

APPOINTMENT AS VICAR APOSTOLIC OF SOUTH SHANTONG

In the second document issued on January 12, 1886, Fr. John Baptist Anzer was appointed Vicar Apostolic of South Shantung. The document reads as follows: “To our beloved son, John Baptist Anzer, priest of the Steyl Mission house. Leo XIII. Pope.

Beloved son! Greetings and apostolic blessing. Since our apostolic office has entrusted to us the task of looking after all the churches, we always, according to circumstances and the times, take great care for their well-being and to provide good leadership for them. Therefore it seemed to us to be useful in the Lord, to divide the Apostolic Vicariate of Shantung into two and to create a new Vicariate of ‘South Shantung’. You, beloved son, have already administered the office of pro-vicar in that southern region in a praiseworthy manner. So, according to the advice of our venerable brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, who have been entrusted with carrying out the administrative tasks connected with the spread of holy Faith, we have now decided that you, beloved son will be chosen as Vicar Apostolic of the new Vicariate. Through a similar document issued by us today we have already appointed you titular bishop of the church of Telepte. At the same time we now choose and appoint you and place you in charge as Vicar Apostolic of the new Vicariate of South Shantung with all the necessary and appropriate powers. We therefore order all those concerned that they, by virtue of this letter, receive and admit you as ‘Vicar Apostolic’ of the already mentioned new Vicariate of ‘South Shantung’ and that they will help you and be at your service. They must obey you and receive your salvific admonitions respectfully and effectively; and the judgment you make over the recalcitrant or which you lawfully decide, we will confirm and in the strength of the Lord we will see to it that it will be observed inviolably in accordance with worthy satisfaction.

Given at Rome at St. Peters’ under the fisherman’s ring on January 12, 1886, in the eighth year of our pontificate” (“Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote” [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart], vol 13, No. 6, March 1886, pp. 45-46).

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

These documents having been issued, the Founder could “go public and tell the happy news to the entire world: ‘After ten years of existence, the Mission House in Steyl has its own independent mission territory with its own SVD bishop.’” (Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 187).

DATE OF EPISCOPAL ORDINATION

January 24, 1886 was decided upon as the day of the Episcopal ordination of Fr. Anzer. Archbishop Krementz of Cologne was invited as principal consecrator, and co-adjutor Bishop Boermanns of Roermond and Bishop Korum of Trier as co-consecrators.



EPISCOPAL COAT OF ARMS

As his coat of arms bishop elect Anzer had chosen a picture of the Holy Spirit as a dove. Underneath was his motto written in Latin: *Esto lux et fortitudo mea* which means: Be my light and my strength!.



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The Arnoldus Family Story

ARNOLD JANSSEN IN ROME

In October 1885 Frs. Arnold and John Baptist Anzer had travelled to Rome. Their goal had been the separation of the South Shantung mission from the Apostolic Vicariate of Shantung and the establishment of a new Apostolic Vicariate entrusted to the SVD under an SVD Vicar Apostolic and Bishop.

They were supported by an old acquaintance of Fr. Arnold, the former archbishop of Cologne and now Cardinal Paulus Melchers, who for some months had been living and working in Rome. To help bring about the decision, in the spring of 1885 Fr. Janssen had already sent “a detailed folder with the development of the territory up to the present time, including the long drawn-out negotiations with the Franciscans, and the candidates he himself suggested for the office of vicar apostolic. Anzer was clearly preferred before Joseph Freinademetz and Anton Wewel” (Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Nettetal, Steyler Verlag, 2002, p. 186).

Success

On December 10, 1885 the cardinals of the propaganda met and decided the establishment of the Apostolic Vicariate of South Shantung and the appointment of Fr. Anzer as Vicar Apostolic. In the afternoon of that day Fr. Arnold heard of the cardinals’ decision “who all had been very much satisfied with the report they had received and who had unanimously decided in favor of the Society [of the Divine Word] (Hermann auf der Heide, *Die Missionsgesellschaft von Steyl, Ein Bild der ersten 25 Jahre ihres Bestehens* [The Mission Society of Steyl. A picture of the first 25 years of its existence], Steyl 1900, p. 95).

On December 13 Pope Leo XIII confirmed the decision of the cardinals.

Fr. Arnold received by Pope Leo XIII

On December 10, 1885 Pope Leo XIII received Fr. Arnold in private audience. “It was not all pious chat; concrete matters were also discussed”. Fr. Arnold remembers: “When I was received in private audience by His Holiness Pope Leo XIII on 10 December 1885, His Holiness asked me if we would be ready to take over a mission in a German-African protectorate as well” (Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, pp. 186-187). It was at that time that the German government had declared South West Africa, Togo, Cameroun and territories in East Africa (Tanzania) a German protectorate.

Also important....

