

NEWSLETTER

July 2026

Issue #1

 @sacredheartdna_



Sacred Heart DNA

SacredHeartDNA is an initiative of the Young Adult and Vocation Ministry Office of the Society of the Sacred Heart, United States – Canada Province.

We are a growing community who collaborate with Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) to organize, facilitate and lead programs for young people (ages 18-35) who are seeking a spiritual community of support as they discern, discover and navigate their life call.

SacredHeartDNA programs are intergenerational, international, intercultural, and interfaith.

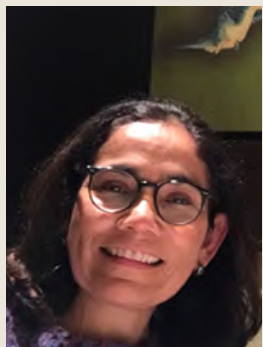
This Week's Highlight: Hearts of Hope 2026

Hearts of Hope 2026 was the International Summer Initiative hosted by SacredHeartDNA, the young adult and vocation ministry of the Society of the Sacred Heart (Religieuses du Sacré-Cœur de Jésus or RSCJ). Held in San Luis Potosí, Mexico, this 10-day gathering brought together young adults (ages 18-35) from across the globe for an immersive leadership conference rooted in spiritual reflection, community building, and social justice.

Guest Speakers

Reyna González, RSCJ

Originally from La Barca, Jalisco, she has 25+ years of experience as an administrator and educator. She created the SacredHeartDNA program and serves as Director of Young Adult and Vocation Ministry for the US-Canada Province.



Carolyn Osiek, RSCJ

Based in the US (Chicago/Texas), she is a distinguished New Testament scholar, author, provincial archivist, and Professor Emerita at Brite Divinity School.



Bonnie Kearney, RSCJ

Originally from Chicago and now living in New Orleans, retired Sacred Heart educator and administrator with a lifelong career in school ministry, now active in youth engagement, reading, and the arts.



Urszula Krajewska, RSCJ

From Poland, she works as a lawyer and advocacy officer for the Jesuit Refugee Service in Warsaw, focusing on migrant support, youth ministry, and digital outreach.



Imma de Stefanis, RSCJ

Based in the US with degrees from UC Berkeley and Boston College, she is the cofounder of SHERPA Consulting with 25+ years in education, leadership, and change management.



Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ

Based in the US, she serves as Provincial of the US-Canada Province with a long career in educational leadership, school board trusteeship, and international governance.



Lynne Lieux, RSCJ

Based in the US with extensive work in Missouri, she is a veteran educator, former head of school, and pioneer in educational technology who leads annual service projects in Nicaragua.



Paola Viatore Maset

Born in Rome and currently living in Madrid, she is a Product Marketing Manager leading AI projects in the legal sector, with a background in communications and global volunteer work.



Day 1- Building a Community

Every meaningful journey starts with belonging.

Our first day focused on creating a safe and welcoming environment through our Community Agreements. Rather than establishing rules, we built a shared commitment to respect, openness, and trust.

This foundation allowed everyone to feel heard and valued from the very first day.

Before we could inspire others, we had to first create a community where everyone could flourish.



The Start Of A Community

Participants from Spain, Mexico, France, United States, South Korea, and Poland gathered in San Luis Potosí for a leadership program.

Day 2- Knowing Ourselves

Leadership begins with self-awareness.

Through reflection, silence, and an activity of mapping our lives, we explored our own stories while listening to those of others. We were reminded that every individual brings unique experiences that shape the way they teach, lead, and serve.

One powerful lesson emerged:

The better we understand ourselves, the better we can understand others.

**Diane Roche,
RSCJ & Bonnie
Kearney, RSCJ**



***"The only thing more dangerous
than an unanswered question is an
unquestioned answer" - Bonnie
Kearney, RSCJ***



Day 3- Redefining Leadership

What makes someone a leader?

This question guided an engaging day filled with teamwork, movement, creative challenges, and honest conversations.

We discovered that leadership is not defined by titles or authority. Instead, it is about:

- * Knowing when to lead and when to follow
- * Thinking creatively
- * Learning from failure
- * Encouraging others to grow
- * Building strong teams through collaboration



“Leadership begins with knowing ourselves, recognizing the gifts we have been given, and having the courage to place those gifts at the service of others.” - Reyna Gonzalez, RSCJ

Day 4- A Shared Vision

Communities thrive when they dream together.

On our fourth day together, we explored how vision shapes leadership and how our role as educators extends beyond the classroom into our communities.

This was also a day of beautiful culture celebration and exchange. We were hosted at a local restaurant to gather and celebrate the conclusion of the World Cup. Spain's win was especially meaningful due to our Spain based participant.

