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U.S. Province Priests of the Sacred Heart

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Minutes of the 925th US Provincial Council Meeting December 20-21, 2022, Hales Corners, WI

PRESENT: Fr. Vien Nguyen, Provincial Superior, Fr. Jack Kurps, Fr. Rafael Querobin, Fr. Greg Schill, Br. Duane Lemke and Dn. David Nagel, Councilors; Br. Frank Presto, Provincial Secretary; Mary Gorski, recording secretary. Frs. Quang Nguyen, Henry Nguyen (Zoom) and Chuck Wonch joined the council for discussion of the Province Vocation Office transition. Sr. Cathy Bertrand, SSND, met with the council via Zoom for discussions of the Provincial Chapter. Members of the Centennial Planning Committee — Fr. David Szatkowski-chairperson (Zoom), Fr. Ed Zemlik, Fr. Yvon Sheehy, Frater Paul Phong Hoang (Zoom), and Fr. Christianus Hendrik (Zoom) — joined the council for discussion of Centennial plans.

- I. Check-in — Councilors updated each other on themselves, their ministries, and communities. Items of note:
- A. Br. Andy Gancarczyk has completed his sabbatical and will join the Mississippi community as of January 1.
 - B. The Sacred Heart Community at SHML had an evening of recollection led by a Protestant minister; her presentation was on letting go, aging and embracing life.
 - C. Fr. Richard MacDonald is recovering from recent procedures to treat an infection in the knee area. He is now able to come to meals and prayer, and will soon work to transition from a walker to a cane.
 - D. Sacred Heart Southern Missions was able to have its first in-person Christmas luncheon in three years; previous gatherings were cancelled by the pandemic.
 - E. Fr. Hendrik Ardianto has regularly met with a group of about a dozen young people in Mississippi in preparation for World Youth Day. The Houston community is also beginning to prepare a group. It is hoped that young people (WYD age guidelines are 16-39) from all the areas served by the province can be represented at WYD.
 - F. Due to a severe winter storm, St. Joseph's Indian School was closed for an unprecedented four days in a row and students were delayed by several days in returning home for the Christmas break. The equine therapy specialist was unable to get to St. Joseph's; Fr. Schill took care of the horses during her absence.
 - G. Attendance at events for the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at OLG, Houston, was back to pre-pandemic levels. Fr. V. Nguyen joined the community for the celebrations.
 - H. The auxiliary bishop of Galveston-Houston recently made a brief visit to Our Lady of Guadalupe school.
 - I. Br. Frank Presto anticipates minor eye surgery next summer.
 - J. During his visit to Houston for the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Fr. V. Nguyen was able to meet with Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, Bishop Italo Dell'Oro (auxiliary bishop), as well as the Vicar for Clergy, for information-sharing, including details of Fr. Quang Nguyen's new position as a chaplain at the University of Houston.

II. Vocations — Frs. Quang Nguyen, Henry Nguyen (Zoom) and Chuck Wonch joined the council for discussion about the Province Vocation Office in light of the upcoming transition.

