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Minutes of the 841st Provincial Council Meeting Hales Corners, Wis., February 4-5, 2014

PRESENT: Fr. Stephen Huffstetter, provincial superior; Fr. Ed Kilianski, Fr. Byron Haaland, Fr. Jack Kurps, Br. Duane Lemke (on the second day Br. Lemke returned to Chicago after learning that Fr. Bob Bossie had been hospitalized) and Fr. Christianus Hendrik, councilors. Present after faith-sharing: Br. Frank Presto, provincial secretary and Mary Gorski, minutes. Present for financial matters: Dn. David Nagel, provincial treasurer. Visitors: David Schimmel (Dehonian Associates director) and Mark Peters (Justice, Peace and Reconciliation director)

I. Faith sharing – The council spent Wednesday morning in prayer and faith sharing. They focused on passages from the SCJ Constitutions and then reflected on the following questions:

- How am I a servant of healing and reconciliation in my community?
 - in my ministry?
 - in my personal life?
- What can I do to create a better community life in my local community?
- If I know someone in my community is hurting or in need of reconciliation how can I help that member of my community?

II. New Staff

A. David Schimmel — Mr. Schimmel was hired on January 6 as province director of the Dehonian Associates. He met with the council briefly to talk about his work so far, and to get councilors' input on the position.

On January 20 Mr. Schimmel met with the Dehonian Associates Committee. They reviewed past efforts and ideas. Immediate goals include preparation of a bulletin insert for SCJ parishes to coincide with Fr. Dehon's anniversary of birth on March 14 (include in the bulletins for March 9). Follow-up will be done with pastors to determine if such things would be helpful in the future, or if there might be other needs that Mr. Schimmel could address. Councilors suggested that the insert be done in Spanish, and perhaps Vietnamese.

Also, the spirituality component of the province website will be redesigned with a Dehonian focus. Mr. Schimmel will work with Mary Gorski on this, and on other electronic communications.

On February 12, he will take part in a conference call with representatives from Sacred Heart Schools in Collaboration. On February 17, Mr. Schimmel will facilitate an in-service day with Sacred Heart Southern Missions' staff. In May, he will attend the Famiglia Dehoniana meeting at the Generalate in Rome.

Mr. Schimmel asked the council if there was a desire to explore possibilities for an oblate program. Some lay people may want a more formal bond or commitment with the Dehonian charism. Councilors said that there may be a call for this. It was suggested that Mr. Schimmel begin to develop materials that could be used in an oblate program, materials that could help people incorporate the Dehonian charism in their lives. Such materials could be used in parishes, with the vocation office and with

benefactors. The benefactor audience is quite large: several million people.

It was noted that a three-year formation program for lay people will be presented at the Rome meeting. Perhaps this could be integrated with materials Mr. Schimmel prepares.

When asked about directions and hopes for the new position, one councilor said that he was happy to see that a director for Dehonian Associates and a director for Justice, Peace and Reconciliation were hired. It is thought that there can be integration of the work of the two offices. Another suggested that Mr. Schimmel examine ways of reconnecting with former SCJs and/or alumni from SCJ seminaries. Even those who were only briefly with the community seem to have a strong connection to it and the Dehonian charism.

Br. Lemke noted the First Friday reflections at the formation house during which an outside presenter reflects on something related to SCJ spirituality or the Dehonian charism, often showing how it has impacted his/her own life. Br. Lemke said that he would welcome suggestions from Mr. Schimmel for future presenters.

Br. Lemke also offered use of the formation house for a possible retreat/catechetical/spiritual development program for province administrators. He sees this as a way of maintaining Dehonian values as the presence of SCJs in province ministries diminishes.

Discussing Mission Education, the council hoped that Hispanic ministry in Texas could be better represented.

Mr. Schimmel will meet with the council quarterly. As the budget is developed for the next fiscal year, it was suggested that Mr. Schimmel's computer needs be reviewed, as well as any other equipment or supplies he might need. He can work with the Provincial Treasurer's office on this.

