



SUPERIOR GENERAL  
CONGREGATION OF THE  
PRIESTS OF THE SACRED HEART  
Dehonians

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Rome, June 05, 2024.

## RAISE YOUR EYES!

*Letter on the occasion of the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus,  
June 7, 2024*

*To the members of the Congregation  
To all members of the Dehonian Family*

They will raise their eyes "and look upon him whom they have pierced" (Jn 19:37). It is with these prophetic words of Zechariah that the evangelist John concludes his account of what happened to the crucified Jesus: They will raise their eyes "and look upon him whom they have pierced" (Jn. 19:37). In the darkness of violence and death, prophecy opens us to hope.

This gesture, "raising our eyes," seemingly trivial, is one of the most fundamental actions of our life of faith, of our journey in following the One who loved us and gave Himself up for us. "Raising our eyes" expresses resistance to remaining suffocated by the guilt and evil of this world. This is how our Founder lived it:

*Father Dehon was very sensitive to sin  
which weakens the Church  
especially when consecrated persons are involved.  
He was aware of social evils;  
he had carefully studied their human causes,  
both individual and social.  
But he saw the refusal of the love of Christ  
as the deepest cause  
of this human misery.  
Caught up in this unrecognized love,  
he wanted to respond to it  
by being intimately united to the Heart of Christ  
and by establishing His Reign  
in souls and in society. (CST 4)*

To "raise our eyes" to the unfathomable love of God, recognized in the Savior's open side, is to seek the communion that heals and restores lost and trampled dignity.

It is an attitude that not only enlightens us but helps us discover and understand the "breadth, length, height, and depth" (Eph. 3:18) of God's plan. Father Dehon was deeply convinced of this and urges us to move in this direction.

*To form a living faith in ourselves, let us form the habit of looking to the Heart of Jesus and Mary in everything we do. Let us have no other goal in view in all our pious exercises. Let us strive to imitate Him, let us remember His virtues and mysteries, let us try to clothe ourselves with His divine intentions and wondrous dispositions<sup>1</sup>.*

As we approach our XXV General Chapter, we want to recognize again that the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the source of our renewal, the foundation of the unity and love we can offer to this world in transformation. It is the inexhaustible source of hope that gives life to the Church, the Congregation and the men and women of our time.

"Raising our eyes" to this Heart means rekindling our hope so as to invite many others to look together to the source of love and reconciliation. It is there that we are repaired and are invited to join the movement of reparation that flows from the open Heart.

God's reparatory love, contemplated and adored in his Son, nourishes our oblation and teaches us to be true worshippers, in charity and truth. This gaze calls us to remain at the foot of the cross with Mary and the beloved disciple, the first builders of *Sint unum*, defying hatred and death itself. Like them, He invites us to build community anew, sharing life and mission. May our General Chapter be a fraternal sign of our attentive gaze at the Gospel, welcomed, lived, shared and proclaimed.

May this feast rekindle "the hope (that) is contained in the heart of every person as a desire and expectation of goodness<sup>2</sup>" and help us overcome our fears, mistrust, doubts and discouragement. May it be a time of profound spiritual renewal for each of us to fulfill God's will:

*We, too, must raise our eyes (...) and seek to penetrate more deeply into the spirit of our vocation and always improve our goal to know God's will and realize His designs more and more<sup>3</sup>.*

Fraternally in the Heart of Jesus,

Fr. Carlos Luis Suárez Codorniú, scj  
Superior General and  
his Council

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<sup>1</sup> Leone Dehon, *L'anno con il Sacro Cuore*, 1° maggio 1919, § 56.

<sup>2</sup> Papa Francesco, *Spes non confundit*, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Leon Dehon, *Note sulla Storia della mia vita, quaderno 13*, § 68.