- A. Events and advertising — Fr. Q. Nguyen identified significant yearly events of which to be mindful (in particular the Religious Education Conference February 23-26, SEEK January 2-6, and the National Catholic Youth Conference November 16-18), as well as regular activities of the office that take place throughout the year. Fr. Q. Nguyen said that he put on hold all vocation advertising as of December 1 to allow Fr. Henry Nguyen the opportunity to determine how the office should advertise. Previous advertising has included the diocesan papers where the SCJs are located, diocesan websites, and print and electronic advertising with vocation publications such as *Vision* and *Religious Ministries*.
- B. Current contacts — There are currently 246 names in the vocation file; these are men to whom the office regularly sends communication. Fr. Q. Nguyen noted that often the same person can be in the files of dozens of communities. There are different opinions regarding the best way to reach out to these men. Some suggest getting in contact with the potential candidate as soon as possible to make an impression before other communities contact him. Others say that it is better to wait a bit, in hopes of standing out more than those who initially made contact.
- C. Assessments — There was a brief discussion of the various assessments, including medical and psychological, required of an applicant to the community. If medical professionals previously used by the province are not available, Fr. H. Nguyen has a network of resources that he can utilize.
- D. Support of new director — Fr. Q. Nguyen will be assisting Fr. H. Nguyen as he moves into his new role as director. The Province Vocation Committee, chaired by Fr. Jack Kurps, will soon meet; the committee is to also be a support to the office.
- E. Thank you — The council thanked Frs. Q. Nguyen and Wonch for their years of service to the province through their ministry at the vocation office.
- F. New director — Councilors briefly continued their dialogue with Fr. H. Nguyen. There was discussion regarding the role of the Vocation Office after an applicant has been accepted as a candidate. The Admissions Board and/or Director of Formation (or team, in the absence of a director) should be the liaison with the schools to which a candidate is applying. The file management process needs review so that files transition appropriately from the Province Vocation Office to the Formation Department.

Related to the discussion above, councilors said that clarification is needed regarding what documents need to be submitted to SHSST when an applicant is applying to the school. All sponsoring religious communities and dioceses should have the same requirements.

Councilors briefly talked about the membership of the Admissions Board. After review of the Province Policy for Admissions and Vocations, it was determined that only the Provincial Superior is prohibited from serving on the board.

III. Administration

- A. Meeting of North American Councils — The Canadian and US administrations will meet via Zoom on January 17. Among their tasks will be to surface topics for discussion at the in-person joint meeting in Hales Corners March 28.
- B. Visitation schedule — Fr. V. Nguyen shared his proposed visitation schedule. All of the following dates are tentative and need to be confirmed with the local superiors:

March 17-25: Sacred Heart Monastery
April 12-18: South Dakota
May 15-18: Sacred Heart at SHML
August 7-11: Houston
October 17-18: Novitiate
November 2-8: Mississippi
November 9-14: Florida
December 6-7: St. Joseph Community at SHML

- C. Advent Hours of Recollection — The council briefly reviewed the two virtual Hours of Recollection. The first was for staff and other collaborators; the second was for SCJs. Approximately 100 people took part in the staff event led by Sr. Nancy Schreck, OSF; Pardeep Kaleka was the presenter of the SCJ gathering. Both were well received. Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA, will be the presenter of both of the Hours of Recollection in Lent. Dates and times will soon be finalized and shared with the province. It is hoped that such events can continue to be scheduled around significant moments in the province and congregation, such as the founder's birth.

In the future, a committee can take charge of organizing the moments of reflection. Perhaps, this could fall under the Dehonian Associates Committee.

D. 2023 US Provincial Chapter

1. January meeting — There will be a preliminary meeting of Chapter delegates on January 31 from 9:00 a.m. to noon; Br. Frank Presto will soon send details to participants. The meeting will take place via Zoom; Fr. V. Nguyen will contact Sr. Kathleen Burns for technical assistance. It was suggested that each participant take part in the Zoom individually, not in a group, to allow for break-out sessions if needed.

During the meeting, delegates will appoint the officers of the Chapter, members of the Chapter Preparatory Committee and Finance Committee, and discuss various topics and organizational issues of the Chapter.

