

Message for the Solemnity of St. Arnold Janssen
January 15, 2023

May the **Heart** of **JESUS**
live in the hearts
of all people.

- St. Arnold Janssen

Dear confreres, Sisters, Mission Partners,
Benefactors, Friends and Relatives,

One of the spiritual legacies of our Founder, Saint Arnold Janssen, is his prayer:
"May the Heart of Jesus live in the hearts of all people."

The heart of Jesus is a heart rooted in his intimate relationship with the Father and his loving embrace of humanity, a heart full of humility and compassion, a heart that rejoices in the Lord and beats for the suffering humanity and the world, a heart that is united with the Lord and feels the pain of the world. If this heart lives in us, we become missionary disciples who are faithful to the Word, and one, in solidarity with the people. Saint Arnold passed on to us this prayer and is teaching us this prayer with his life.

Without closing our eyes to the many failures, we have all the reasons to thank the Lord. As we pray, "May the Heart of Jesus live in the hearts of all people," we are grateful for the members of the three congregations founded by Saint Arnold and the lay mission partners who share his missionary spirituality. We witness how the heart of Jesus is living in our hearts, inspiring our life and mission.

Between Christmas and New Year, I visited Ukraine, which is part of the SVD Polish Province. With General Councilor Eryk Koppa and Krzysztof Malejko, the JPIC Coordinator, I met the three confreres working in three parishes: Verboviets, Struga and Nova Uszyca, and the SSPS Sisters in two communities, in Wierzbowiec and Boryspolu, Kyiv. The decision of the confreres and the Sisters to stay with the people in this time of war, in this dark period of their lives, is very much appreciated by the people and the bishop. They provide the necessary help for the locals and refugees from other parts of the country. They also accompany many families who are mourning the loss of their loved ones. Furthermore, they counsel men between 18 and 60 who are called to the military service and have to say goodbye to their young children or aging parents. In such a situation, the presence of our missionaries is significant because it gives witness to the Heart of Jesus, who embraces all with their concerns and does not leave anyone alone in times of difficulties.



The COVID-19 Pandemic and the wars in different parts of the world, including the war in Ukraine, reveal the deep crisis the world and humanity are going through. At the same time, we also see how moral institutions such as religions are losing their authority. Moreover, we constantly witness with consternation how climate continues to affect many places worldwide. Indeed, our world is wounded by all these crises.

The crisis of human hearts made all these possible. These are hearts that are incapable of sharing the pains and joys of others. These are hearts imprisoned in their interest and concerns. What humanity and the world are in dire need of is a conversion of hearts. Converted hearts are compassionate and generous, eager to feel and share with others. These hearts are free and always ready to work towards the common good. Our wounded world can only be healed by those whose hearts can live in solidarity with others and care for nature.

We believe, as Saint Arnold did, that this is only possible if the heart of Jesus lives in our hearts, when we are immersed in the love and goodness of the Triune God. In his speech to the capitulars of the 17th General Chapter in Nemi in 2012, the late Pope Benedict reminded us of the generosity of God as the source of mission. God is the "bonum diffusivum sui," a goodness that has an inherent need to be communicated, to be given. It cannot remain in itself; what is good, the goodness itself is essentially communicatio. ... This Trinitarian mystery is disseminated in the history of salvation and in our need to give others the good that we have received." Therefore, Pope Benedict assures us that "missionary dynamism is only alive if there is the joy of the Gospel if we experience the goodness that comes from God that must and wants to be communicated."

Dear confreres, Sisters, Mission Partners, Benefactors,
Friends and Relatives,

May the celebration of the Feast Day of Saint Arnold Janssen, the founder of our three congregations and the inspiration of our mission partners, help us in the way of conversion of hearts so that the darkness of sins, the night of egoism and greed, vanish before the light of the Word and the spirit of grace. May the heart of Jesus live in our hearts and the hearts of all people.

Happy Feast Day of
Saint Arnold to you all.

Fr. Paulus Budi Kleiden, svd
Superior General
Society of the Divine Word