Fr. Schimmel was asked to be present at the March 21 Local Coordinators/Superiors Meeting in Hales Corners. He will be given more details at a later date.

- B. Mark Peters — Mr. Peters began as province director of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation on January 6. His first weeks have focused on learning about the congregation, Dehonian charism, and the US Province in particular. He said that from his reading, he gets a sense that in the 1980s the congregation reexamined its roots and put an emphasis on the social apostolate.

He said that one of his first tasks is to get a sense of where individual SCJs are at in regards to social justice issues. Mr. Peters hopes to speak individually to as many members of the province as possible in the next weeks. He will soon send a letter of introduction — with a photo — to SCJs. This will go out conventional mail. Follow-up information will be in the Fridge Notes.

Mr. Peters plans to travel to local areas to learn about the SCJs, their ministries, and the social justice needs of the areas in which the province has ministries.

So far, he has only met with a few SCJs in the Milwaukee area, as well as Mr. Schimmel and a few other lay staff.

Mr. Peters contacted Fr. Hendrik about visiting with the South Dakota community. Fr. Hendrik said that the community was very willing to host him but that the SCJs would like to have more of a sense of the expectations of the visit. Initially, said another, the visits are simply to be educational — get a better idea of the SCJs and the needs (social justice concerns) of a local area. The letter of introduction should help to clarify who Mr. Peters is and what he is doing.

Mr. Peters' impression is that many members of the province have a lot on their plate; they are stretched thin. Mr. Peters does not want to give them more tasks. He suggests developing lay leadership locally to address social justice concerns. In this regard, he wondered if he might need to travel more than initially anticipated. Would his work involve a lot of hands-on lay leadership development? Does the council want him to focus on community organizing?

Councilors suggested that as he learns about local areas and their concerns he also investigate social justice organizations in the area — what is already being done? Are there organizations with which the SCJs can collaborate, or at least network with?

It was noted that “immigration” was listed as a priority during the North American Continental Conference.

Possibilities for the future include educational and reflective pieces prepared by Mr. Peters for province communications (website, Facebook, printed materials, and/or blog). This could expand into a blog or website dedicated to social justice concerns. Mary Gorski will continue to send the CMSM J/P Alerts to the membership; if there are issues from them that Mr. Peters wants to expand on he will prepare a follow-up. It was also noted that if he wants to develop an article from his reading of Dehonian materials it would be welcome. Even short items can be used in Fridge Notes or on Facebook.

Mr. Peters asked about his relationship to the province. Should he sign statements and/or other items in the province’s name or in his role as JPR director? Mr. Peters will prepare a one-page policy statement regarding such concerns. He will give this to Br. Presto for the council’s review.

The JPR Commission will meet on February 14.

In closing, Mr. Peters said that he learned that his position is funded with money previously used for province grants to social justice organizations. He said that he has reached out to these organizations to maintain contact.

As was David Schimmel, Mr. Peters was asked to be present at the March 21 Local Coordinators/Superiors Meeting in Hales Corners. He will be given more details at a later date.

III. Administration

- A. Mission Secretary — The province does not have a mission secretary at this time. The council discussed several possibilities for the position but decided to table discussion of it until another meeting.

Dn. Nagel will continue to serve as mission procurator.

B. Province Chapter

1. Packets — Br. Presto said that packets with chapter information were recently sent to SCJs. He will give electronic versions of the materials to place in the Members’ section of the province website where a special section for the province chapter will be created.
2. Participation concerns — There is significant concern that many of the younger members of the province do not want to attend the chapter. Some have already indicated that they will be prayer partners instead of delegates. While any SCJ may be a prayer partner, it was thought that only those who had difficulty because of health or other significant reason would choose this category of participation. There had been an assumption that most men in active ministry would participate as full delegates. It is especially important that younger men in vows participate so that they can be a part of decisions that will affect the future of the province.

