WE ARE CALLED to serve the Church in the CONGREGATION OF THE PRIESTS OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS. Our response to this call presupposes a spiritual life: a common approach to the mystery of Christ, UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF THE SPIRIT, and a particular attention to what, in the inexhaustible richness of this mystery, corresponds to the experience of FATHER DEHON and of our predecessors.

SCJ Rule of Life No. 16

Join us!

In our last issue of the SCJ News we shared the story of our newest SCJs, the three men who professed their first vows in August (Fraters Jonathan Nguyen Vuong, Jacob Smith and Michael Wodarczyk). Following their year of novitiate, they are now back at Sacred Heart Monastery to continue their studies.

Each year the formation community changes as students enter different phases of preparation for religious life. Also back at Sacred Heart Monastery is Frater Paul Phong Hoang, SCJ, who spent the previous year in rural South Dakota doing pastoral ministry on the Lower Brule and Crow Creek Reservations.

Absent from the community this year is Dn. Henry Nguyen, SCJ, who now serves in full-time ordained ministry as a deacon at St. Martin of Tours parish in Franklin, WI. Please keep him in prayer as he prepares for his ordination to the priesthood on December 17.

You met Fraters Jonathan, Jacob and Michael in the previous issue, so here is the rest of the 2022-23 formation community:

“I was attracted to the SCJs’ simplicity, diversity, and community life.”
- Frater (Paul) Phong Hoang, SCJ

My name is (Paul) Phong Hoang. I am 30 years old and was born in Hà Tiên, Kiên Giang, Việt Nam. My family came to the United States in 2007 and settled in Houston, Texas. I graduated from the University of Houston in 2015 with a bachelor’s degree in Biology. My uncle in Houston recommended that I reach out to the Priests of the Sacred Heart during my initial discernment. At the Come and See weekends, I was attracted to the SCJs’ simplicity,
Fra. Paul Phong Hoang

Milwaukee after being away for one year in Lower Brule, SD, for my pastoral experience. I am currently in my fourth year of Theology at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology and working on my final vow program. [Fr. John Czyzynski, SCJ, is Frater Paul’s final vows director.]

I’ve been in various ministries since I joined the community, including the ESL program with the Vietnamese Association in Uptown Chicago, the Vietnamese Eucharistic Youth Movement (TNTT), St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care, Dismiss Ministry, Juvenile Jail visitation, and Catholic Charities.

I will be returning to TNTT this year and volunteer at St. Martin of Tours, a Dehonian parish in the Milwaukee area. In my spare time, I enjoy playing soccer, billiards, and making YouTube videos.

“I like listening to music and being alone with God in a peaceful place.”
-Frater Thuan Nguyen, SCJ

I want to be a prophet of love, servant of reconciliation, and give attention to humankind’s appeals through Dehonian spirituality.”
-Frater Hung Pham, SCJ

Fra. Thuan Nguyen

Hi, my name is Thuan. I was born into a small family in Dong Nai Province, Vietnam; there is my mom, my sister, and me.

I studied Chemistry in Sai Gon University from 2011 to 2015. I lived in the dorm of Huyen Si Parish, which is available to students to live and study in Ho Chi Minh city. I liked community life there and I felt called to become a religious. I knew about the Priests of the Sacred Heart in Vietnam through my neighbor, who was a student with the community.

I contacted Fr. Thai, the vocation director, and I met him to learn about the SCJs. I was invited to Mass for the feast day of the congregation. After that, I decided to apply to become an SCJ candidate.

My first day as a candidate with the community was August 6, 2015; I had my first holy hour in the community. In that initial year, I studied English and Vietnamese in preparation for the entrance exam for Philosophy studies. I passed the exam, and I entered the Dominican Academy.

After finishing Philosophy, I joined two of my confreres to go to the US Province to enter Postulancy and the Novitiate because we did not have those programs in Vietnam at that time.

I am now a professed member and a first-year theology student at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology.

I like listening to music and being alone with God in a peaceful place.

Fra. Hung Pham

Hello. My name is Hung Pham. I was born and raised in Vietnam. I moved to Houston in 2008. I graduated in Petroleum Engineering from the University of Houston in 2015. Before entering SCJ candidacy, I worked at the ALS Oil and Gas Company in Houston as a Total Petroleum Hydrocarbon (TPH) analyst and started there in 2015.

