

# SCJ News

A newsletter of the U.S. Province of the Priests of the Sacred Heart (Dehonians)

## Preparing for religious life as a Dehonian

**E**ach year we ask our students in formation to introduce themselves. This year's group includes four candidates, four professed seminarians, and three novices. They are men from a wide variety of cultural, educational and work backgrounds. Yet they all speak of their shared call to the spirituality found in the Priests of the Sacred Heart (Dehonians) and a desire to serve others.

Candidates and seminarians for the Priests of the Sacred Heart live at Sacred Heart Monastery in Hales Corners, WI. They do their theological studies at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology and undergraduate work at Marquette University in Milwaukee.

The following are students who are new to the formation program for 2018-19. To read the introductions of all of our students go to:

[www.dehoniansusa.org/features-and-photos](http://www.dehoniansusa.org/features-and-photos)

### HELLO, my name is...

#### **Kenneth Chidozie Anyanwu (candidate)**

My name is Kenneth C. Anyanwu. I am originally from the southeast of Nigeria. I came from a devout

Catholic family of seven: three brothers and four sisters. I am 45 years old. Prior to entering formation with the Priests of the Sacred Heart this year, I earned a master's degree in Jewish Christian studies from Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ.

Initially, what attracted me to the Priests of the Sacred Heart was the name. I found the name to be very fascinating and captivating. When I inquired further, I learned that they have what I consider a captivating life and ministry which blends well with my personality, gifts and vision. The fact that the SCJs are committed to continuing Christ's work of rebuilding our world into God's kingdom of justice and love is a



Kenneth

strong connection for me.

My hobbies include, reading, singing, playing table tennis and making new friends.

#### **Frater Huan Duy Pham, SCJ**

Hello, everyone. My name is Huan Pham. I'm 33 years old and originally from Vietnam. I graduated with a degree in Sociology from the Vietnam National University of Social Science and Humanity in 2008.



Frater Huan

Before I entered priestly formation in the US Province in January 2018, I spent seven years in the Philippines doing philosophy, postulancy, novitiate, and initial theology studies. From 2015 to 2016 I did my pastoral





Sign of Peace during morning Mass at Sacred Heart Monastery

year in Vietnam. Now I am in my second year of theology at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology.

I professed my first vows on May 13, 2017. What was significant in helping me to make my decision to join the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Dehonians) is the pierced Heart of Jesus from which I saw a true source of love, hope, and fulfillment of my life. Dehonians, in their own charismatic way, essentially attracted and impacted me with their motto of being “Prophets of Love and Servants of Reconciliation.”

I love playing soccer, taking care of plants (especially the cacti), and chatting with friends while enjoying a cup of coffee.

**Novice John Huan Nguyen**

I am John Huan Nguyen from Vietnam and I am 30 years old. I have two brothers: one older, one younger.



Novice John

The first phase of my life was interesting for me in school, but then I asked myself, “What is next?” I wondered if I would have a family, what my career would be. I went to college; my years there were exciting but still safe in the arms of my family. I had a lot of friends and I have many happy memories of doing things with them. But

then my life changed because of a deep call in my heart: the call of Jesus.

I joined the SCJ formation program in Vietnam three years ago. After I completed a year with the community, I attended St. Joseph Major Seminary in Saigon to study philosophy. Many people think that studying philosophy is boring, but it is an important stage for a person pursuing a vocation.

At the end of May, I left Vietnam and joined the ESL program at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology. Now I am with the novitiate community. I am very happy to be a part of the community because we bring out the best in each other, but also sometimes the worst. Yet, I would not trade it for anything else. Now, I reflect on my vocational journey with the Priests of the Sacred Heart, learning to be intimately united with Christ in the “Ecce Venio” and “Ecce Ancilla.” This year is intense, but I am willing to be part of this fraternal living. Most of all, I am happy to be part of the community. The novitiate can be difficult, but it is also a sweet stage of my life.

For me, whatever happens is good because it is of God. I will always try to live well. I hope my life is a beautiful reflection of God. I believe that through difficulties and trials life becomes meaningful.

**S.K. Okechukwu Landericus Oledibe – “Landry” (candidate)**

For me, it is a great honor to be called by the Heart Of Christ Jesus to the Priests of the Sacred Heart. I have always believed that “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” [Philippines 4:13] I believe that by accepting the will of God the grace of God will sustain me eternally. I am 34 and come from a Catholic

family. From childhood, I have had a special devotion to Eucharistic Adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the rosary of our Blessed Virgin Mary.



