



Good Stewards Newsletter

United in faith, we bring the Reign of the Sacred Heart to the world.

Fall 2025

Seminary to Service: A Shared Journey

This summer, the Priests of the Sacred Heart welcomed religious students enrolled in the English Cultural Studies (ECS) program to Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology. They came to learn about U.S. culture and improve their English, to bring this knowledge back to enrich their communities.

Engaging with priests from around the world as they learn English brings both joy and inspiration. It also presents occasional challenges, especially when explaining some of our local customs and traditions.

One such moment came during a conversation with a priest from one of our foreign missions. When trying to explain the tradition of Halloween here in the United States, it was shared, "On Halloween, children dress up in costumes and go door to door, asking for candy to fill their bags."

He looked puzzled. It was elaborated, "Sometimes they receive candy, fruit or even coins." That's when understanding dawned, and he responded with a gentle smile, "Ah, that is what we call Tuesdays. Every Tuesday, children in our village go from door to door, visiting homes and stores to gather food to help feed their families."

That simple exchange reminds us just how different our worlds can be, and yet, how deeply connected we are by our shared desire to care for one another, especially our children.

In our travels, we witness firsthand how crucial



education is in transforming lives. Inspired by our founder, Fr. Dehon, who emphasized the importance of education, our ministry is committed to creating educational opportunities, particularly for girls, in our mission communities.

A gift of **\$200** can provide a child with a full year of education and two school uniforms. A gift of **\$300** can offer one year of secondary education.

If you'd like to learn more about how you can support education in our missions, please contact our Mission Advancement Department at 1-800-448-7674 or by email missionadv@poshusa.org.

Together, we can turn compassion into action and help create a brighter future for children around the world.

A Message from Fr. Dominic



October 16 was the feast day of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque.

Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary between 1673 and 1675. Among the words spoken to her, she heard Jesus make several promises to those who would respond to the pleadings of

His Heart and make an effort to return His love. She wrote them down and they have come to be known as the Twelve Promises.

However, as so many other saints have experienced, she had those dark days when others refused to believe her. In fact, it was not until the time of Pope Pius XI,

in his 1928 *Miserentissimus Redemptor*, (Most Merciful Redeemer), that the Catholic Church affirmed the credibility of her visions of Jesus Christ. As Pius wrote: “For when Christ manifested Himself to Margaret Mary, and declared to her the infinitude of His love, at the same time, in the manner of a mourner, He complained that so many and such great injuries were done to Him by ungrateful men.”

Let this be a time for each of us to put our faith and hope into practice and make use of the gifts that Jesus has given us by showing the love, mercy and forgiveness we have received by sharing that same love, mercy and forgiveness with others.

Blessings Across the Miles: Personal Visits that Inspire

Whenever possible, Fr. Dominic and Pam, our Mission Advancement Manager, travel across the country to visit with our generous donors. While every visit is unique, one thing always stands out: **the Priests of the Sacred Heart’s mission would not be possible without you.**

Your prayers and support are the heart of our ministry, and we are deeply grateful. Meeting so many of you over the years has reminded us time and again of the power of connection, the strength of family and the importance of reaching out to those in need.

We learn so much from each of you. Take, for example, Josie and her



family, who warmly welcomed us into their home. Over a lovely meal, Josie shared a family tradition that left a lasting impression on us.

Each time her family gathers, Josie’s mother offers a personal blessing over them. While Fr. Dominic is always honored to bless your home or religious items, as he did for Josie, it is **her mother’s heartfelt blessing** that he will carry in his memory for years to come. It was a beautiful reminder that blessings can come from many hands and hearts.

If you would be interested in a personal visit, let us know by calling our Mission Advancement Department at 1-800-448-7674.

Fr. Dominic's Reflection on the 2025 Pilgrimage

In late May, Fr. Thomas Cassidy, SCJ, Pam, our Mission Advancement Manager and I led a group of benefactors on a deeply moving 10-day spiritual journey through Rome. Fr. Willyans, SCJ, also joined them for a few days.

Each day was anchored by the celebration of Mass and enriched with prayerful moments along the way. We were blessed with the opportunity to celebrate Mass in the four major basilicas of Rome and other sacred churches, each offering its own spiritual and historical depth.

One of the most unforgettable highlights was our audience with the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV. We were close enough to almost reach out and touch Pope Leo — an awe-inspiring, grace-filled moment that will live long in our hearts.

