



Dear SVD Partners in Mission,

On this the feast day of the Sacred Heart, I send greetings to you all! Our founder, Saint Arnold Janssen, had a special devotion to the Sacred Heart. His devotion is evident in his prayer that the “Heart of Jesus lives in the heart of all.”

In the May issue of *Arnoldus Nota*, the international internal newsletter of the Society of the Divine Word, our leadership team (Father Heinz Kulüke, SVD, and the General Council) spoke about the revitalization of the Society of the Divine Word in Europe. I want to share with you a few paragraphs in which they address the role of you—the laity—as significant members of our family.

### **Sharing mission with the laity**

“It is not possible to perceive the history and presence of our congregation in Europe without special reference to the laity. It is true that since the beginning of the SVD, the laity were always present in our life and missionary service, as teachers, employees or collaborators of the mission. Yet above all, it was in the last decades that they came to occupy a central part in our mission.

“The existence of organized groups in many provinces/regions is a positive sign. We encounter lay groups inspired by the charism of St. Arnold Janssen, working in parishes, involved in missionary animation, sending lay missionaries to other continents, praying with us, helping us maintain the structures and pastoral services, etc.

“We corroborate with joy that the SVD family is much more than its members. We are aware of the existence of a vast network of colleagues, friends, and supporters of our mission causes. We would like to continue working with this wide network in order to maximize collaboration, meet and share mission among all. In this task it is fundamental to respect their vocation and to recognize their specific role in the life of the church, without paternalism or discrimination on our part.”

This summer, let us continue to share the charism of our founder, let us support each other in our missionary service, and let us call forth others to embrace and celebrate the Heart of Jesus in the hearts of all.

Please feel free to contact me at [missionusc@gmail.com](mailto:missionusc@gmail.com) if you know of others who would like to share and be enriched in our spirituality.

Blessings,  
Brother Bernie Spitzley, SVD