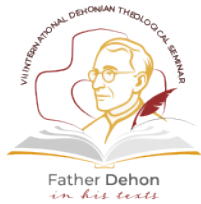


Father Dehon
in his texts



Congregation of Priests of the **Sacred Heart of Jesus**

VII Theological Seminar
Father Dehon in his texts
Taubaté, July 30 to August 4, 2026



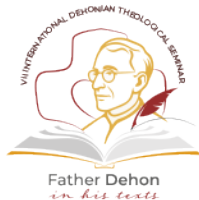
VII INTERNATIONAL DEHONIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINAR

GUIDE FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Taubate, Brazil
July 30 – August 4, 2026

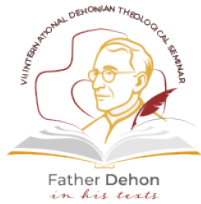
SEMINAR OVERVIEW

Theme	Exploring the implied authorial presence of Léon Dehon in his various writings
Origin of the Theme for the 2026 Dehonian Theological Seminar	The project as presented and accepted at the meeting of the International Dehonian Theological Commission in December 2023: On the occasion of the centenary of the death of Léon Dehon (1843 – 1925), the continental Dehonian theological commissions are invited to participate in a seminar entitled <i>Dehon in His Texts</i> .
Aim of the Seminar	The seminar will explore the implied authorial presence of Léon Dehon in his various writings, namely, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Notes Quotidiennes</i> (1867-1870 and 1886-1890) 2. <i>Notes sur l'histoire de ma vie</i> (1843 – 1883) 3. <i>Œuvres sociales</i> (1880s and 1890s) 4. <i>Oeuvres spirituelles</i> (1890s to 1920) 5. Correspondence (1850s to 1925) 6. <i>Les Chroniques du règne</i> (1889 to 1903)
Seminar Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Seminar will be held over a period of six days and is intended to be interactive, with active participation ● The Seminar will provide time for participants to process content and for quiet reflection, and may include a panel discussion ● Lead Commissions will present their Research Synopsis and Respondent Commissions will present their review/comments ● Session format: 1 hour presentation by Lead Commission, followed by 15 minute presentation by Respondent Commission, and subsequent group discussion ● A group discussion will take place after all readings and research have been presented focusing on '<i>How does each text relate to Dehon's other writings?</i>'



KEY DATES

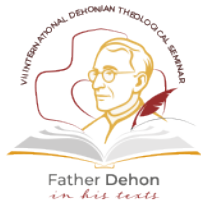
Activity	Deadline
Guide for Research to be sent to Continental Commission Chairs by Scientific Committee Chair	March 6, 2025
Each Lead Commission will hold an initial meeting with a member(s) of the Scientific Committee and any additional experts to discuss approach for the applicable area of research	April 30, 2025
Lead Commissions to provide Scientific Committee with text selection and proposed approach to research	May 15, 2025
Checkpoint Zoom with Scientific Committee and Writer(s)	Week of September 15, 2025
Synopsis papers by Lead Commissions to Scientific Committee	March 15, 2026
Introduction Zoom with Scientific Committee Chair and each Respondent Commission	Week of April 1, 2026
Review by Respondent Commissions	April 1 – June 30, 2026
Review by Scientific Committee of Synopsis Papers and translations	April 1 – May 31, 2026
Powerpoint presentations by Lead Commissions and Respondents due to Scientific Committee/Secretariat	June 30, 2026
Translation and finalization of Powerpoint presentations	July 1 – 25, 2026
Theological Seminar 2026, Brazil	July 30 – August 4, 2026



PROPOSED DIVISION OF TEXTS OF LÉON DEHON

Texts	Lead Commission	Respondent Commission
Dehon in his <i>Notes quotidiennes</i> (1867-1870; 1886-1890) and his <i>Notes sur l'histoire de ma vie</i> (1843-1883)	Europe	Africa
Dehon in his <i>Œuvres sociales</i> (1880s and 1890s)	South America	Asia
Dehon in his <i>Oeuvres spirituelles</i> (1890s to 1920)	North America	Europe
Dehon in his Correspondence (1850s to 1925)	Africa	North America
Dehon in his <i>Les Chroniques du règne</i> (1889 to 1903)	Asia	South America