The day before, we participated in the Pilgrim Walk, a deeply symbolic procession through the streets of Rome. Roads and sidewalks were closed as we carried a large wooden cross and prayed together as one. Each pilgrim had the humbling privilege of taking a turn carrying the cross — another powerful moment that defined our journey.

Our international SCJ headquarters is just a 30-minute walk from the Vatican. The rooftop patio there offers a stunning view overlooking St. Peter's Basilica. We gathered here for two evening meals with our priests and special guests, including our Superior General, Fr. Carlos, SCJ. These evenings were rich with conversation, laughter and a shared sense of mission and fraternity.

Our accommodations were at the Villa Aurelia, a gated retreat operated by the Priests of the Sacred Heart. It serves as a residence for SCJ priests and a welcoming

hotel for guests. Each day, we set out from Villa Aurelia to explore new sites, visiting places like a working vineyard and farm, the Borghese Gallery, Trevi Fountain, the Palace of Castel Gandolfo, the Colosseum and the gardens of Tivoli, among many others.



What continues to amaze me is the camaraderie that blossoms among pilgrims. Many of us had never met before, yet we came together as one — united in faith, prayer and purpose.

At our final Mass in Rome, Fr. Thomas Cassidy, SCJ, offered a brief but profound homily. He asked, “What if God loved you as much as you love God?” and then simply said, “Think about it.”

That question still echoes in my heart — and perhaps it will in yours, too.

Fr. Dominic SCJ



Discover the Dehonian Associates

More than a century ago, Fr. Leo Dehon, founder of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, believed lasting change came from people working together in faith and compassion. It all began in 1878, when Fr. Dehon founded the first Dehonian Associates group to address the social challenges of his time.

Early in his ministry among the working poor, he realized that the varied social problems of his day needed the collaboration of many people — priests, religious and laity. Since then, thousands of people have collaborated with the Priests of the Sacred Heart, and some chose to join a Dehonian Associates group.

Dehonian Associates gather once a month to learn more about Fr. Dehon and the charism of the Priests of the Sacred Heart. Integrated with prayer and reflection, it is a time for deepening spirituality while supporting one another and continuing to foster collaborative relationships. Anyone with an interest in learning more about Fr. Dehon and the Priests of the Sacred Heart is welcome to join a group. You do not need to be Catholic nor do you have to make a commitment. For participants who would like to formally become an Associate, a process is made available.

For Fr. Dehon, the basis of his life was love of the

Heart of Jesus. He wanted everyone to know of God's great love for us — each and every person. In this open way, he approached the issues of his day. Unlike some religious orders which are known by one type of ministry (for example: preaching or running hospitals), Dehonians are known by how they live — with open hearts and open minds. They look for where Christ's heart is aching in this world and then try to fill that ache with love. That is one reason the Dehonian cross has an open heart in the middle of it.

If you would like to learn more about Dehonian Associates groups, please contact Monica Misey, Director of Dehonian Associates. Monica works in the U.S. Provincial Office in Wisconsin. She can help find a local group for you and if one is not active in your area, you are welcome to join an online group. Contact Monica by email at mmisey@dehoniansusa.org or by phone at 1-414-427-4267. You can also ask your local Dehonian priest or brother if they know of a group in your area!

The mission of the U.S. Province of the Priests of the Sacred Heart is "To be prophets of love and servants of reconciliation." The world needs love and reconciliation. Consider joining us!





Fr. Stephen Huffstetter, SCJ, recently began his new assignment as president-rector at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology. He previously served as provincial superior of the U.S. Province and vicar general of the Priests of the Sacred Heart in Rome.

Q: Where were you born and raised? I was born and raised in the small town of Walkerton, IN, 20 miles from South Bend. I am the oldest of six children, three boys and three girls. With one set of twins we were born within 6½ years of each other, so we grew up as a pack, sharing so many memories and experiences. My parents were both teachers, although mom didn't start in the classroom until my youngest brother started kindergarten. Until then, Dad barbered on Saturdays, worked in my Grandad's convenience store at night, and picked up a variety of other jobs during the summer. All of my grandparents lived close by, and were always an important part of our life.

Q: List three words that describe you.

Gentle, optimistic, curious.

Q: How did you come to know of the Priests of the Sacred Heart (Dehonians) and what interested you about them?