2. Legislation — A legislative committee was named (Fr. David Szatkowski, Br. Frank Presto and Fr. Jack Kurps) to prepare documentation for legislative issues.
3. Finance Committee — A weighted ballot will be used to surface names for the Chapter Finance Committee. Br. Presto will initiate this process at the beginning of January.
4. General Chapter — The General Administration may ask entities to address certain topics in preparation for the General Chapter. Earlier, entities were asked to submit topics for consideration. The North American entities suggested the topics of interculturality / internationality and lay collaboration be included in the General Chapter.
5. Timelines and personnel — The Chapter will tentatively begin on Tuesday, July 18, following Centennial celebrations on Monday, July 17. Sr. Cathy Bertrand, SSND, who joined the council via Zoom for discussion of the Chapter, will facilitate the January meeting as well as the Chapter itself. Fr. Kurps, province liturgist, will organize prayer for the Chapter.
6. Chapter Process and Procedures — The Chapter Process and Procedures established in 2014 will be reviewed by councilors and voted on at their next Zoom meeting.
7. Chapter topics — Besides the required work of the Chapter (such as electing delegates to the General Chapter), there is also the option of addressing other topics. It was suggested that topics be forward-thinking, helping the province to envision itself in the next 10, 20, 25 years. Suggested topics: what will be the Dehonian mission in the United States in 25 years; how can vocations be nourished, how can the Dehonian Associates and lay collaboration be enhanced?
8. Chapter Preparatory Committee — The Chapter Preparatory Committee (Br. Presto, Fr. Kurps, Fr. Hendrik Ardianto and Sr. Cathy Bertrand) will meet via Zoom on December 28 at 1:30 p.m.; Fr. Kurps will set up the call.

- E. JPR succession — Fr. V. Nguyen asked the JPR Commission to discuss and recommend a succession plan for the JPR director. Br. Lemke served in the role but has stepped aside in light of his work as superior of the Sacred Heart Community at SHML. Fr. V. Nguyen suggested that the commission discuss three possibilities for the JPR director's role: 1) hire a religious of another community, 2) hire a lay person, or 3) free up an SCJ to be JPR director. Fr. Kurps has served as a liaison from the council to the commission; members of the commission hope that he can continue in that role.

Councilors briefly discussed the collaborative work of the JPR Commission and the North American Migration Committee. There have been good collaborative discussions; however, it is important that the JPR Commission have the freedom to explore a variety of social justice concerns, not just migration. Social justice concerns of a US-based commission could include human trafficking, refugees, and the visa process.

- F. Dehon Study Center — Fr. V. Nguyen spoke with Dr. Paul Monson, SHSST Academic Dean, about the possibility of SHSST faculty writing on Dehonian topics for use in a variety of settings, such as parishes. It was a good discussion; Fr. V. Nguyen will continue to update the council.
- G. Formation — Fr. V. Nguyen reported on the initial work of the Formation Committee which has begun to develop a guide and syllabus for province formation. SCJ formation centers on five pillars: Spirituality, Community, Ministry, Affective Human Development, and Intellectual Development. All five pillars are addressed during each year of formation, but the focus may be different during a particular year. The committee identified a wide variety of Dehonian reading material to be covered during formation.

The purpose of the guidelines and syllabus is to ensure that there is a standard set of material that each student receives at particular moments in his formation, and that the province formation program fully meets the requirements of the current PPF.

The draft that was presented to the council was divided into two sections: 1) Stages of formation for those who enter with a college degree, and 2) Stages of formation for those who enter without a college degree. During council discussion, it was suggested that the formation stages for both groups in their initial years be similar. If adjustments are needed for additional years of study (as would be the case for someone entering formation without a college degree) they should be made in the latter years of formation. This ensures that all receive the same initial formation regardless of a student's academic standing.

The committee will continue its work to refine the document.

- H. Pre-retirement Workshop — SCJs in the US Province aged 60-75 in active ministry will be invited to a Pre-Retirement Workshop to be held April 25-26 at the Redemptorist Retreat Center in Arizona. Invitations will go out at the beginning of the year. Among the topics to be covered: Spirituality in the Later Years, Healthy Aging for Religious Men, Philosophy of Aging, and Transitions.

Fr. V. Nguyen will sign the contract with the center; he will reserve 20 rooms.

