

Dear confreres in the Greater Amazon region, Fr. Willyans Rapozo and I will soon have the opportunity to meet with you. Rest assured that it will be a joy to visit you and share in the life and mission you carry out in your respective communities and mission areas. During our previous visit—made alongside Fr. Levi dos Anjos, the current Vicar General—we thanked God for the dedication with which the Congregation's religious have worked for nearly 60 years in this vast region of the continent, which also extends into other countries.

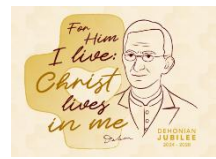


That visit, despite time and space constraints, helped us grasp some of the complexities of this area—known in civil terms as the "Legal Amazon" (established in 1953). Of the nine states that comprise it, we are present in five: Amapá, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Pará, and Rondônia. Today, there are nearly thirty communities where more than seventy religious share a missionary vocation in service of the Gospel, working in both urban centers and vast rural areas. At the same time, the charism is being shared with laypeople who identify as members of the Dehonian Family. Vocations to SCJ religious life, inspired by God, have also emerged.

On this upcoming occasion, we will meet with confreres representing all of you on August 20 and 21 in Lucas do Rio Verde, Mato Grosso. We thank the major superiors of the BRM and BSP provinces, as well as the superiors of the BSL and BMT districts—entities present in this vast territory served by Dehonian missionaries—for welcoming our proposal. We are mindful of the diverse realities and sensibilities that coexist within this great global river basin across social, cultural, economic, and ecclesial



spheres. However, we cannot ignore the work the Church has been doing for years to foster a more conscious and shared evangelization of a territory that—both in human terms and regarding its ecosystem—holds unique importance for the common home we all inhabit. All of this is evident in the post-synodal apostolic exhortation **Querida Amazonia** (2020).



What motivates us to meet with representatives of the Dehonians (SCJ) in the Amazon for a few days? Firstly, the voice of the Church: particularly through the Synods on the Amazon (2019) and the exhortation *Querida Amazonia* (2020), as well as the Synod on Synodality (2021–2024). Secondly, we wish to hear directly from you about the real impact this has had on the SCJs in this vast region. On the third place, we are motivated by the guidelines of the XXV General Chapter and the programmatic letter *Abide in my love* (Jn 15:9), prepared for the 2024–2030 six-year term.



How are the Dehonian *identity, communion, and mission* lived out in these parts of Brazil? Also related to the above, we are motivated by the Dehonian Jubilee — a time of grace for renewing ourselves in the vocation that unites us around the shared charism of Father Dehon.

What does this time mean to you? How has the invitation to re-examine the section “With Christ in the Service of the Kingdom” (Cst 9–39) — found in the second part of our Constitutions— impacted you?

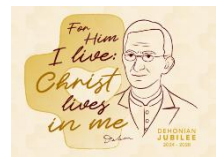
Finally, we are motivated by the desire to listen more attentively and learn from you how the Amazon region challenges us and helps us discover and live out, with greater intensity, the richness of the Dehonian charism entrusted to us.

During his long journey across much of Latin America, Father Dehon had the opportunity to learn a great deal. As is well known, he took a keen interest in the events unfolding around him. Guided by his faith and his commitment to the Gospel, he observed everything closely. In a sense, he was a mystic with open eyes.

His life is a true witness of someone who, along the way, kept his eyes and ears wide open, his feet firmly planted on the ground, and his heart turned toward “things above,” as Saint Paul says (cf. Col 3:1).

When recording his visit to Brazil, Father Dehon devoted a few brief lines to the Amazon region. He thus left us a glimpse of that world so that we, too, might become travelers and explorers beyond the vastness of his own experience.





In one of his notes, he wrote: «In the colossal Amazon basin—covering more than six million square kilometers, from the peaks of the Andes to the edge of the ocean, in villages as well as in the great cities of Pará and Manaus—the word ‘rubber’ constantly strikes the traveler’s ears»¹. Wishing to adopt this observation from that era, we would like to know what it is that “*constantly strikes the ears*” of a Dehonian in the vast Amazon region. Something like asking: “What did you see along the way?” that did not leave you indifferent, rather stirred and animated you. We want to hear you about all of this.

We wish to engage in this reflection to nurture the transformative power inherent in Jesus’s plea to the Father — “*Sint unum*” (that they may be one) — so that the world may believe, starting at home, among ourselves. How might the events unfolding in the Amazon guide Dehonians to rethink their lifestyles, apostolates, and works? Indeed, we would like to reflect with you on the possibility of greater coordination among Dehonian activities in the Amazon basin — considering, for instance, how to collaborate in the face of shared challenges.

Let us place ourselves under the action of the Holy Spirit, who “makes all things new” (cf. Rev 21:5), so that through fraternal sharing we may be inspired to “put out into the deep.” We invite everyone to begin this reflection now within their local communities, so as to further enrich our upcoming gathering. It would also be valuable to hear the voices of the lay members of the Dehonian Family in this region.

May Fr. Dehon — who in his time knew how to take risks, place his trust, and lead the Congregation into challenging missions — help us to be bold and creative, remaining faithful to the call we have received. Our Lady of Aparecida will surely accompany us, interceding for us and for the beloved people of the Amazon region. With deep gratitude for the mission you carry out, and eager to collaborate with you in the service of the Kingdom within this rich territory, we send you our warm greetings and our prayers.

In the Heart of Jesus,

Fr. Carlos Luis Suárez Codorniú SCJ
Superior General

Given in Rome, on the 148th anniversary of the foundation of our Congregation.



¹ Leão Dehon, *Mil léguas na América do Sul*, APPAL, Corupá 2021, p. 79