Divine Heart Seminary in Donaldson, IN, was just 10 miles away from my hometown. They started a day student program for commuters who lived in the area and wanted a good Catholic education. We had no Catholic high school in Walkerton, and three other guys from our parish were driving back and forth every day. Dad asked me to join them and try it for a year to see if I liked it. I did get an incredibly good education. I got to know students from many different areas of the U.S., from the Carolinas to California, who were quite culturally and ethnically diverse. What I liked most about the SCJs was that they were very human and relatable. They were good teachers, but also coached and played sports with us, led us in prayer and on retreats, and rolled up their sleeves and worked alongside us when things needed to be done. They helped a lot of people and as I finished high school and thought about the future, I decided to give the college seminary program in Chicago a try.

Creative Ways to Support the Mission Without Giving Now

Do you ever wish you could do more when you receive our mailings?

While your prayers are always the most important gift you can offer, we also rely on your financial support to help carry out the mission God has entrusted to us. With your generosity, you become a true co-missionary — walking alongside us in faith, compassion and service.

Financial support can take many forms. For some, it's a one-time gift. For others, it's a smaller monthly contribution, a stock donation or even a gift of a personal item. Each gift, no matter the size or type, is vital in supporting our ministry today.

But just as important as giving now are **legacy gifts**, which help ensure our work continues for future generations. These can include additions to your estate plans, bequests or designating the Priests of the Sacred Heart as a beneficiary of accounts such as IRAs, savings or checking accounts, stocks or life insurance policies.

If you're interested in learning about different ways to give — or you would like to receive our free, no-obligation estate planning guide — contact us at 1-800-448-7674 or missionadv@poshusa.org.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support. **You make our mission to serve those most in need possible.**

“Oh! Lord should I forget anything, never let me forget that without you I am nothing.”

— Gugu Mona

2025 is Ending ... What are Your Goals?

As the year draws to a close, it's a great time to reflect on your personal and financial goals and the impact you can make. Several smart charitable planning strategies can help reduce your income and tax burden while supporting causes close to your heart, like the Priests of the Sacred Heart.

Here are a few effective ways to shift **tax dollars into charitable impact**:

1. IRA Charitable Rollover

If you're 70½ or older, you can roll over up to **\$108,000** from your IRA directly to a qualified charity like ours.

This gift may count toward your **Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)**, lower your **taxable income** and **avoid income tax** on the transfer.

2. Charitable Gift Annuity Using Individual Retirement Account (IRA) Rollover. Thanks to a change in the law, IRA funds can now be used to fund a **Charitable Gift Annuity**. While you may initially appreciate income from your IRA, higher withdrawal requirements can eventually increase your tax burden.

With this new option, you can **support our mission** and receive a **lifetime income**; the rollover counts toward your RMD and while you won't receive a tax deduction or tax-free income, you also won't pay income tax on the transferred amount.

Requirements:

- You must be age 70½ or older.
- You must transfer the gift **directly from your IRA to a qualified charity**.
- The annual limit is **\$108,000**.
- This applies to IRAs only (consider rolling over other retirement accounts into an IRA if applicable).

3. Outright Gift of an Asset

Make a gift of **appreciated stock, real estate or other**



assets to avoid paying **capital gains tax**, receive a **charitable deduction** and support a ministry that aligns with your values.

4. Donor Advised Fund (DAF)

Make a **tax-deductible contribution** to a DAF now and choose when to direct grants to your favorite charities. This offers flexibility for giving in both the current and future years.

5. Year-End Tax Planning: Six Simple Tips

Here are quick ways to make your money work harder before the year ends:

- **Pay Your January Mortgage in December** for an extra deduction.
- **Defer Income or Bonuses** to next year if possible.
- **Make Charitable Gifts** to organizations like the Priests of the Sacred Heart.
- **Take Only the Required IRA Distribution** to avoid excess taxable income.
- **Offset Capital Gains** by selling underperforming stocks.
- **Prepay Deductible Expenses** to increase your 2025 deductions.

If you'd like to explore these strategies or receive our free, no-obligation estate planning guide, we'd be happy to assist you. Call us at 1-800-448-7674 or by email at missionadv@poshusa.org.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support.

Your generosity ensures that the mission and ministry of the Priests of the Sacred Heart continues — today, tomorrow and for years to come.