



Edition #22



NEWSLETTER



DEHONIANS INDIA

March 2025

Voice of the Superior

Loving, Leading, Liberating Lent: the acceptable time, the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2)

As disciples of Father Dehon, we want to make union with Christ
in His love for the Father and for all the principle and center of our life (Cst 17).

Dear Confreres in the Heart of Jesus!

Month of March has been the **month of Lenten observance**. Each of the communities observed the spirit of the season of Grace by engaging themselves in the spiritual exercises of fasting, praying and armsgiving which has enhanced the spirit of our community life, our personal life as well as our life of apostolate. Several of our confreres were able to reach out to the faithful in many parishes and mission stations for giving retreats, recollections and nourished the faithful with deep and profound God-experince and Abba-Experience during this Holy Season of Grace.

During this month, the **District Administration** had its **Council Meeting** and made some important decisions concerning the life and the mission of the District and also made some necessary transfers. Following the footsteps of our Founding Father Leo John Dehon whose death centennary we commemorate this year, we encourgae our confreres to reach out to the least, last and the lost by assuming various pastoral as well as spiritual ministries in a creative and innovative Dehonian Way.

During this month, we had the privilege of sending 2 of our confreres namely Fr. Raju Dumala and Fr. Thambi Behana to Commit themselves for Chile mission as a concrete expression of the Dehonian Spirit of "We the Congregation" and the spirit of Internationality and Interculturality. We wish and pray that these two confreres experience the Dehonian Mission and make their valuable contribution as Dehonian Missionaries with 'Open Heart' and 'Open Mind'.

As we are looking forward to the visit of Fr. Daniel Ribeiro for the annual retreat of the Scholastics, Diaconate Ordinations, Renewal of the Vows and the new appointments in the coming months, may we all be well disposed to share the Paschal Joy of the Risen Lord and manifest that joy through our dedicated Dehonian attidues and by making the 'union with Christ' as the centre of our lives.

Fraternally Yours in the Heart of Jesus,

**Long live to the Heart of Jesus
Through the Heart of Mary**

Fr. Michael Augustine SCJ
Fr. Michael Augustine SCJ





The Month of March has marked the end of academic year with fruitful completion of all semestral examinations and submission of assignments and research paper. The Month has made many activities and events meaningful and enriching. On 18th we had special prayer service along with the farewell celebration of all the outgoing students. On the following day Fr. Michael Augustine SCJ has visited me and spoke to the Rector of our community and shared about our congregation with him. It was really a pleasant time to have the presence of Fr. Michael in DVK and spending few hours of time together. The following days I journeyed home and spend time with my family for few days and it was indeed a great time with family and we happened to make a Pilgrimage to Niramlagiri. However, I experience the constant support of God all through my journey wherever I am and I had also made a visit to our CDN community and experienced the real laughter and brotherhood for few hours spent with them.

Br. Nirmal Uppati SCJ



Heartfelt gratitude & the Hearty Farewell

We begin by extending our heartfelt gratitude to Almighty God for His abundant grace, guidance, and support throughout the month of March. His presence and blessings have been our strength in all our undertakings and accomplishments.

The month of March was marked by significant academic and emotional milestones. Our Plus One and Plus Two students diligently prepared for their board examinations. With focused efforts and determination, they engaged themselves wholeheartedly in their studies, aiming for excellence in their academic performance.

Another major highlight of the month was the heartfelt send-off program organized for our Plus Two students, who will soon be proceeding to Kerala for their higher studies. The event was both joyous and emotional, as the outgoing students reflected upon their three-year journey in our formative community. They shared their experiences of growth not only in academics but also in sports, group activities, and personal development.

The students expressed deep gratitude towards the Fathers for their constant guidance, care, and the filial love that nurtured them during their formative years. They also extended warm thanks to their younger brothers, acknowledging the special bond they shared and the mutual support they received throughout their stay.

As we conclude the month, we remain thankful for all the opportunities, lessons, and blessings received, and we look forward to the months ahead with renewed hope and commitment.