I made my first religious vows with the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on August 15, 2020. I always want to discover more about the SCJ Rule of Life and SCJ charism. I want to be a prophet of love, servant of reconciliation, and give attention to humankind’s appeals through Dehonian spirituality. I also want to live in a spirit of love and reparation so, I can dedicate myself more intimately to God’s and our Dehonian service. I am happy to be a Dehonian, and I want to do my best to live as a Dehonian.

I am a member of the Dong Hanh group in Houston, also known as a Christian Life Community group (CLC). I was actively involved with the group when I lived in Houston. This group helped me to grow in my spiritual life. Therefore, I continue to contact them through the Internet.

I used to be a Minister of Care at the University of Chicago Hospital. In addition, I have just completed the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program at the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston in the summer of 2022. These experiences have helped me to learn not only to distribute Communion but also to provide spiritual care for the sick. One of my skills in encountering patients is to empathetically listen with a compassionate presence. Therefore, I want to continue to provide spiritual care and support to the St. Martin de Tours parishioners in Franklin, WI, this year.

I lived in Chicago as a candidate in 2017. I studied philosophy and theology at Catholic Theological Union. I am currently a seminarian at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology; this is my third year of theology.

I look forward to requesting the Ministry of Acolyte with the Priests of the Sacred Heart in the Spring of 2023. And I am applying for a Pastoral year in the summer of 2023 to experience parish life. I believe that a pastoral year will help me grow in my sense of ministry.

In my free time I love playing soccer, cycling, gardening, fishing, and walking.
“Overall, I’m just an ordinary guy with a disciple’s heart.”
-Alfonso Pizano (candidate)

Hello everyone! I am Truc Tran and I am 37 years old. I was born in NgheAn Province, Vietnam. I have two sisters and two brothers. I am the second child in my family. My youngest sister is also following a religious vocation in my diocese. My parents are farmers. I graduated with a degree in Construction Engineering in 2011.

In 2015, I went to Saigon City to discern my vocation. I became a candidate with the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (SCJ) in August 2015. In my first year, I had to focus on studying in preparation for the Philosophy entrance exam. In 2016, I took the academy exam and passed it. I completed Philosophy in 2018 at the Alphonsus School of Redemptorist Congregation in Saigon.

In August 2018, I arrived in the United States to study ECS (ESL) at SHSST. I began my Novitiate on August 14, 2019. The Novitiate was a good time for me to learn more about the Dehonian charism, the vows (poverty, chastity, and obedience), and the SCJ Rule of Life. These were all significant classes for me. They helped me to understand more deeply our founder and our Congregation. I professed my First Vows on August 15, 2020, in the Sacred Heart Chapel at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology (SHSST).

I am now in my seventh year of formation with the Dehonians. I always want to discover more about the SCJ Rule of Life and the Dehonian charism. I am living at Sacred Heart Monastery and I am in the M.Div program at SHSST. It is my first year of theology.

“I always want to discover more about the SCJ Rule of Life and the Dehonian charism.”
-Frater Truc Tran, SCJ

“I always want to discover more about the SCJ Rule of Life and the Dehonian charism.”
-Frater Truc Tran, SCJ

Overall, I’m just an ordinary guy with a disciple’s heart. I’m grateful and eager to see what God has in store for me as I am available to do his will.

“I always want to discover more about the SCJ Rule of Life and the Dehonian charism.”
-Frater Truc Tran, SCJ

And if you missed our last issue... here are the abbreviated introductions to our newly professed SCJs. Read their full stories at www.dehoniansusa.org under the “Vocations” link at the top of the page.

I am Alfonso Pizano from Phoenix, Arizona. I am 43 years old and was raised in the California sunshine in Los Angeles. I have a bachelor’s in English from Mount St. Mary’s University and a master’s in Education from Loyola Marymount University. I also studied for a second master’s in Philosophy at Fordham University in New York. I am currently working on an MDiv at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology while I discern and prepare for a career in the Sacred Heart.

I am a second-year candidate in the SCJ community. I bring a wealth of life experiences that will hopefully be useful in building up God’s Kingdom as we strive to serve the world with open minds and hearts by being agents of reconciliation and peace.

Before joining the Priests of the Sacred Heart, I was a Catholic elementary school teacher and have taught everything from 1st to 8th grade. In addition to teaching at various Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, I’ve taught in San Francisco, Phoenix, and Guadalajara, Mexico. My work experience includes a long stint at Disneyland, where I peddled souvenirs, danced as a snowman in the “Christmas Fantasy Parade,” piloted the Monorail, and sailed submarines on a quest to find Nemo.

