

ST. ARNOLD JANSSEN
SPIRITUALITY CORNER REFLECTION

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“Spirituality”



The following is taken from a paper by Father Tony Pernia, SVD, about some fundamental conversions needed for us to be part of God's mission today. The Lenten Season may be a good time to review them and convert where it is necessary:

From Activism to Contemplation.

Very often we are very “Pelagian” in our way of doing mission. We act as if mission depends more on our efforts than on God's grace.

From Individualism to Collaboration.

Indeed, very often, we do our work, and do it well, but it is our work and no one else's.

From Superiority to Humility.

This entails that today the missionary is called to evangelize from a position of powerlessness, lowliness and humility. He or she will not seek power – economic, cultural, technological, or even media power. The only power he or she will need is the power of the Word and of the Spirit. And that power is the power of love, which is manifested in self-giving.

From only evangelizing to also being evangelized.

Dialogue underlines the fact that the Spirit is at work in the people being evangelized as well as in the evangelizers, and that mission is a two-way exchange of gifts between missionaries and the people with whom they work. They must be prepared to change and be changed, to form and be formed, to invite to conversion and be converted.

From Burden to Privilege.

A fifth conversion is from undertaking mission as a sacrifice or a burden to experiencing it as a privilege and a gift. As St. Joseph Freinademetz, our first SVD missionary to China, wrote in one of his letters to his family: “I cannot thank the Lord enough for having made me a missionary in China” ... “When I think of the countless graces that I have received and continue to receive until now from God ... I confess that I could cry. The most beautiful vocation in the world is being a missionary”.