Suggested Format for Research Paper and Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is suggested that each Lead Commission prepares: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A written synopsis (approximately 20 pages) of their research; and ○ A powerpoint to be presented at the seminar ○ Note: Presentation to last no longer than 1 hour (template to be provided) ● Each Lead Commission paper will have a Respondent from another continental commission. For this reason, a copy of the synopsis paper will be required by the Scientific Committee by March 15, 2026, to allow time for the Respondent to reply to the paper. ● It is suggested that each Respondent Commission prepares a powerpoint presentation of no longer than 15 minutes to be presented at the seminar (presentation template to be provided)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After the presentation of the respondent's paper, time will be set aside for an open discussion by the participants of the seminar.• The paper and the respondent's remarks will be published in the Proceedings of the Seminar. The Commissions will have until December 2026 to complete the editing of the papers and the responses.
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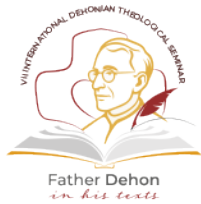
RESEARCH STUDY

The Seminar will explore the implied authorial presence of Léon Dehon in his various writings:

- *Notes Quotidiennes* (1867-1870 and 1886-1890)
- *Notes sur l'histoire de ma vie* (1843 – 1883)
- *Œuvres sociales* (1880s and 1890s)
- *Oeuvres spirituelles* (1890s to 1920)
- Correspondence (1850s to 1925)
- *Les Chroniques du règne* (1889 to 1903)

ALL DOCUMENTS CAN BE FOUND AT DEHONDOCS

[HTTPS://WWW.DEHONDOCSORIGINALS.ORG](https://www.dehondocsoriginals.org)



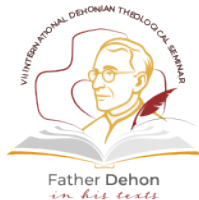
Description of the Seminar Topic

"Dehon in His Texts"

Outside of the record of the memories of those who shared life with Léon Dehon until his death in 1925, we have no other source of knowing our Founder except in what he called his "work/oeuvre" (the Congregation) and his writings. With great care, Dehon's followers have gathered these texts in physical books and now electronically in *Dehondocs*. Now that we are celebrating the centenary of his death and in three years time, the sesquicentennial of the Congregation, it is an opportune time to bring to life the dreams and questions of Léon Dehon that are found in these writings. They bring traces of his vibrant activity configured in the great variety of texts that he left behind as a unique memory. These texts are found in a variety of genres from the journal/diary type of his *Histoire de ma vie* and *Notes quotidiennes* to his social commentary in *Oeuvres spirituelles* to his more than 600 meditations of his spiritual writings to his great number of personal letters and correspondence, and then to his fourteen-year long visionary text of *Le règne* in which he saw the emergence of the Sacred Heart in souls and contemporary societies.

As a way of commemorating the centenary of Dehon's death, the International Dehonian Theological Commission has proposed that for the Theological Seminar of 2026, the continental theological commissions search out the mosaic of the authorial presence of Léon Dehon in his writings. Literary theorists, such as Wayne Booth, call the presence of the author within a text the "implied author". This is not necessarily the same as the 'flesh and blood' Dehon but the Dehon as he wove himself into the texture of his writings. Dehon wrote his texts within a certain background and horizon of expectation for people of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This is the textual Dehon. Dehon left a variety of traces of himself within his writings which are detectable in the way that the "implied author" addresses his readers. Dehon makes use of a variety of rhetorical devices through which as an implied author, he brings the reader to see reality in a certain way. In the texts that he wrote, we are given an "ideal, literary, created version".

Not only do the texts contain an implied author but the text also constructs the reader of the text. J. P. Tompkins calls this reader in the text the "mock reader". The "mock reader" is an artifact created and controlled by the text. This mock reader is not the real reader but the implied reader. The implied reader understands the meaning of the text and to what the text refers. The real reader may not understand the meaning



of the text. The real reader may have to read the text several times before he or she understands it. The implied reader is the receiver of all the explanations and information provided by the implied author. The reader will be guided by the genre of the text: a journal/diary, social analysis, meditation, letters, a religious reading of the time? What are the questions and answers of the implied author of the text? In what kind of world does the mock reader live? What does it look like? What are its themes?

So the questions in our research will be: "What question was Dehon, through his implied author, trying to answer in his text? What was his answer to the question within the horizon of expectation of the reader, the implied reader, of the late 19th and early 20th centuries?"

In addition to the search for the question and answer of the text, we might want to add a reflection on "What question does the text address to us as readers who live in the 21st century?" That question will not necessarily be the same question as that of the implied author. How does the issue, the question, brought forward by the implied author of the text interact with my/our question today? The question of the text goes beyond the historical horizon of the implied author of the text. We want the text to stir up the imaginations of new readers who have new questions and seek new answers. The interpretation of the text includes our questions and answers.

