. This fidelity frees our heart and opens us both to the Holy Spirit and to our neighbor. In this way we form true communities where we can all grow fully and where a new family, founded on the spiritual power of love, can take root.

35. In following Fr. Dehon, we have a mission to give witness to the love of Christ in a world searching for a unity difficult to achieve, and searching for new relationships between persons and groups. Our consecrated fidelity moves us to share in building up a new humanity, open to communion in God's reign.

Prayerful Celebration

- Begin by singing the mantra, “Heart of Jesus.”
- Reader One: **I John 3:16**
The way we came to understand love was that he laid down his life for us; we too must lay down our lives for one another.
- Sing mantra, “Heart of Jesus.”
- Reader Two: **Dehonian Associates Rule of Life #20**
With St. John, we see in the open side of the Crucified the sign of love, which, in the total gift of self, re-creates humanity in the image of God.
- Sing mantra, “Heart of Jesus.”
- Reader Three: **Fr. Leo John Dehon**, *My Spiritual Testament to My Religious*, 1914
I leave you with the most wonderful of treasures, the Heart of Jesus.
- Sing mantra, “Heart of Jesus.”
- Invite spontaneous prayer by participants. This can take the form of a word or phrase that they take with them from the meeting, or a prayer of petition, thanksgiving, or praise. Allow enough quiet time to encourage the introverts to take part.
- When this sharing seems to be finished, sing mantra, “Heart of Jesus.”
- Join hands and pray together the “Our Father.”
- Make any necessary announcements for the next meeting.
- Invite participants to take with them the prayer card. Remind them to bring the Dehonian Associates *Rule of Life* with them to the next scheduled meeting.