Landry

Originally from Nigeria, West Africa, I immigrated to the United States in 2008 and lived in Texas with family for many years. There, I was a registered parishioner at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Rowlett, and a Knights of Columbus 4th degree active member. I was also a Safe Environment Licensed Officer for the Diocese of Dallas. My hobbies include volleyball, working out at the gym, and golf.

I completed my bachelor’s degree in philosophy at the Pontifical Urban University in Rome, and graduate courses at the United States Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C and at John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, MD.

For over six years I worked in clinical pharmacology at hospitals and assisted living communities in the Dallas area. Now, I am pursuing my call with the Priests of the Sacred Heart and am studying at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology.

**Jacob Smith (candidate)**

Laudetur Iesus Christus! My name is Jacob Smith and I am in my first year of candidacy with the Priests of the Sacred Heart. I’m 19 years old (the youngest in the formation community) and I hail from Houston, Texas. I currently study philosophy at Marquette University in Milwaukee.

I was not raised in a Catholic household; I come from a semi-religious Protestant home. However, my love of the history of mankind led me to ponder the truth in Protestantism, and after being confirmed a Lutheran, I left the faith for what I like to call



“Christian Agnosticism.” However, the Lord called out to me from the darkness and showed me the light of the Catholic Church and how brightly it burned through the pages of history.



Jacob

I became fascinated with the priestly ministry and approached my local parish, wanting to know what Catholicism was about. I felt called to the Catholic faith. Two years after that first visit to the parish, on April 23, 2017, I received my first Communion and Confirmation.

My fire continued to burn for God, but my passion for history also led me to develop a deep love for other cultures, which drove me to seek out a future as a religious missionary. Taking a bold move, I reached out to the SCJs and learned about their spirituality and founder’s charism before I ultimately decided, after much deliberation, that they were the order God was calling me to. I applied.

Since entering candidacy, my hobbies include hanging out with my brothers in community, badminton, soccer, pool, singing, and listening to classical music. I also enjoy reading, especially about international history.

I am touched by the SCJs’ desire to help those whom society rejects the most, and how that charism plays such an important role in the life of a missionary.

## Welcome!

Just before Christmas, Michael Wodarczyk was accepted as a candidate for the Priests of the Sacred Heart. Originally from suburban Milwaukee, Michael is 30, and has a degree in accounting from St. Norbert’s College.

# Long-time spiritual director dies

*Hundreds fill the chapel at Sacred Heart Monastery to honor and remember Fr. Paul Kelly, SCJ*

**A**fter a lengthy illness, Fr. Paul Kelly, SCJ, died the morning of October 26, surrounded by members of his community at Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake in Franklin, WI. He was 68.

Originally from Carbondale, PA, Fr. Paul was 18 when he became a candidate with the community. He professed first vows in 1970 and was ordained in 1977. Fr. Paul earned his M.Div. from Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology and a Master’s in Theology from St. Mary’s University in San Antonio.

Fr. Paul served in parish ministry at St. Matthew’s in Houston and Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (now St. Martin of Tours) in Franklin, WI, as well as on the Cheyenne River Pastoral Team in South Dakota. He was also spiritual director of the Province Development Office, the public face of the Priests of the Sacred Heart for many people in the United States.

However, one of his greatest passions was spiritual formation. For many years he served as a spiritual director at SHSST, and as vice president for Spiritual and Human Formation.

“I have found that the ministry of spiritual direction has been a unique opportunity to help others (and myself) to experience God’s graciousness in the midst of struggles, decisions, triumphs and tragedies,” wrote Fr. Paul in the e-publication *Dehonian Spirituality*. “The inner journey isn’t an easy one. Having a trusted companion is a great gift and mutual

blessing.”

He continued, noting that “spiritual direction is both a grace and an art! It touches both director and directee. The unfolding of one’s life in the light of the love and mercy of God is a grace. As an art, it demands of the director a deep knowledge of self and of God’s ways, a listening heart, and a desire to help set another free. The director must become aware of his/her own journey to inner freedom.”



Fr. Paul Kelly

Just before he died, Fr. Paul was honored by SHSST for his many years of ministry to the seminary.

Besides spiritual direction, Fr. Paul also had a great love for his religious community, though was quick to note that living in community is not necessarily an easy task.

“Community life has challenges in regard to mercy,” he said during a presentation at the 2016 US Province Assembly. “We come together for the mission, for the community. We are

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"Hope is so necessary for living life more fully. It seems to me that these times of ours test our hope in so many significant ways. Natural disasters seem to be so frequent. Tensions between nations seem to be escalating. Climate change and diseases appear to be adding to the picture. How do we continue to hope?"