Along with my passions for teaching and Disney Parks, I love going to the movies. Disney and Pixar films hold a very special place in my heart. I enjoy theater and took great advantage of Broadway while I was a student in New York. I saw about 40 plays and musicals while I was there.

Overall, I’m just an ordinary guy with a disciple’s heart. I’m grateful and eager to see what God has in store for me as I am available to do his will.

And if you missed our last issue... here are the abbreviated introductions to our newly professed SCJs. Read their full stories at www.dehoniansusa.org under the “Vocations” link at the top of the page.

I am Michael Wodarczyk from Brookfield, WI, and am 34 years old. Prior to becoming a candidate, I went to St. Norbert College where I earned a bachelor’s of Business Administration with a major in Accounting. I worked for Asenzya in Oak Creek, WI, as an inventory control clerk. I was active in my home parish, serving as a lector and as a Eucharistic minister. I also worked with RCIA.

I was drawn to the community because of its parish ministry and daily Eucharistic Adoration. Currently I am in Theology 1, studying at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology.

My name is Jonathan Tu Nguyen-Vuong. I am 21 years old, which makes me the youngest member of...
Fra. Jonathan Nguyen Vuong

the community but legal to have a celebratory glass of wine or beer now. I was born in Riverside, CA. My family moved to Louisiana in 2004 and I lived in Broussard, LA, for 15 years.

I am studying at Cardinal Stritch University, working on my bachelor’s in Humanities: Contemporary Society.

I find community life to be life-giving, filled with joy. We bond and learn more about each other in community.

I am currently involved in TNTT (Vietnamese Eucharistic Youth Movement, VEYM) as a Youth Group Leader to the Vietnamese kids every Sunday at St. Martin of Tours Church in Franklin, WI.

I am Jacob Smith. Originally from Houston, I am 22, and a convert to Catholicism. I come from a semi-religious Protestant home. After being confirmed a Lutheran, I left the faith for what I like to call “Christian Agnosticism.” But increasingly, I felt called to the Catholic Church.

I became fascinated with priestly ministry and approached my local parish, wanting to know what Catholicism was about. Two years after that first visit to the parish, on April 23, 2017, I received my First Communion and Confirmation. Eventually I realized that my call to Catholicism was also a call to ordained ministry.

I was attracted to the SCJ community initially because of the many opportunities to work overseas, as well as the vibrant ECS community I met during my Come and See vocation weekend. [“ECS” is the English and Cultural Studies program at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology.] This attraction has deepened because of the many Dehonians I’ve met who have had significant positive impacts on my life and who have shown me what the Sacred Heart looks like and can look like in how I live my life. I want to make that joy my own.

Now I am back with the formation program at Sacred Heart Monastery and working on my undergraduate studies at Marquette University. I am also volunteering at St. Martin of Tours parish and sing with the Jubilate Chorale of Milwaukee.

Fra. Jacobe Smith

Fra. Jonathan Nguyen Vuong

In August, the province honored its jubilarians. Among them were Fr. Jim Schifano, who was celebrating 50 years of vows, and Fr. Bernie Rosinski, who noted his 70th anniversary of religious life this year.

Due to recent back surgery, Fr. Bernie was unable to be at the province celebrations at Sacred Heart Monastery. The surgery was successful, and Fr. Bernie no longer felt the back pain that had been plaguing him for months. However, on the day of the jubilee celebrations he learned that while things were continuing to go well regarding the surgery, doctors discovered in a routine scan that he had a much more significant health concern: Fr. Bernie had advanced metastatic cancer that had spread to his lungs, pancreas and liver. Treatment options were very limited. On a day that was meant to be one of celebration, Fr. Bernie was making doctor appointments and trying to think of how to share the unexpected news with fellow Dehonians, friends and family.

Less than three months later, Fr. Bernie died on November 3 in home hospice at the SCJ community house in Chamberlain, SD.

Two months earlier, on August 29, 50-year jubilarian Fr. Jim Schifano, died of a heart attack just as he was preparing to leave for a cross-country trip to visit family.

Vietnam veteran

Originally from Colorado Springs, CO, Fr. Jim was 77, and was ordained in 1975. Before pursuing his vocation, Fr. Jim served in the US Army and
spent time in Vietnam; he was at the rank of sergeant when he was discharged in 1967.

Fr. Jim did his theological studies at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology and later served at the seminary from 1978-1990. However, his first assignment as a priest was at Divine Heart Seminary in Donaldson, IN.