Celebrations continued that evening with Cultural Night, where participants proudly shared their traditions, stories, music, and cultures.

The evening reminded us that diversity is not something to overcome—it is something to celebrate.

Different cultures.
Different perspectives.
One shared mission.



Cultural Sharing



“Where there is no vision, the people perish” - Proverbs 29:18

Day 5- Service That Transforms



At the core of Sacred Heart education is service.

Inspired by the story of the Good Samaritan, we reflected on solidarity, compassion, and walking alongside those who need us most.



Service was presented not as a one-sided act of charity, but as an opportunity for mutual transformation. This was brought to life in our journey to Iyolosiwa, a youth program born of the community, by the community, for the community.



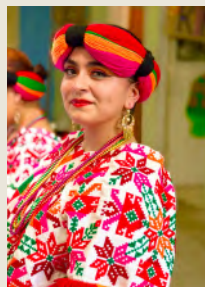
Iyolosiwa Popular Education

“Solidarity begins when we move beyond simply seeing the needs of others and choose to walk with them, listen deeply, and recognize that their lives are connected to ours.” - Reyna Gonzalez, RSCJ

Another Iyolosiwa program we learned about was Amor Por la Lectura (Love for Reading), a pedagogical program that trains teachers and links children with books to improve reading comprehension and critical thinking. Make them fall in love with reading.

As we reflected together, one message stayed with us:

The peace you bring into the lives of others has the power to transform your own.



Day 6- Communicating in a Changing World

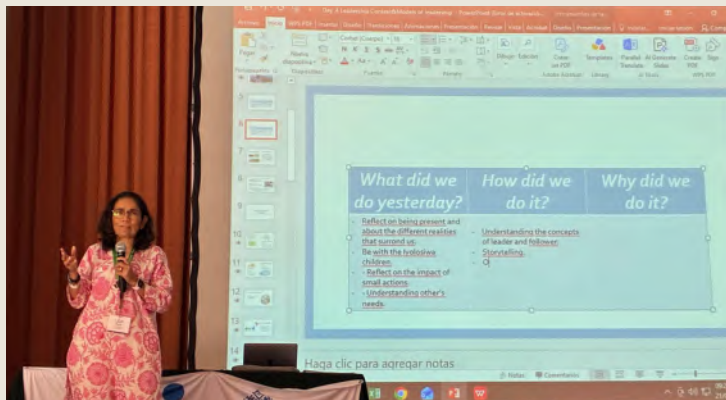
Today's educators face new opportunities and new responsibilities.

Our workshop on Communication and Artificial Intelligence challenged us to think critically about how technology can enhance learning while preserving what matters most: authentic human relationships.

Later, we collectively reflected upon Pope Leo's statements, reflections, and concerns regarding AI and its possible effects on humanity.

These lessons served as a reminder that education is not only about information—it is about dialogue, and that it is our duty to honor human dignity above all else.

“In the era of artificial intelligence, when human dignity is threatened by new forms of dehumanization, ours is the pressing duty to remain profoundly human.” - Pope Leo XIV, Magnifica Humanitas



Day 7- Looking Ahead

As the week came to a close, we reflected upon all that we had learned while knowing there is still much more ahead of us. Through conversations about leadership, open dialogue, and intergenerational learning, we considered the educators we hope to become.

We reflected on the importance of listening across generations and recognized that wisdom grows when experiences are shared. These lessons were highlighted in Zoom conversations with a number of RSCJ.

We also reflected on the leadership of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, Philippine Duchesne, and Janet Erskine Stuart. Sophie's leadership was marked by relationships and a bold commitment to forming others, Philippine's by the courage to embrace uncertainty with faith, and Janet's by the patience and vision to lead with hope and inspire lasting transformation.

This past week reminded us that leadership is never about standing above others, it is about walking with them.



“Listening starts in silence.”
- Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ



Day 8 - Sophie's Gift & Becoming a Young Adult Educator

Leadership grows through community, presence, and shared values.

We reflected on the Sacred Heart Apostolic Priorities and how generosity, solidarity, and hospitality shape the way we lead. We also identified personal values such as service, honesty, humility, gratitude, and respect.

We explored Sophie's Gift and discovered that education is a process of humanization—one that calls us to recognize the dignity of every person, cultivate compassion, and help others grow. We reflected on how humanization enables us to become leaders who lead with empathy, authenticity, and a genuine commitment to serving others.

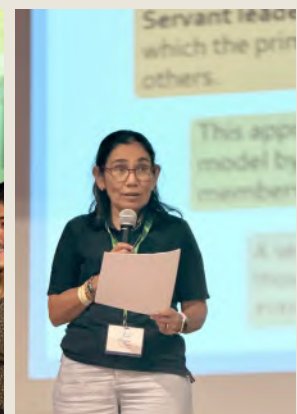
To deepen our experience, we also participated in a traditional Mexican callejoneada, connecting with the city's rich culture, history, and traditions while strengthening our sense of community. These experiences reminded us that leadership is not only about what we achieve, but about how we help others feel welcomed, supported, valued, and able to flourish.



