

March 16, 2023

Dear Brothers,

Before founding the congregation and during his terms as General Superior, Fr. Dehon visited various places to broaden his horizons and chart a growth path for the congregation. Indonesia was one of the countries that he visited and wanted to establish a presence. His dream and vision became a reality when, in 1924, the first Dutch missionaries arrived in Indonesia—fourteen years after Fr. Dehon’s visit.

In its ninety-nine years, the Indonesian Province has increasingly become one of the congregation's largest entities. With about 170 final professed members and 70 students in various stages of formation, the province continues to expand within the country in response to the needs of the local church, especially in parish ministry and education. The SCJs have developed an excellent reputation for educating young minds and hearts. Most SCJ vocations have come from our schools.

The Indonesian Province has also sent missionaries abroad. In the US, we have three: Hendrik Christianus, Vincent Suparman, and Hendrik Ardianto. Since becoming provincial superior I have been in dialogue with the Indonesian Province about the possibility of more Indonesian SCJs coming to the US Province. This was a significant reason for my recent visit to Indonesia. The Indonesian provincial administration has agreed, and I am pleased to say that a fine young SCJ is now preparing to come to the United States. He is currently involved in communications ministry; I’ll share more about him when his visa is approved and issued. I am grateful to the Indonesian Province for sending missionaries to the US.

As mentioned in my previous letter, education is one of the Indonesian Province’s major apostolates, ranging from junior high to seminary to university education. I visited two junior high schools. Each has between 500-700 students from various parts of the country. Many more are on a waiting list. Annual tuition is around \$1,200, which



is beyond the reach of many families. Our brothers have networked with benefactors to ensure that students from low-income families have access to good education. The US Province has contributed to the building of several schools.

While visiting Indonesia, I became more aware of the collaborative relationship between the two entities. Many American SCJs have served in Indonesia: Ray Vega, Mark Fortner, Tom Fix, Wayne Jenkins, Charles Yost, and other former SCJs (i.e., Francis Fletcher, Jim Goering, Pat Houterman, Joe Schmidt, Greg Yates). In addition to the three SCJs serving in our province, many Indonesian SCJs have gone to the US for school or English. This has been part of their ongoing effort to send members to study overseas to gain broad and diverse educational and cultural experiences. Its members' efforts to develop language skills, especially English, impressed me. For example, a day is devoted to celebrating Mass in English in the formation communities. This is part of their concerted effort to promote the "missionary spirit" among the young and the old, for they know that English has become a common international language.

The last US provincial superior to visit Indonesia while in office was Tom Garvey in 1994. I hope that my trip to Indonesia and the meeting with the Indonesian Provincial Council continue to nurture the great relationship between the two provinces. I also hope that the Indonesian Provincial Superior, Fr. Andreas Suparman, will be able to join us for the centennial celebrations in July 2023.

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vier".