The disengagement of younger members from province activities is troubling for councilors. How can their voices be heard if they are not present?

Fr. Huffstetter will send an email to encourage full participation at the chapter by all those who are in active ministry. He will follow-up with phone calls to those in active ministry who have indicated that they do not want to be delegates.

It was noted that the participation level of those in temporary vows will be an issue to be addressed at the chapter.

3. State of the Province — The Chapter Preparatory Committee suggested that members of the province be given a survey to get a sense of the life of the province (individually, on the local level and as a province) as a part of the preparation of the State of the Province report for the province chapter. Councilors reviewed the survey prepared by the committee and approved it with minor changes. Mary Gorski and Br. Presto will work together to get the survey to the membership. SCJs will have the option of doing it online with SurveyMonkey or on paper.

Survey questions are based on the pillars of formation from the Program of Priestly Formation. Responses will be anonymous. The survey will be sent in the next week; deadline for response will be March 5.

Another piece of the State of the Province preparation will be a question asked of a lay person or other collaborator

from various province ministries. The question: “How is this ministry Dehonian?” Br. Presto will ask ministry sites to provide the names of two people to respond to this question.

These pieces will help Fr. Huffstetter prepare a reflective State of the Province report, as opposed to a piece structured more as a business report.

4. Committee name — The official name of the planning committee for the chapter is “Chapter Preparatory Committee.”
- C. General Chapter — The preparatory materials for the General Chapter will be mailed to the membership soon, including a letter from Fr. John van den Hengel explaining the theme of the chapter.
- D. North American Continental Conference follow-up — Two SCJs volunteered to serve on a follow-up committee for the NACC (Frs. Tony Russo and Greg Schill). Fr. Kurps will chair the committee and seek two more people to serve on it. He hopes to have the committee in place prior to the North American councils meeting in Montréal on March 3.
- E. North American councils meeting — The next meeting is on March 3 in Montréal; participants are expected to be there March 2 to share dinner together. Councilors should send their travel arrangements to Fr. Claude Bédard.

Fr. Huffstetter shared Fr. Bill Marveve’s email regarding the meeting. Topics the Canadian council suggests for discussion: 1) follow-up to the North American Continental Conference, 2) regional and provincial chapters (Fr. Huffstetter is going to go to the Canadian chapter as an observer; he suggests that a member of the Canadian Region be invited to the U.S. chapter), and 3) the general visitation.

Topics suggested by members of the U.S. council: 1) an update on and discussion of the intentional, international community in Toronto (Fr. Haaland will write something about this for Fr. Huffstetter to send to Fr. Marveve), 2) possibilities for engaging younger members in leadership.

- F. Local Coordinators/ Superiors Meeting — The meeting with local superiors/coordinators will be March 21 in Hales Corners. Fr. Huffstetter and Br. Presto will organize the meeting with input from the council. The meeting will begin with dinner on March 20 and end by 3 p.m. on March 21.

The first two discussion items for both this meeting and in local communities are 1) the participation level of those in temporary vows at the provincial chapter, and 2) problems and successes in local communities.

Also, time could be spent in faith-sharing, using some of the questions prepared by the General Chapter Preparatory Commission. Prayer should be a part of the gathering.

David Schimmel, Mark Peters, Sid Liebenson and Mark Wenzel will be asked to attend part the meeting. Mr. Liebenson and Mr. Wenzel will give a brief introduction of themselves and their work; Mr. Schimmel and Mr. Peters will be asked to give slightly longer reports. It is estimated that the entire time for this section of the meeting will be about 45 minutes.

- G. Cistercians — Currently a member of the Cistercian order from Vietnam is living with the Dehon Formation Community. His superior recently came to visit and asked if the SCJs would be open to hosting two more men (at a later date) while they do graduate studies. The Cistercians would pay for all of their expenses outside of room and board. Most likely, they would study for about four years.