Besides his many years serving at the seminaries and in the monastery community, Fr. Jim also did pastoral ministry, first at St. Matthew parish in Houston (1977-78). After over 20 years at SHSST, Fr. Jim returned to Houston, where he briefly served at Christ the Redeemer parish (1990-91) and then back at St. Matthew’s for five years.

In 1997, Fr. Jim joined the SCJ community in Mississippi, where he ministered for three years at St. Gregory parish in Senatobia and Sacred Heart parish in Walls. From 2004-07 he served at St. Joseph’s parish in Holly Springs.

Fr. Jim’s final assignment before retirement was with the Sacred Heart Community in Pinellas Park, FL.

“I am happy to be an SCJ because I am surrounded by saints. There are so many of them, both deceased and still living. I find that by being with them I discover their saintliness, often hidden, but discoverable through attentiveness and observation. It’s not that my SCJ brothers don’t have faults. It’s that they seek to find them out, work on them, weed them out, and face any fault or weakness that prevents the LOVE and SERVICE to others that Fr. Dehon called for. That takes courage and guts. That SCJ tradition is bonding.”

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The quote above is from Fr. Bernie as he reflected on his 70th anniversary of vows; it was written just before he learned of his cancer diagnosis.

Originally from Detroit, Fr. Bernie was ordained in 1959; at that time of his death he was 88.

Except for a brief stint in vocations, most of Fr. Bernie’s ministry was in academics or administration. He taught at Divine Heart Seminary in Donaldson, Ind., at Dehon Seminary in Great Barrington, Mass., and at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology. In 1990 he was named provincial secretary but stayed with the Provincialate for only a year before being asked to serve on the staff of the Generalate in Rome.

He was there from 1992-1998, after which he returned to SHSST. In 2001 he was back to his old job as provincial secretary. He also served on the Provincial Council.

“I don’t really like to use the word ministry when I talk about my work,” said Fr. Bernie. “I reject it because I think that it is a limiting concept, limited by my personal desires, wants or aspirations. I also know that my feelings on the matter run counter to the current trend or wisdom. I believe that my existence, willed by God, consists in being priest and religious. How that is lived is determined by the apostolate given to me by my superiors. This is how I believe that I can become an instrument of God’s mercy and love, and a ‘prophet of reconciliation’ most truly and effectively.”

Fr. Bernie retired in 2007, but it was an active retirement. In South Dakota he assisted with pastoral ministry and held formation workshops for permanent deacons. Fr. Bernie had degrees from the Gregorian University in Rome, Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology and from Ball State University in Muncie, Ind.
Cardinal Turkson featured Dehon Lecture speaker

“Fr. Dehon wanted to sensitize parish priests and seminarians about social problems so that they would leave their sacristies and go to the people.”

- Cardinal Turkson

Cardinal Peter Turkson was the main speaker at the October 19th Dehon Lecture at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology. The title of his presentation: “A New Social Catechism for the 21st Century?”

Past president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Cardinal Turkson is Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Prefect emeritus of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, and Archbishop emeritus of Cape Coast (Ghana). He was a presenter at the SCJs’ General Conference in February, speaking on the social doctrine of the Church.

The cardinal began the lecture by reflecting on the time into which Fr. Leo John Dehon, founder of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, was born (1843). By then, the Industrial Revolution had turned workers into replaceable cogs amid difficult and often unsafe working conditions. Family life among the large numbers of working poor suffered.

“People turned away from the Church, which they saw as inept in handling the economic, political, and sociological crisis of the poor and lower-class citizens in society,” said Cardinal Turkson. “The Church no longer had influence over government or its people.”

Fr. Dehon recognized this in his first assignment in the French factory town of Saint-Quentin. Cardinal Turkson quoted the founder, who said that “I wanted to contribute to the uplifting of the lower classes... The masses are not yet convinced that the Church alone possesses the true and practical answers to all social questions.”

“Fr. Dehon, said the cardinal, “wanted to sensitize parish priests and seminarians about social problems so that they would leave their sacristies and go to the people.”
This social concern was Fr. Dehon’s legacy, he added. It is what urged him to teach Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, which addressed the condition of the working classes.

*Rerum Novarum* was followed by 16 social encyclicals including two by Pope Francis: *Fratelli Tutti* (2020) and *Laudato Sì* (2015). These social encyclicals, said the cardinal, form the basis of a new “Social Catechism for Integral Ecology.” The Social Encyclicals focus on the wholistic growth and development of the human person.

