



A Year with Venerable Father Leo John Dehon

The sixth in a series of monthly biographical sketches as we prepare to commemorate the centenary of his death on August 12, 2025

Fr. Leo John Dehon: The Priest with a Pen Last month, we learned how beloved Fr. Dehon was for his many good works among the people. Fr. Dehon knew the importance of the apostolic work that his community was busy with, and he also knew that this required a deep spiritual grounding to sustain it. The source of the community's strength must come from the Gospel, so Fr. Dehon wrote numerous meditation books applying the Gospel to daily life. A central theme is love. *The Crowns of Love to the Sacred Heart*, begins this way:

You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength.

(Deuteronomy 6:5) In this retreat we wish to lay the foundation of our love for the Sacred Heart. But we must first consider how God has loved us, how He gave Himself to us. Before contemplating the Heart of Jesus it will be



well to stop a moment to consider the Heart of God Himself. Before God gave us the Heart of His Son, the Blessed Trinity gave us its Heart from the very moment of creation. "Let us do a great and important work," said the Holy Trinity. "Let us make humankind in our image and likeness (Genesis 1:26)." (First Meditation)

This meditation opens our hearts to knowing we are beloved children of God. Believing in this great gift of love, how can we not want to respond to God with love, and share that love with others? We are called to do this, uniting prayer and ministry, making our lives into what Fr. Dehon calls a "never-ending Mass."

Quote: "Every person has inalienable dignity, duties, and rights...with an intelligent, free and immortal soul which God created." Fr. Leo John Dehon, *Christian Social Manual*, Chapter One

Reflection Question: *How do we share God's love with others?*

Learn more about the Priests of the Sacred Heart (Dehonians/SCJ) at: www.dehoniansusa.org