"Hope may not change disastrous realities around us, but it does change us. People with hope bring light into the darkness. Small thoughtfulness and kindness should not be dismissed. It has been my experience that the living Lord and my hope in Him continually renews my strength!"

- Fr. Paul Kelly, SCJ

so very much alike and but also so very different. And that is the rub. How different we are! We unintentionally hurt with words, slights and misunderstandings...

"When it comes to being merciful in community sometimes I say, 'I can't.' But if we allow God to work in us, we can be shown the way; the way to give mercy, to receive mercy. I hope that we will continue to find deep experiences of the mercy and compassion that God intends for us to experience in and through the lives of one another."

One of the last written pieces that Fr. Paul did was for the Province Vocation Office's 2017 Advent reflection booklet. His topic? Hope.

"Hope is so necessary for living life more fully," he began. "It seems to me that these times of ours test our hope in so many significant ways. Natural disasters seem to be so frequent. Tensions between nations seem to be escalating. Climate change and diseases appear to be adding to the picture. How do we continue to hope?"

"Hope may not change disastrous realities around us, but it does change us. People with hope bring light into the darkness. Small thoughtfulness and kindness should not be dismissed. It has been my experience that the living Lord and my hope in Him continually renews my strength!"

## SCJ provides Catholic insight to medical questions

**A**dvances in science have produced life-changing and even life-saving medicine. However, as opportunities in medicine increase, so too do challenging questions surrounding healthcare.

Approximately 40 years ago, hospitals started to develop multidisciplinary "ethics committees" to help medical professionals, administrators, patients and families wrestle with potentially life-changing situations, including end-of-life care.

Now found in most hospitals in the United States, such committees were seen in only a handful of facilities nationwide when Fr. Jan de Jong, SCJ, was asked to be a part of one of the first in the Milwaukee area. St. Luke's

Hospital, a Level 3 Critical Care facility, began to organize its ethics committee in the 1970s.

A moral theologian by training (he has a doctorate in moral theology from the Academia Alfonsiana in Rome), in the 1970s Fr. Jan had become increasingly interested in the newly developing field of medical ethics. He was asked by St. Luke's to represent the pastoral component of the committee. Doctors, nurses, social workers, administrators, lawyers, ethicists and others from a wide variety of disciplines were a part of the committee. At the time, Fr. Jan had been teaching moral theology at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology and working with the CPE program (Clinical Pastoral Education) at St. Luke's.

"Initially, many of the doctors were afraid of us," said Fr. Jan of the committee. "They saw us as a sort of oversight or monitoring group; people who would judge their work."

But the purpose of the committee was the exact opposite. Instead of judging doctors and their actions, the committee was to be of assistance to them – an advisory body to aid doctors in the midst of difficult decisions.

After several years with St. Luke's, Fr. Jan moved to Houston where he was asked to serve on the Medical Ethics Committee at what is now known as Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center. Another Level 3 Critical Care hospital, the ethics committee regularly had cases brought before it for input.

Fr. Jan's primary task in Houston was to serve as a CPE supervisor but his interest in the field of bioethics continued to grow. He attended and eventually presented at bioethics sem-



Fr. Jan de Jong

inars around the country.

When he returned to teaching at SHSST in 1999, Fr. Jan added a course on "Human Life" to his schedule, along with previous courses that he had taught in moral theology. He also worked with the Medical College of Wisconsin, helping medical students critically think about the care decisions that they would be expected to make. Although he was working in a secular environment, his foundation was in Catholic moral theology and SCJ spirituality.

"Working in a secular environment is indeed a challenge for a Catholic moral theologian," said Fr. Jan. "However, most physicians will at some point attend to Catholic patients and it is good for the physician to appreciate the spiritual background of their patients. As a Catholic moral theologian with a background in medical ethics I was often consulted by physicians about ethical questions in medicine. Physicians sometimes have theological questions too. In seminars with medical students I often tried to clarify their understanding of the Catholic position regarding death and dying, last resort interventions, and similar concerns."

Back in the Milwaukee area, Fr. Jan was once again asked to assist with several medical ethics committees, including two on which he continues to serve: the San Camillo Ethics Committee (San Camillo is a transitional living facility that offers options from assisted living to nursing care) and the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Healthcare and Bioethics Committee.

As with that first committee at St. Luke's, both of these committees are consultative. The focus of the archdiocesan committee is set by the archbishop. The current archbishop, Fr. Jerome Listecky, is – like Fr. Jan – a trained moral theologian. He taught moral theology at Mundelein Seminary for many years.