There is an openness from the formation team to allow this. The current situation has gone very well. It was noted that clear guidelines always need to be set when people stay with the community. The needs of the formation program and the people within it always take priority in the house.

- H. Retirement evaluation — At the last meeting Fr. Huffstetter said that he planned to make arrangements for the province’s senior care to be evaluated early this year. That has been put on hold due to the repairs and renovations underway at Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake.
- I. Communities on Rawson Road and Woods Road — The canonical status of these two communities is irregular. Br. Presto shared the minutes of several council meetings in which this was addressed. He also presented recommendations developed together with Fr. David Szatkowski, province canonist.

Once possibility is that the two communities be merged into one and that a consultation be done for a local superior/coordinator and house council. Fr. Huffstetter will meet with the SCJs in both houses, present the information that Br. Presto and Fr. Szatkowski prepared, and talk about options.

In regards to the election process for delegates to the province chapter, Fr. Dominic Peluse has agreed to coordinate this for the two communities.

IV. Finance

A. Province Development Office — Dn. Nagel reported that income from the first six months of the fiscal year is slightly ahead of the previous year. More mail went out and more donations were received. The partnership with Quadriga is going well; the office is working with Quadriga on developing next year's budget. Sid Liebenson recently had his performance review; Dn. Nagel reported that Mr. Liebenson is doing well in his position.

B. Capital expenditures — Dn. Nagel noted several capital expenditures that the council can anticipate seeing in the budgets for FY15. These include approximately \$1.4 million of expenditures for St Joseph's Indian School, \$20,000 to create additional office space at Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake, and approximately \$200,000 for HVAC work at the Province Development Office.

Dn. Nagel also noted that Sacred Heart School of Theology would like to begin with the first phase of its Facility Master Plan. This would include remodeling/updating of the Sacred Heart School of Theology lobby and remodeling the serving area of the SHST dining room.

The lobby project would not only enhance the appearance of the lobby, but more significantly, begin work to update mechanical concerns such as the sprinkler system, fire alarm and asbestos abatement.

Dn. Nagel said that one of the more significant expenses of the proposed remodeling in the dining room is installation. The plan calls for bringing in plumbing and electricity.

Each year, SHST spends between \$250,000 to \$1 million on maintenance. A maintenance fund is in place for this; however, it is anticipated that fund raising can be done to help cover expenses of the remodeling and updating.

Dn. Nagel asked the council if it was open to reviewing a proposal to remodel/update the lobby and dining room during the budget process. Councilors said they were open to it. A formal proposal will come back to the council during the budget process.

C. New staff — As noted earlier, David Schimmel was hired as Dehonian Affiliates director and Mark Peters was hired as director of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation. Dn. Nagel has worked with them to get situated.

D. Investments — Returns on investments were very good during 2013. The Growth Fund earned 22.4%, exceeding the projected goal of 8%. However, there are concerns that 2014 will be more unpredictable. Dn. Nagel noted that the province maintains a lot of diversity in its investments.

There will be an investment meeting at 9 a.m. on February 11 at the Provincialate Offices and a stakeholders' meeting at 1 p.m. Members of the council are welcome to attend.

E. Water damage, Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake — There have been two significant water issues at SHML. The first involved a hot water leak that affected four apartments in the newest section. The work on this was expected to be done by the end of the week.

The second issue was more significant. A frozen water pipe in the sprinkler system caused extensive damage in the SCJ wing (16 apartments plus the corridors and storage rooms). The extent is still not fully determined. Moisture and mold continue to be found. It has been suggested that the moisture may have been left from when work on the wing came to a standstill in the transition from Carstensen. It is expected to take three to four months to fully complete repairs and renovation.

Christian Brothers is the insurer. They plan to cover the damage on both wings as one claim so the SCJs will pay a single \$1,000 deductible.

No guest space is available during the renovation.