**Panelists’ response**

In the afternoon, two panelists responded to the cardinal’s presentation. Catherine Orr is the Pastoral Associate at Lumen Christi Parish in Mequon, Program Coordinator for the Roundtable Association of Catholic Diocesan Social Action Directors, a member of the Catholic Charities USA Parish Social Ministry Leadership Team, and on the board of directors for the Catholic Labor Network. Dr. James Stroud, S.T.D. is an Associate Professor of Moral Theology at SHSST in his ninth year at Sacred Heart; he teaches in the areas of fundamental moral theology, biomedical ethics, social ethics, and philosophical ethics.

“I was truly inspired by something that the cardinal said in his presentation,” began Dr. Stroud in his response. “Something that had not clicked for me... even though I had read some but not all of Fr. Leo John Dehon’s writings...

“What becomes novel with Pope Leo XIII and *Rerum Novarum* is that he sets out in a certain way to tackle the Industrial Revolution and the rise of socialism that really brings about radical social changes for all European life and has significant ramifications for the Church and the people who make up the Church, the Body of Christ. He is trying to respond to that.

“Fr. Dehon had the same insight, that there needs to be an on-the-ground way to catechize people, including priests, on their responsibilities in living out the social teaching”

“It made me think, in light of Cardinal Turkson’s overview, if perhaps we already have a social catechism unfolding before us, and that begins with the social encyclical of Leo XIII.” In these documents, added Dr. Stroud, there are prescriptions from the popes about what priests, bishops, theologians and the laity need to be doing in the social arena.

Catherine Orr echoed Dr. Stroud in noting the richness of the social encyclicals and how they give direction in how Christians can focus their lives. However, she also spoke specifically to something which Cardinal Turkson said in his homily that morning, something which led her to echo the words of Fr. Leo John Dehon:

“He said that formation comes through two ways: study and prayer. To that I’d like to add ‘action.’ At all levels of formation, our study, our prayer, needs to lead us to act.”

As the cardinal noted in his presentation, Fr. Dehon “wanted to sensitize parish priests and seminarians about social problems so that they would leave their sacristies and go to the people.” In other words, “to act.”

**125 years!**

This year the Priests of the Sacred Heart celebrate the 125th anniversary of the SCJ presence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Among those who took part in the international celebrations in October were Fr. Vien Nguyen, SCJ (provincial superior of the US Province), Fr. Gustave Lulendo, SCJ (superior of the Canadian Region) and Fr. Charles Brown, SCJ, former missionary in the Congolese Province.

Fr. Vien wrote that “the two [Congolese] apostolates that left me with a deep impression were their schools and orphanages. With the orphans, for example, our SCJ confreres care for their past, present, and future. A psychologist is available onsite to help children deal with their traumas. Older children receive vocational training for life beyond the orphanage...”

“We congratulate our Congolese...
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.

Find out how you can join us!

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DEHONIANS
Priests of the Sacred Heart

Not forgotten

Daily, people contact us asking for updates on the search for Fr. Anthony Kluckman, SCJ, who disappeared from Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake on July 21. Unfortunately, no information has yet surfaced to help authorities in their search.

In November, the Franklin Police Department once again combed the property around Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake using a variety of methods. Multiple Silver Alerts have been issued, and media outlets in the Midwest have repeated the story of Fr. Anthony’s disappearance. Homeless shelters and hospitals have been contacted.

There are no clues to share, but that doesn’t mean that we have simply “moved on.” Fr. Anthony is with us always in our prayers.

If you have any information that you think may be relevant in the search for Fr. Anthony Kluckman, please contact the Franklin Police Department at: 414-425-2522.

A long walk!

Congratulations to Br. Andy Gancarczyk, SCJ, who hiked the Camino de Santiago early in autumn.

“It was 35 days of walking along the French route, from Saint Jean Pied de Port, crossing all of Spain, 800 kilometers in the legs and 12 kilograms on the back every day,” wrote Br. Andy. “It was a long time of solitude, hardship and overcoming one’s own weaknesses, in heat, in rain, with or without a bottle of water, overcoming steep ascents and shaking about your knees in long descents. There were familiar faces, smiles, greetings, coffee, a moment of breath and you were back on your way. The real miracles you experience allow you to forget about blisters, swelling, knee pain and back pain, which are completely unimportant.

“It was a good time for prayer and reflection, and I found a lot of strength and peace. I recommend it to everyone!”