



# Dehonians USA

PRIESTS OF THE SACRED HEART

August 12, 2025

Dear Confreres,

One of the contemplative practices I sometimes do is walking through a cemetery, pausing at some tombstones, and imagining the lives of those who rest there. I find myself asking: *Who were they? What joys and struggles did they experience on their life's journey? What legacy did they leave in the hearts of those who knew them?*

During my time in Saint-Quentin, I had the opportunity to stand in front of Fr. Dehon's tomb and reflect on the questions above. My reflection kept leading me to the "Parable of the Pencil."

A man invented the pencil, held it in his hand and said to it:

"I want you to remember four things:

First, your goodness or true worth is within you.

Second, you will need to be sharpened as you go through life.

Third, you will be in someone else's hand.

Finally, you will be expected to leave your mark."

Fr. Dehon undoubtedly recognized his goodness infused by the love of the Sacred Heart. His life was constantly sharpened and nurtured through the Eucharist. He knew that his life belonged to the Lord, and he lived fully for Christ crucified. By founding a Congregation devoted to the Sacred Heart and uplifting the poor and marginalized, he left behind a legacy for the Church and the world.

On this 100th anniversary of our founder's passing, we—sons of Fr. Dehon—are called to live with the same audacity of love and justice for all that marked Fr. Dehon's life. To embrace this audacity, may the four principles in the parable above guide us: that we always recognize God's goodness within us; that we must be sharpened as we journey through life; that our lives belong not only to us but to Christ and to one another; and that we are called to make

a difference through our vocations as Dehonians through our daily witness and service.

Fraternally,



Saint-Martin Church in Saint-Quentin. Here lies the servant of God, Fr. Leo John Dehon, SCJ.