- F. Former provincialate building — An organization has contacted the province about leasing the former provincialate office building north of the Province Development Office. An environmental studies agency, the organization is interested in a three-year lease of between \$5,000 – 6,000 a month, not including utilities. They would also like the first option to buy if the SCJs sell the property.

The suggested rental amount is appropriate for the market.

The council voted to approve leasing the building.

- G. Housing in Houston — The council briefly discussed the possibility that more housing might be needed for the community in Houston. The local community has approximately \$140,000 in its account. This could be put toward additional housing — either renting or buying. The issue will come back to the council when and if the need becomes more urgent.

V. Membership

- A. Sacred Heart Community, Pinellas Park — Fr. Huffstetter said that the visitation in Pinellas Park went well.

1. Fr. Tom Burns — He just returned from his brother's funeral in Pennsylvania.
2. Br. Ben Humpfer — He is generous in serving the needs of the community and plans to retire in 2015. He most likely will move to SHML.
3. Fr. Ralph Intranuovo — He has been doing chaplain ministry at a hospital and nursing home.
4. Fr. Steve Pujdak — He still has back issues post-surgery but is doing well. He plans to visit in San Antonio and Mississippi soon.
5. Fr. Ray Vega — At 89 Fr. Vega still has a lot of spring in his step on daily walks and is faithful to his weekly prayer vigil at the area abortion clinic. He has trouble hearing but otherwise is doing well.
6. Fr. Frank Burshnick — He is happy in the community and helps with many community tasks and assists in several area parishes.
7. Br. Gabriel Kersting — He is experiencing more memory loss but the community is helping him in order to allow him to stay with them.
8. Fr. Wayne Jenkins — He will assist with the community when Br. Humpfer is at the local coordinators/superiors meeting in March.

- B. Fr. Paul Grizzelle Reid — Fr. Reid met with Fr. Huffstetter during the Pinellas Park visitation. He is interested in returning to the community after his current parish commitment is complete in November.

- C. Fr. Andrej Sudol — A member of the Philippine Region, he has been in dialogue with Fr. Huffstetter about doing a year-long sabbatical in Chicago, staying with the Dehon Formation Community and taking classes at Catholic Theological Union. Most likely, he will arrive in August.

- D. Fr. Guy Blair — He will be completing his assignment at St. James Parish in Chamberlain in June.

- E. Fr. Bernard Rosinski — He turned 80 in January and is continuing the studies that he began last fall. In June he has a trip to Poland scheduled.

- F. Fr. Quang Nguyen — Fr. Nguyen arrives in Hales Corners this week. Next Monday Fr. Huffstetter will meet with him, Br. Ray Kozuch and Br. Long Nguyen about transitions in the vocation office.

- G. Br. Ray Kozuch — He recently had surgery. The results were positive; he will go back for a follow-up in three months.

- H. Br. Andrew Lewandowski — His health is good; he will soon be going on an annual ski trip.

VI. Future agenda — As a part of strategic planning, SHST proposes including “seminary” in the name, such as “Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology.” It was noted that this issue came up previously. At that time the council suggested “Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology” and “Dehon Seminary of the Sacred Heart.” The issue did not move beyond initial discussions at that time. Mary Gorski will look up the discussion in the council minutes.

VII. Conference call — The council will have an informal conference call on February 26 at 10 a.m. central.

CALENDAR

March 3:	North American Councils meeting in Montréal
March 19-20:	Provincial Council meeting
March 21:	Local Superiors/Coordinators meeting
May 14-15:	Provincial Council meeting
June 27:	Feast of the Sacred Heart
July 7-11	Provincial Chapter
August 19-20:	Provincial Council
October 22-23:	Provincial Council
December 16-17:	Provincial Council

UPDATES

FR. QUANG NGUYEN

Fr. Quang is temporarily with the Sacred Heart Monastery Community since joining the vocation staff in February. He will move to Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake when renovations to SHML are complete.

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