

deepening questions

FOR REFLECTION ON THE HISTORY OF ENSLAVEMENT BY THE SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART

This is a moment of truth-telling.

In this moment, each one of us who plays a part in the story of the Society of the Sacred Heart is invited to learn more about the enslavement and racial injustice practiced by the Society throughout its history.

Our commitment to discovering and revealing God's love in the heart of the world calls us, in this moment, to face with courage and compassion the hard truths that we may find there. The truth we discover today is this: our history and present are bound up together, and the legacy of our ancestors is indelibly part of our own story. The stories of our own history are speaking to us today, calling each one of us to reflect on our own place in this ongoing, ever-unfolding story.

The following questions are offered as an accompaniment to an individual or collective reading of this material. You are encouraged to use these questions to deepen your reading and prayer and to help direct your individual or collective reflection.

May the boundless love and compassion of the pierced Hearts of Jesus and Mary be reflected in and through us as we confront the truth of our history.

As I prepare to enter into this reading,

I ask my heart to show me the truth of who I am and where I stand:

Where does my personal story fit into the collective story of the Society of the Sacred Heart?

From my perspective, who are the protagonists in that story?

When I reflect on how I use the words "we" and "us," who do I naturally include in that circle?

Who do I tend to exclude from it?

As I begin to read these narratives of our history,

I ask my heart to open wide in love:

How are all of these ancestors' stories speaking to me in this moment?

With reverence and compassion, I pay attention to the emotions I am experiencing.

How is my heart responding to what I am reading?

What is being broken apart as I read these narratives? What is being broken open?

As I contemplate these narratives in my own time and place,

I ask my heart to direct me to a place of hope:

What new and radical forms of love are being made possible for me in this space of breaking-open and breaking-apart?

What is being freed within me in this encounter with the truth?

How am I being called to reach within and beyond myself to join the work of collective truth-telling, repair, reconciliation, and healing?