"We have had some wonderful conversations," said Fr. Jan about his

interactions with Archbishop Listecky. Fr. Javier Bustos, a Milwaukee diocesan priest, is the archbishop's representative on the committee. If his name is familiar, it is because Fr. Bustos has served in several roles at SHSST, including as a professor of moral theology.

One of the primary focuses of the archdiocesan committee is to ensure that the Ethical and Religious Directives of Catholic Health Care Services developed by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops are followed by hospitals and healthcare facilities in the archdiocese which identify as Catholic.

"Again, our role is not to 'police' medical professionals but to serve as a sounding board for the archbishop," said Fr. Jan.

Regardless of the committee on which Fr. Jan sits, the ultimate purpose of each is the same: providing patients with the most compassionate care possible.

"And sometimes, that means simply helping patients know that God is with them," said Fr. Jan. "God walks with us in the valley of darkness."

"Why does God want me to suffer so much," said a patient during



Sometimes the best that we can do is offer clarity and comfort in difficult situations, not just to the patient, but to their caregivers as well.

- Fr. Jan de Jong

the review of a complicated situation brought before an ethics committee.

"I told him 'No, the Lord does not make us suffer, he is here to help us,'" said Fr. Jan.

"Sometimes the best that we can do is offer clarity and comfort in difficult situations, not just to the patient, but to their caregivers as well," he added.

Fr. Jan de Jong, 81, has served as a professor of moral theology, CPE supervisor, novice master, and as SHSST president-rector. He is now retired and is a member of the Sacred Heart Community at SHML. Besides his work with the two committees noted above, he also continues service as a chaplain to Catholic patients at St. Luke's Hospital one afternoon a week.

## PHOTOS!

Pictures from stories found throughout the *SCJ News*, as well as about other events can be found online at:



[www.scjusa.smugmug.com](http://www.scjusa.smugmug.com)

or on our Facebook page  
(search **PriestsoftheSacredHeart**)



# A familiar face returns to Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology!

Fr. Raúl Gomez-Ruiz, SDS, named next SHSST president-rector

**F**r. Raúl Gomez-Ruiz, SDS, has been named the next president-rector of Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology. He will succeed Fr. Thomas Knoebel as of July 1, 2019. His appointment is for five years.

Fr. Gomez, 65, recently completed a six-year term as vicar general and general secretary of the Society of the Divine Savior (Salvatorians) in Rome.

Prior to his appointment in Rome, he served for nearly 25 years in a variety of capacities at Sacred Heart. From 1988-2004 he was director of the Hispanic Studies Program, one of the first seminary programs in the country to specifically address the pastoral concerns of the growing Hispanic population of the Catholic Church in the United States.

From 2002-2005 he was SHSST Vice-Rector, and from 2005-2012 he was Vice President for Academic Affairs and Director of Intellectual Formation at SHSST.

Fr. Gomez left Sacred Heart in 2012 to become director of Accreditation and Institutional Evaluation for the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. But the job was short-lived; soon after settling in he was elected

to serve his religious order in Rome.

He has a BA in Spanish from the University of Arizona in Tucson, an MPA in Public Administration from California State University in Sacramento, an M.Div in Pastoral Theology from the Franciscan School of Theology in Berkeley, CA, and a doctorate in Liturgical Studies from The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.

He is originally from Bisbee, AZ, and professed his first vows with the Salvatorians in 1982; Fr. Gomez was ordained to the priesthood in 1987.

A well-published author, Fr. Gomez has written five books and has contributed to ten others. He has also published dozens of articles and book reviews.

"I am grateful for the service of Fr. Tom Knoebel to our seminary," said Fr. Ed

Kilianski, SCJ, provincial superior of the Priests of the Sacred Heart. "Fr. Knoebel came out of retirement to serve as SHSST president-rector during a transitional period. He has a passion for seminary education, just as our founder, Fr. Leo John Dehon, did, and was instrumental in implementing several exciting initiatives, including this year's Pope Francis Symposium.

"In that same spirit, I am very



In many ways,  
I feel that I am  
welcoming him  
home."

-Fr. Ed Kilianski



Fr. Raúl pictured in Rome following a recent audience with Pope Francis.

grateful that Fr. Gomez has accepted the position of president-rector. Fr. Gomez has demonstrated that same passion for Sacred Heart, and for seminary education in general. It is significant that he is a member of the Society of the Divine Savior, a religious community which has had a long partnership with our seminary.

"In many ways, I feel that I am welcoming him home."


Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology is an apostolate of the Priests of the Sacred Heart (Dehonians). It is one of three major seminaries in the world operated by the order; the other two are in Brazil and Poland.

