

February 10, 2026

Dear Confreres,

On February 1, 2026, Archbishop Edward J. Weisenburger of Detroit offered a heartfelt opinion piece in the *Detroit Free Press* on the state of our country.

Concerned about the recent tactics of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the painful reality of family separations, he asked a question that lingers in our conscience and hearts: “Is our nation losing its very soul?” He wrote,

As a proud American, I have always lived by the belief that we are a nation of guiding values, a nation of noble virtues, a nation established on the rule of law and respectful of human rights. Increasingly, I find myself asking if our nation is losing its very soul.



He goes on to express his grave concern about what is happening in our midst.

In the digital space of Facebook, this message triggered a polarized response. While many praised him for speaking out during a time of social unrest and moral confusion, critics argued that he should “stay out of politics.” This tension raises a fundamental question: How should faithful Catholics and church leaders respond when the state fails to respect human dignity?

When we turn to the Hebrew prophets, we find that they didn’t stay in their “lane.” They not only reprimanded kings for worshipping pagan gods but also denounced policies that worsened the lives of the vulnerable. For example, Micah condemned the seizure of people’s ancestral lands, Jeremiah protested

against the use of forced labor to build grand palaces, and Amos criticized the manipulation of the legal system to harm the poor.

For us Catholics, especially Dehonians, the answer to whether we should be critical of our leaders is a gentle but firm "Yes." The Church teaches that voicing a just criticism when the dignity of a person is at risk is not just a right but also a moral obligation (CCC 2238). Political authority only holds its true legitimacy when it serves the common good and protects the dignity of every human person. Like how prophets challenged rulers, Catholics are to speak out against contemporary issues such as poverty, racism, and the mistreatment of immigrants or the unborn.

Archbishop Weisenburger's words echo the spirit of Fr. Leo John Dehon, who taught us that we cannot truly love the Heart of Christ if we are indifferent to the neighbor standing beside us. Dehon saw social injustice as a wound to the Sacred Heart that required "reparation."



True national soul is reflected in our devotion to the forgotten and the cast aside. Today, we turn to the courage of prophets and leaders such as Fr. Dehon and Archbishop Weisenburger to guide us through the challenging issues of our era with both grace and decisive action.

Fraternally,
Vice