- I. Mission Education — St. Joseph's Indian School will host the next Mission Education Conference October 8-9, 2023. The planning committee would like to host a Sunday Mass as a way of introducing Lakota Spirituality in worship. The Centennial of the province will be one of the focuses of the gathering; tours are planned in Lower Brule, the first mission of the US Province (Fr. Christianus Hendrik is planning the tours). It is hoped that representatives from each of province's ministries can be present. More information will be shared in the next few months.
- J. Centennial — Members of the Centennial Planning Committee met with the Provincial Council to give an update on their plans for the 100th anniversary of the SCJ presence in North America. Committee members include Fr. David Szatkowski (chairperson), Fr. Ed Zemlik, Fr. Yvon Sheehy, Frater Paul Phong Hoang, and Fr. Christianus Hendrik. The Centennial will be celebrated locally and as a province. In the parishes in Mississippi the Centennial will be tied to the celebration of the Feast of the Sacred Heart. It is hoped that each local community and its ministries will have a public celebration of the Centennial.

At the province level, the celebrations will tentatively take place July 16-17 in Hales Corners, prior to the start of the Province Chapter. Possibilities include a Centennial Mass on Sunday to which benefactors and alumni would be invited, as well as a Remembrance Service on Monday, perhaps at the mausoleum. It was suggested that a "roll call" be done of the deceased members of the province as a way of paying tribute to them.

The celebration in Lower Brule will be on July 30. Bishop Peter Muhich of Rapid City will be the main celebrant.

A logo is in development, as well as several promotional ideas to keep the Centennial in the forefront of people's thoughts in the months leading up to the celebrations. It was suggested that a Centennial booklet be created that would include letters from bishops from the dioceses in which SCJs minister as well as the Superior General, a timeline of province history with a few "break out" sections with details about certain parts of province history, historical photos, and short reflections from SCJs and collaborators about the SCJ presence in the United States. Mary Gorski was asked to help put this together.

Centennial banners, tee shirts and other promotional items were suggested. Br. Lemke was asked to consider creating a piece of art as he did for a previous province gathering.

A Centennial prayer will be developed that will be shared with all ministries; the prayer can be used in the lead-up to the celebrations to keep the Centennial in the forefront of people's thoughts. There was also a suggestion of a Dehonian prayer booklet to be released in conjunction with the Centennial.

Fr. V. Nguyen will begin to invite bishops, as well as the superiors of the entities that have had a significant relationship with the US Province, to the province celebrations.

Fr. Kurps will organize Centennial liturgies at the province level.

Fr. Yvon Sheehy was asked to work with Dn. Nagel to develop a budget for the Centennial. The committee was asked to draft an outline of planned Centennial activities; this will be helpful for overall organization, but in particular, for the budgeting process.

K. Ministries

1. South Dakota — Fr. Christianus Hendrik would like to go on sabbatical after the Centennial celebrations. Whoever is assigned to South Dakota should go through a training program in Native American culture. Fr. Schill will investigate possibilities both for SCJs and for the Theresian Missionaries of Mary.
2. Theresian Missionaries of Mary — The sisters have an immigration interview scheduled for January 11. Fr. V. Nguyen will speak to the staff who assist international students at SHSST to learn information that might be helpful to the sisters in their interview. Once they are in the United States the US Province will help the sisters apply for their religious worker visas. Details such as health insurance will also have to be addressed. If they do not have their own plan, they can go on the province employee plan. Their salary will be paid as a stipend to their religious community; the sisters will need to open a bank account in the States. Once the sisters are settled in South Dakota, the Sioux Falls bishop will be asked to include them in the Catholic Directory. The bishops of Rapid City and Sioux Falls have been informed of the TMMs' anticipated ministry in South Dakota.
3. New ministry in Milwaukee — Fr. Duy Nguyen continues to investigate possibilities for a new ministry in the Milwaukee area with a social justice focus.