Br. Ravi Teja Madanu SCJ





Lentern observance for life of Abundance

The month of March for the Divine Mercy Parish Community began with the Lenten Resolute. We began the graceful days of Prayer, Fasting and Abstinence while marking the sign of the cross in our foreheads with ashes on Ash Wednesday with our Parishioners. On 9th of March, we had the Parish Pastoral Meeting to plan out for the Holy Week, Easter Celebration and our Parish Feast of Divine Mercy. During this season of Lent, every day, we had the Way of the Cross before the Holy Mass and the Lenten Masses for the faithful of the community groups of our Parish. On 14th of March, we had the celebration of the Nativity of our Founder Ven. Fr. Leo John Dehon with our Parishioners and on 19th March we celebrated the Solemnity of St. Joseph in which after the Holy Mass we blessed the "JUBILEE CROSS" for the faithful of our Parish, as we are in the Jubilee year 2025 with the theme, "THE PILGRIMS OF HOPE." This cross is the "Sign of Hope" and the "Visible Sign of the Invisible Grace" for the many, as the faithful kneel down and pray silently before the Jubilee Cross in their uncertainty and the difficulties of life.

Fr. Ajit Baxla SCJ



Life of Interiority, Fraternity & Responsibility

We are very happy to share some of our experiences this month. We had some beautiful moments such as the time of hard work, the days of exams, the days of spiritual nourishment, and the happiness and joy of living together in the community. The most important is that we experience brotherly support, love, care and fraternal correction from each one. All are happy and ready to grow and continue the religious journey. Our philosophy brothers were engaged with their semester exams. All of them got good marks. The professors are very happy with the effort of our brothers in all the exams. Especially our 3rd year philosophy brothers successfully completed their Philosophical studies. They are very grateful for your prayers and blessings. Now the M.G. University Exams are going on.

First year philosophy brothers have gone for the holidays. Degree students start their model exams on 4th April and second semester university exams will start in the last week of April. We ask for your continuous support and prayers for each one of them. In this month we have celebrated two important events, March 14th the birthday of our beloved Founder Leo John Dehon and on March 25th the Solemnity of Annunciation of the Lord. Two meaningful and inspiring celebrations which nourished our spiritual journey and strengthened our Religious Life. On 29th of this month, we have gone to Malayattoor; together we have climbed the mountain, praying and meditating the Way of the Cross. Thanks to each one of you for your constant support, prayers and blessings. Continue to pray for our brothers who are writing their university exams. May the Good Lord bless each of us in our pilgrim journey!

Fr.Christy Peter chittapanezhikathuvila SCJ



Formative moments of collaboration, coordination and celebration

Month of March was packed with: Final Examination of the students, celebrations of the Birthday of our Venerable Father Leo John Dehon, 7th death anniversary mass of Fr. Martin Van Ooji. SCJ, the First Holy Mass of Fr. Ashin SCJ and students' picnic. All our students worked hard and did well in their exams and they were wisely guided by the formators & the community members. We had a special prayer service in memory of Fr. Martin Van Ooji (Founding Father of Indian Mission), with the people come to our chapel for the daily Holy Mass. The spirit of Lenten season is well observed by everyone since Ash Wednesday. Each of the class groups was taken to different places for their annual outing by their respective formators, which gave them all a time of relaxation, recreation and refreshment to the candidates here.

Fr. Abraham Lazar SCJ



Spiritual Reflection, Academic Dedication and Fraternal Relaxation

March was a month filled with meaningful activities, learning, and celebrations in our community. It was a time of spiritual reflection, academic dedication, fun, and togetherness. For some of us, it also marked the beginning of our holidays, offering a well-deserved break. With all these experiences, March was truly a memorable month for everyone..

We began with a Recollection Day led by Fr. Vien SCJ, providing an opportunity for spiritual renewal. Through prayer and reflection, we deepened our faith and strengthened our bonding as a community.

Academically, many of us were busy with exams, working hard to achieve our best results. The community provided support and encouragement to help everyone stay motivated during this demanding time.

A refreshing break came with the Annual Outing, where we enjoyed a fun-filled day of relaxation and companionship. This outing strengthened friendships and provided a much-needed escape from daily routines.

We also celebrated the Birthday of our Founder, a significant occasion to honor his legacy. It was a time to reflect on his values and the guiding principles that continue to inspire us today.

The Three Days of Dehon's Memorial Cricket Series added excitement to the month. With great enthusiasm, participants displayed teamwork, sportsmanship, and a competitive spirit. The matches brought joy and fostering unity within the community.