**Save the Date!**

Lux Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies

**Spring Lecture  
for the Public**

**Keynote Speaker Rabbi Abraham Skorka**



**March 31, 2-3:30 pm, SHSST**

Guided by their own religious convictions, Rabbi Abraham Skorka and Pope Francis spent years conversing about their understanding of God and each other. Today they are friends. Rabbi Skorka is a biophysicist, rabbi, seminary rector, and author. RSVP to [bshafirin@shsst.edu](mailto:bshafirin@shsst.edu) or call 414-529-6966

# SCJ NEWS



A St. Joseph's student learns about colors from this year's visiting artist.

## Visiting artist at St. Joe's

St. Joseph's Indian School recently partnered with the South Dakota Arts Council to bring a visiting artist to work with students at the school for a week. "We look for visiting artist opportunities that can demonstrate diversity and collaboration for our students," said Dave Meyer, an art teacher at St. Joe's. "Being from Peru, English is not Hector's first language. This obvious difference immediately started building the bridge for sharing. He was gracious enough to teach our students some Spanish. In return, students shared some Lakota with him."

Read more about this and other activities at St. Joseph's on the school blog at: <http://blog.stjo.org/>

## New Dehonian chapel dedicated in Vietnam

December 15, 2018, marked another milestone for the District of

Vietnam. "After nine months of construction, a new chapel – dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary – stands in the middle of the community's property, Dehon House III, as a witness to our Dehonian charism," said Fr. Francis Vu Tran, SCJ, district superior. "The name and its setting are very Dehonian, speaking of the heart as the center of our Dehonian spirituality and the availability of SCJs who are responding to the call to prophetic love as an oblation to God and humanity."

The celebration began at 5:30 pm with the arrival of Bishop Joseph Tuoc Tan Nguyen, bishop of the diocese of Phu Cuong, where the district's third community is located. Approximately 700 guests attended the chapel blessing, including SCJs, other priests and religious, benefactors, friends, family, neighbors, and local government leaders.

At the end of the Mass, Fr. Francis expressed the district's joy and gratitude towards its benefactors, who significantly contributed to the cost of the construction. Among the major benefactors: the US Province and the British-Irish Province.

## We must listen to youth

"In order to serve youth we must hear their voices," wrote Br. Diego Diaz, SCJ. "They ask us – the Church – to accompany them in their growth, but that accompaniment cannot be one-sided."

Br. Diego spent many years in youth ministry in Argentina. He recently wrote on the province blog about his experience at a La RED meeting, a network of Catholic organizations and pastoral ministers committed to the evangelization, holistic development, and ongoing support and formation of Hispanic teens and young adults in the United States.

"My own experience of being accompanied in my first steps of discernment guided me in my decision to seek in the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus a way of living, and a way of accompanying others," wrote Br. Diego.

Now, he says that it is his turn to



Br. Diego



Ribbon cutting at the new Immaculate Heart of Mary chapel in the District of Vietnam.



accompany others.

Read the rest of Br. Diego's reflection on the province blog at:

[www.scjusablog.org](http://www.scjusablog.org)

### New administration meets with Pope Francis

On November 28, members of the general administration, as well as other SCJs from the Rome community, had an audience with Pope Francis in the Pope Paul VI Audience Hall. Traditionally, delegates at a General Chapter have an opportunity for an audience with the Holy Father. Often, it is an opportunity to introduce the new general administration to the pope.

Unfortunately, Pope Francis was not available for an audience during



Dehonians with Pope Francis in December.

the July, 2019, General Chapter. Instead, he visited with Dehonians following the Wednesday audience.

### Welcoming the stranger

"When we see the face of the stranger in another individual and open our hearts to his/her story and share our own, we begin to move beyond our own prejudices and truly 'welcome' the one whom we did not know," said Fr. Jim Walters, SCJ, in a recent homily at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology.

"I'd like to challenge each of us today to reach out beyond our personal boundaries and take the risk of meeting someone in the community whom we do not know, whose name we have not learned, whose story we have not heard, whose life, traditions and culture still remain a mystery to us. Our world will become wider, our hearts more compassionate and the mystery we celebrate at every Eucharist more profound."

Fr. Jim, pictured at right, is SHSST director of Hispanic Studies. Find his full homily in the Features section of the province website:

[www.dehoniansusa.org](http://www.dehoniansusa.org)



## We are the Priests of the Sacred Heart: DEHONIANS

Our ministries are diverse, as are our members. Yet our goal is the same: to work with a common heart in service to God's people, reflecting the love of Christ as experienced by our founder, Fr. Leo John Dehon

### Learn how to join us in community and ministry

**800-609-5559**

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