L. Members

1. Fr. Anthony Kluckman — No clues have been found regarding Fr. Kluckman's disappearance.
2. Fra. Paul Phong Hoang — Fra. Hoang has asked to study Spanish in Ecuador. The district welcomes the request.
3. Alfonso Pizano — The council voted to approve Mr. Pizano's request to begin postulancy. Br. Ray Kozuch will be his postulancy director.
4. Fra. Michael Wodarczyk — The council voted to approve Fra. Wodarczyk's request for the Ministry of Lector.

M. Schools — Schools in Collaboration is planning for a summer gathering in Houston next summer. A Dehonian school in Brazil is planning to send students for a cultural exchange at Sacred Heart School in Southaven. The Brazilian school has invited Sacred Heart School to send students for a cultural exchange. Fr. Kurps said that the schools need to consult the Diocese of Jackson, which generally has a policy of no international travel for primary school students.

IV. Finance

- A. Province Development Office — The POSH board approved the Development Office audit, noting that the office contributes \$7-8 million annually to the province. The response to mailings has been down slightly, as is the case with many fundraising organizations currently. The office recently received two significant estates, one valued at \$500,000 and the other a property that is expected to sell for approximately \$1.7 million.
- B. Dehon House — The property is empty at this time, but regularly maintained. The sisters from the Theresian Missionaries of Mary could use the property during their initial preparation for ministry in South Dakota. SHSST may also be interested in renting the property for the propaedeutic year. Dn. Nagel consulted with the province attorney, Kathleen Dahlgren, about rental guidelines. It was suggested monthly rent be set at \$5,750.
- C. Woods Road — The white house at Woods Road needs significant updating. There had been inquiry about purchase of the land, but the inquiry was withdrawn. Due to restrictions on the property set by the City of Franklin, it is not possible to

build a single, large dwelling on the land. If the land were to be sold, breaking it up into several pie-shaped lots would be the best option. A developer has expressed interest in purchasing the land to use in multiple parcels.

- D. Budgets — Dn. Nagel presented the timetable for the province budget process. All major capital expenses must be reported to the Provincial Council by February 3. Budgets are due on April 10. The Finance Commission will review the budgets on April 19, and the Provincial Council will do their budget review at the May 9-10 council meeting.
- E. Investments — The Investment Committee met on November 17. In reviewing proxy votes, it was noted that votes for shares owned by the Priests of the Sacred Heart are done so mindful of Catholic social teachings and concerns.
- F. Financial Report for FY2022 — Dn. Nagel briefly reviewed the Province Financial Report for FY2022. The Province Development Office gave \$7.6 million toward operations and overseas missions, St. Joseph's Indian School contributed \$3.99 million and SHSM gave \$800,000 toward province expenses. The report is attached as Addendum A.
- G. Thank you — Fr. V. Nguyen expressed his thanks to Dn. Nagel and his staff for their continued work.
- V. Next meeting — The council will next meet via Zoom on January 3, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. (central).

ADDENDUM A

DATE: January 3, 2023
TO: Province SCJs
FROM: Dn. David Nagel, SCJ

RE: Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2022

The Provincial Council on November 9, 2022 reviewed the financial audit for the Province. The Statement of Activities is summarized here:

Support, Revenue, & Other Gains:	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Total Support & Revenue	\$ 13,498,654	\$ 17,017,009
Expenditures:	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Total program services	\$ 10,351,000	\$ 8,809,835
Administration and general	<u>1,936,960</u>	<u>1,675,582</u>
Total expenditures	\$ 12,287,960	\$ 10,486,417
Gain(Loss):	<u>\$ 1,210,694</u>	<u>\$ 6,530,592</u>
Adjustments/Change in Net Assets	\$ (1,082,983)	\$ 4,769,929
Net Assets Beginning of Year	\$ <u>6,990,129</u>	\$ <u>2,220,200</u>
Net Assets End of Year	\$ <u>5,907,146</u>	\$ <u>6,990,129</u>

Expenses for most Province operations were higher than the previous year. The most significant increase in cash on hand in 2021 was due to fund raising increases and grant for COVID to maintain employees. Seminary remodeling was completed in August of 2021. The audits for Province entities were clean with no issues raised by the auditors..