Overall, March was a month of growth and celebration. Each event brought valuable experiences that strengthened our community spirit. As we move forward, we carry with us the lessons and joy of this month, continuing on our journey with faith and dedication.

Br. Ashwin Joseph SCJ





Sanctifying Spiritual Commitments and Passionate Pastoral Commitments

Thanking God for the gift of this month. As community we have started the Season of Lent with a pilgrimage to Malayattoor. Being the pastoral community, we continue to respond for all kinds of spiritual needs in and around the diocese of Alleppey. Fr. Johnson is temporarily with us after completing his one year of priestly ministry at St. Joseph's parish as assistant vicar. Fr. Siju was being asked to lead the lentern retreat in different parishes. Regarding the construction of the community building, we had the laying of the concrete of the ground floor at the end of the month, and the works are progressing without any delay. District superior along with Fr. Christy and Fr. Roy visited the worksite and evaluated the progress of the project. While visiting Velim community, Goa, me and Fr. Johnson got the opportunity to attend the yearly meeting of "Pro-Life" group, we were very much inspired and received lots of insights from the members of the group.

Fr. Thomas Raju SCJ



My experience at Concentration Camp sites in Krakow, Poland

The history of Jews in Poland is one of both flourishing culture and unimaginable tragedy. For centuries, Poland was home to the largest Jewish population in Europe. Jewish communities thrived there, contributing to science, literature, philosophy, and commerce. Towns like Kraków, Lublin, and Warsaw had vibrant Jewish quarters. However, with the rise of Nazism in the 20th century, this long and rich heritage was nearly obliterated during the Holocaust. Six million Jews perished, including over three million Polish Jews. Their synagogues were burned, their communities erased, and their voices silenced yet their memory endures.

My journey to Auschwitz I and Birkenau was one of the most difficult and sobering experiences of my life. As I walked through the iron gate that reads “Arbeit Macht Frei” (Work Sets You Free), I felt the weight of history press down on me. The barracks, barbed wire, and ruins of gas chambers whispered the suffering so great that words cannot contain it. In one of the exhibition rooms, I saw piles of shoes, hair, and eyeglasses, the everyday items turned into chilling reminders of the lives lost. What disturbed my peace most was the silence. It wasn't just a lack of sound, but the presence of absence. An absence of laughter, of life, of humanity. Birkenau, the larger of the two camps, stretched endlessly into the horizon. The scale of the operation—the organized machinery of death was incomprehensible. It was there that over a million Jews, along with Roma, political prisoners, and others, were exterminated.

In the darkness of this place, two figures shone with light: St. Maximilian Kolbe and St. Edith Stein. St. Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Franciscan priest, was imprisoned in Auschwitz for sheltering Jews. When a fellow prisoner was condemned to die, Kolbe volunteered to take his place. He died in a starvation cell, offering prayers and comfort to others until his final breath. His sacrifice is a testimony to the greatest love, as Jesus said: “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends” (John 15:13). St. Edith Stein, born to a Jewish family and later converted to Catholicism, was a brilliant philosopher and Carmelite nun. She was arrested and sent to Auschwitz because of her Jewish heritage and her faith. She met her death with dignity and prayer, believing that her suffering was united with Christ's. Her life reminds us that even in times of great hatred, the soul can radiate peace.

As I stood near the ruins of Crematorium II in Birkenau, I prayed not only for the dead but for the living. I asked myself: What is our responsibility now? We must remember. We must never forget the atrocities that took place. But remembering is not enough. The Holocaust teaches us the terrifying consequence of hatred, indifference, and silence. Each of us is called to be a light in the darkness.

The Bible calls us to love and justice. In the book of Micah, we are told, “What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8). In Matthew 25, Jesus reminds us that what we do for “the least of these,” we do for Him. That includes speaking out against antisemitism, racism, and oppression in all its forms.

My message to people is this: Let us carry the memory of those who perished not as a burden but as a torch. Let their lives inspire us to build a world where no one is hated for their race, faith, or heritage. Let love triumph over fear. Let mercy guide our actions. And let us say, with our lives, Never again. (My Special Thanks to Fr. Michael Agustine Scj, the District Superior for this opportunity).

Fr. Manish Nayak SCJ



