



Welcoming the Spirit



...preparing for our future

XVII U.S. Provincial Chapter ❖ Priests of the Sacred Heart
July 18 - 21, 2023

April 20, 2023

Dear Brothers,

We are in the Easter Season. The first Sunday readings are from the Acts of the Apostles, which describes the early Church's activities. Among them is the mission of the Church beyond Jerusalem and Judaism due to persecution. As the Church expanded, it dealt with religious and cultural issues, e.g., meat offered to idols, sorcery, and circumcision.

When Fr. Dehon founded the Oblates of the Sacred Heart, he envisioned an international congregation serving the Church. For him, this meant that the congregation needed to expand beyond France and Europe. He considered far-flung places, e.g., the Congo, Indonesia, Brazil, and Ecuador, as fertile mission grounds and sent SCJs to these places to serve and build the Church.

What did the early missionaries go through as they lived and evangelized in foreign lands? How did the receiving communities welcome and react to them? How did they live and share Dehonian spirituality? And in what way did Dehonian spirituality sustain them?

Our province is at the point where we have become more international and intercultural. We are grateful to SCJ missionaries from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Cameroun, Colombia, the Congo, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, and Vietnam. Their presence has brought richness to our identity as Dehonians in the United States.

The theme for the 2023 Provincial Chapter is "Welcoming the Spirit... Preparing for the Future." Interculturality and Dehonian spirituality are the two topics of focus. Input from local communities on these two topics will be the basis of the State of the Province report.

The Chapter Preparatory Committee and I are asking each SCJ to reflect individually on the following questions:

1. What is the present reality of interculturality in your community? What works well, and what are the challenges?
2. Looking toward the future, what are some of the hopes of the community in regard to interculturality in your local community? In the province?
3. How is Dehonian spirituality expressed, experienced, and lived in your community? In your ministries? What works well, and what are the challenges?
4. Looking toward the future, what are some of your hopes for how Dehonian spirituality can be expressed, experienced, and lived in your community? Your ministry? The province?

If individuals would like to send me their personal reflections, I would be happy to receive them. Please send them electronically to my email address: provsup.nguyen@usprovince.org. These individual responses may become an addendum to the State of the Province Report.

We are asking each of the local communities to discuss the same questions and send a written response to each of the four questions to me electronically by **June 1** at provsup.nguyen@usprovince.org. The Sacred Heart Community at SHML might want to break into small groups for these conversations.

The State of the Province Report will focus on these community responses. We want to send it to chapter delegates at least one week before the next pre-Chapter Zoom meeting on June 13.

Thank you for collaborating with me in reflecting on our State of the Province. I am grateful to all of you for living our Dehonian spirituality in community and ministry.

Fraternally,



Dehonians USA
PRIESTS OF THE SACRED HEART