Mexican Callejoneada



"The Glory of God is a human being fully alive"
- St. Irenaeus



Day 9 - Spiritual & Ethical Dimensions of Leadership

Values and ethics in leadership, reminds us that values provide the foundation for who we are, while ethics guide how we put those values into action.

This day we reflected on the idea that actions speak louder than words and that authentic leadership is demonstrated through the choices we make every day, especially when facing difficult situations.

It was made known that leadership is not only about achieving results but also about growing in empathy, compassion, self-awareness, and respect for the dignity of every person. We explored how ethics helps ensure that our actions remain aligned with our mission, allowing us to lead with integrity and purpose.

Through discussions on ethical dilemmas and decision-making processes, we recognized the importance of carefully evaluating situations, considering the impact of our decisions on others, and choosing what is right rather than what is easiest. We also reflected on our personal leadership commitments, identifying concrete ways we can live our values consistently in our schools, communities, and daily lives.

Integrity becomes visible when our words, decisions, and actions remain consistent, even in challenging moments. Ethical leadership requires responsibility, honesty, respect, accountability, and the courage to remain faithful to our values. Ultimately, we learned that our lives communicate more than our words, and when we lead with authenticity, we inspire trust, credibility, confidence, and hope in those around us.



Leadership without values, lacks direction.

Leadership without ethics, lacks credibility



Day 10- Power, Gender & Culture Solidarity

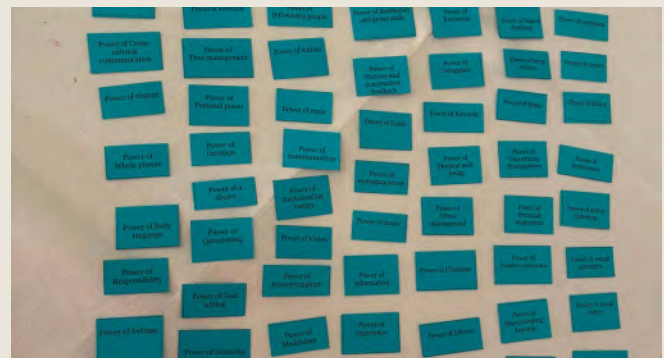
Power must be viewed through the lenses of leadership, gender, and cultural solidarity.

Day 10 asked us to reflect on power not as a way to control others, but as a responsibility that can be used to serve, empower, and create positive. We explored the various types of power and learned to recognize the sources of influence we already possess, whether through our knowledge, relationships, values, or actions.

We also reflected on the factors that can cause us to lose or misuse our power, recognizing the importance of self-awareness, emotional regulation, and integrity in maintaining positive influence.

Sr. Imma also highlighted how gender and power are closely connected, encouraging us to recognize barriers, stereotypes, and inequalities while promoting leadership opportunities rooted in dignity, equity, and respect.

Finally, we explored the relationship between culture and power, understanding how cultural backgrounds shape perspectives, leadership styles, communication, and inclusion. Practicing cultural solidarity means valuing diversity, listening to different voices, and using our influence to build communities where everyone has the opportunity to contribute and flourish.



Powerful or Powerless?



What We Take With Us

This experience was about much more than leadership development. It was about becoming part of a global community connected by shared values.

As we look towards our final days together, we are reinvigorated by the spirit of the Sacred Heart DNA:

- Building communities where everyone belongs
- Leading with humility and compassion
- Reflecting before acting
- Celebrating diversity
- Serving with generosity
- Communicating with purpose
- Believing that education has the power to change lives

These lessons will continue long after Hearts of Hope 2026 has ended, as this education does not exist in isolation. We will carry our knowledge into every classroom, every conversation, every decision, and every community we become part of, because it is forever in our DNA.



**From SLP to
the world...**

Until We Meet Again

This was more than a training program.

It was 10 days of shared stories, meaningful conversations, cultural exchange, laughter, challenges, reflection, and growth.

Thank you to every facilitator, speaker, organizer, and participant who made this experience unforgettable.

No matter where we came from, we leave connected by one mission:

To educate with heart, to lead with courage, and to make a difference in the lives of others.

Once Sacred Heart DNA... always **Sacred Heart DNA.** 



***No es adiós, es
hasta luego***



*"It is better to begin a great
work than to finish a small
one."*

— Janet Erskine Stuart



**Newsletter made by SacredHeart
DNA, Hearts of Hope participants.**