Worries about the pandemic started in March of 2020 but the CARES Act helped with payroll in the spring. The Payroll Payment Program provided for payroll expenses and allowed us to maintain staff. Donations actually increased during COVID.

The Priest of the Sacred Heart Development Office in Hales Corners in fiscal 2022 gave \$7.6 million to the Province for operations and overseas missions. St. Joseph’s Indian School has contributed \$3.99 million and SHSM \$800,000 to the Province. Contributions from other sources including rent from SHML and other office space increased Province income and helped to offset the expenses.

As of June 30, 2022 the Province Ministry Fund was \$ 3.5 million. The total reserves available for the Province needs were \$9.3 million which is about 6 months of surplus. Costs have been reduced and the savings has helped with Province obligations.

SCJ Medical Fund expenses exceeded contributions due to increased costs as the Province membership continues to age.

Medical Fund Activity 2022:

Starting Balance:	\$ 371,696
Contributions:	\$ <u>1,778,445</u>
Total Income:	\$ 2,150,141
Expenses:	\$ <u>1,550,520</u>
Gain/ (Loss):	\$ 599,621

The monthly contribution was \$1,255 per SCJ member. The SCJ Medical Plan has stop-loss insurance of \$75,000 per member so the liability is limited to that amount and expenses over \$75,000 for an individual are reimbursed by the insurance carrier. The Provincial Chapter passed a resolution to fund the medical plan individual contribution at 92% of actual claims which the current premium should do. Monthly premium was raised in July of 2022 to \$1,355.

Priests of the Sacred Heart Support & Maintenance Trust continues to support those members of the Province who are not in active ministry. The Trust provides support to retired SCJs about \$1 million per year which includes income from SHML. The monthly support contribution from SCJs active in ministry is \$400 per person.

The investments for calendar year 2021 returned 15.29% which was up from previous years but in calendar year 2022 the return rate is -17.2% through the end of November. The calendar year 2022 has been bumpy but was up in November by 10.9%. Quarterly meetings are held with the investment committee and our consultants to review the investment activity. Monthly reports and frequent phone conversations are also used to manage the investments.

Note: These are a few of the financial highlights of the finances for Fiscal Year 2022. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this information.

CALENDAR

2023

January 31:	Pre-Chapter Zoom Meeting (9:00 - Noon, Central)
February 7-8:	Provincial Council meeting, Hales Corners, WI
March 13:	Lenten Hour of Recollection for SCJs , via Zoom, 10:00 a.m. (Central)
March 23:	Lenten Hour of Recollection for Staff and Collaborators , via Zoom, 10:00 a.m. (Central)
April 25-26:	Pre-retirement workshop, Redemptorist Retreat Center, Tuscon
March 28-29:	Provincial Council meeting, Hales Corners, WI
May 9-10:	Provincial Council meeting, Hales Corners, WI
June 27-28:	Provincial Council meeting, Hales Corners, WI
July 16-17:	Province Centennial Celebration, Hales Corners
July 17-21:	US Provincial Chapter
July 30:	Lower Brule Centennial Celebration

2024

June 14 - July 5:	General Chapter, Rome
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NECROLOGY

+ **Fr. Joseph Yebona Bomela**, a member of the Congolese Province, died on November 23. He was born in 1978, professed in 2002 and ordained in 2013. In 2019, Fr. Joseph – who was then the DRC provincial secretary – was involved in a significant motorcycle accident. He had been in care in Kinshasa since 2020.

+**Fr. Jean Biondaro**, a member of the Franco-European Province, died December 21. He was born in 1924, professed in 1943 and ordained in 1951.

+**Fr. Cornelis van Hoorn**, a member of the Dutch Region, died December 23. He was born in 1927, professed in 1949 and was ordained in 1954.