Suggested Research

1. Each Lead Commission will hold an initial meeting with a member(s) of the Scientific Committee and any additional experts to discuss approach for the applicable area of research by April 30, 2025.
 - Each Lead Commission will undertake an initial analysis within the designated research area. To assist in this analysis, the following questions are offered:
 - i. How many texts are within the research area and what is the period of time in which they were written, e.g. influences, issues, challenges, etc.?
 - ii. What is the genre of the texts, e.g. a journal/diary, social analysis, meditation, letters, a religious reading?
 - iii. Where would you situate these texts in the life of Dehon?

iv. What are your initial reactions to these texts as a whole and what impression are you left with of Dehon?

- In consultation with the member(s) of the Scientific Committee and any additional experts, the Lead Commission will choose to work on a select text or texts, which to them appears the most significant and revealing. In their research, they should justify their choice. For example, the Commission studying Dehon according to his *Oeuvres spirituelles* from the implied author's perspective may opt to explore more extensively the implied author of *Couronnes d'amour* and note differences and/or confirmations from other spiritual texts. The same selection can be made for the other genres.

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2. A first reading of the selected text(s) will be from the implied author's perspective.

- *Note: The implied author's perspective is not necessarily the same as the 'flesh and blood' Dehon but the Dehon as he wove himself into the texture of his writings.*
- To assist in the research, the following questions are offered:
 - i. What is the genre of the text, e.g. a journal/diary, social analysis, meditation, letters, a religious reading of the time and how is it used to persuade the reader?
 - ii. At what stage in his life did Dehon, as the implied author, write the text? What or whom are the influences on his writing?
 - iii. How does Dehon, as the implied author, weave himself into the texture of this text?
 - iv. What strategies does Dehon, as the implied author, use to convince the reader, e.g. chapter style, use of other writers to support his perspective, genre, etc.?
 - v. Who is Dehon, as the implied author, addressing in the text?
 - vi. What are the questions or issues that Dehon, as the implied author, is seeking to address?
 - vii. Does Dehon answer the questions which he has posed in the text?

viii. How convincing is Dehon, as the implied author, in the text?

- **Suggestion:** The Commissions after a first reading of their texts may choose to work on a select text which to them appears the most significant and revealing. In their text, they should justify their choice. For example, the Commission studying *Dehon according to his Spiritual Writings* from the implied author's perspective may opt to explore more extensively the implied author of *Couronnes d'amour* and note differences and/or confirmations from other spiritual texts. The same selection can be made for the other genres.

3. A second reading of the selected text(s) provides a historical horizon within which the selected text can be understood by the mock reader of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

- *Note: The "mock reader" is an artifact created and controlled by the text. This mock reader is not the real reader but the implied reader. The implied reader understands the meaning of the text and to what the text refers. The real reader may not understand the meaning of the text. The real reader may have to read the text several times before he or she understands it. The implied reader is the receiver of all the explanations and information provided by the implied author. The reader will be guided by the genre of the text: a journal/diary, social analysis, meditation, letters, a religious reading of the time? What are the questions and answers of the implied author of the text? In what kind of world does the mock reader live? What does it look like? What are its themes?*
- To assist in the research, the following questions are offered:
 - i. What is the genre of the text, e.g. a journal/diary, social analysis, meditation, letters, a religious reading of the time?
 - ii. What is the historical context in which the mock reader lives? What does it look like? What are its themes?
 - iii. What were the mock reader's issues, challenges and concerns of the time?

- iv. How does Dehon address the mock reader's issues, challenges and concerns of the time?
- v. From a historical perspective, was Dehon successful in addressing the mock reader's concerns and issues?

4. A third reading of the selected text(s) looks at the genesis and effect of the work by us, the readers of today in the 21st century. The third reading seeks to reconstruct the original question which gave rise to the work in relation to our present questions. Is the selected text still understandable? What does it say to a contemporary reader?

- To assist in the research, the following questions are offered:
 - i. What are the issues, challenges and concerns of the 21st century?
 - ii. Is the text still understandable for the 21st century reader?
 - iii. Are Dehon's questions still pertinent in the 21st century? If not, how are they different? What new questions arise in today's context?
 - iv. Are Dehon's answers still relevant and applicable? If yes, how and if not, why? How would the answers change to reflect the 21st century?
 - v. In what way does Dehon's thinking continue to challenge us today?