TELEGRAMS TO STEYL AND CHINA

On December 14 Fr. Arnold heard of the Pope's confirmation of the Cardinals' decision. "It was time to inform Steyl as soon as possible of the good news. And on that same December 14 Fr. Arnold sent a telegram to Steyl with the two words: 'Anzer episcopus' [Anzer bishop]. This news electrified the students and all the residents of the Steyl mission house were most happy" (*Auf der Heide, Die Missionsgesellschaft von Steyl*, p. 95) Everybody rushed to the church in order to thank the Lord with an enthusiastic *Te Deum* for the proofs of his love and mercy!

On December 18 Fr. Arnold sent a telegram to China. "Freinademetz, Tsining, Anzer Bishop". However, that telegram arrived there only on December 25, 1885 (*Arnold Janssen, Letters to China*, vol. I, Ed. Jos.Alt., transl. Frank Mihalic, Vincent Fecher, vol. I, Rome, 2002, p. 166).

LETTER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE PROPAGANDA TO FR. ARNOLD

With great joy the undersigned secretary of Propaganda can inform your Reverence that in an audience of the current week the Holy Father approved the decisions of the general assembly of the cardinals of December 10 of this month, and he graciously established a new apostolic vicariate, that is of South Shantung. He entrusts it to the well deserving Steyl institute for foreign missions and he appoints as vicar apostolic with episcopal rank the Rev. John Baptist Anzer, who as Pro-Vicar has already worked and suffered so much for the spread of the holy Faith in those regions.

With regard to the borders of the new vicariate the Holy Father, following the vote of the cardinals of Propaganda, decided that not only the three Fu or civil prefectures of Yenchofu, Itchofu and Zautchofu would be entrusted to it, but also the region of Tsinngzho, which your Reverence in your cautious and modest request had wanted to renounce.... In the meantime it is my pleasure, with regard to the above-mentioned decisions of the Holy Father, to convey to you, Reverend Father, and to your well deserving institute, and in particular to the newly elected, the congratulations of his Eminence the Cardinal Prefect and my own. Such a success honors the institute and your wise and zealous direction of it and will certainly all the more kindle the good spirit amongst the young group of missionaries which, to the joy of the supreme office for the spread of the holy Faith, has joined the laborers for the Gospel whom it sends to the missions. With God's grace may the young group greatly increase in number. Then Propaganda will joyfully assign it new places for apostolic work. Finally it is my pleasure to be able to express anew on this occasion my sentiments of special respect for you.

Rome, December 18, 1885 + Dominicus Jacobini, Archbishop of Tyre (in "Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote" [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart], vol. 13, No. 5, February 1886).

STATISTICS OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC VICARIATE

When Frs. John Baptist Anzer and Joseph Freinademetz started mission work in South Shantung on January 18, 1882, there were 158 Christians belonging to a single mission station, Puoli. At the end of 1885 the statistics showed: 700 baptized Christians, 3500 children baptized in danger of death, 3000 catechumens, 32 cate-

chists, 20 seminarians. Furthermore the mission was caring for 60 orphans (Richard Hartwich SVD, *Steyler Missionare in China*, Bd. I, *Missionarische Erschließung Südshantungs* [Steyl missionaries in China, vol. I, Missionary Opening of South Shantung] 1879-1903, Rome 1983, p. 98).

Return to Steyl

On December 19 Fr. Arnold began his return journey to Steyl. He interrupted his journey in Florence in order to meet with the Franciscan Fr. Jeiler who lived near Florence. "On 2 October he had sent Fr. Jeiler the Latin Rule of the First General Chapter drawn up in September 'with the urgent request to check through the same with your trained eye and mature judgment, the more carefully the better, and then send it back to me with your suggestions about changes together with your overall opinion'" (Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, p. 187).

Death of Msgr. Dr. Ludwig von Essen

The beginning of the history of the Steyl mission organization is connected with the parish priest of Neuwerk, Dr. Ludwig von Essen. He was a man most enthusiastic about missionary work and he had already undertaken first steps for the foundation of a German mission house and received the Pope's blessing for it. In his presbytery Fr. Arnold met the Prefect Apostolic of Hong Kong, Raimondi. Raimondi encouraged both men to cooperate, but it only came to a rather tense and temporally limited cooperation between Fr. Arnold and Dr. von Essen. On the occasion of his death on January 6, 1886 we read in the "Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote", [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart], March 1886: "On January 6, after a short illness, Rev. Dr. Ludwig von Essen, died in Neuwerk, district of Mönchen Gladbach, parish priest there and honorary papal prelate. He was 55 years old. In some ways he participated – even though in a more reserved way, in the foundation of the Mission House during the years 1875 to 1876, when he voluntarily withdrew. At the opening of the mission house on September 8, 1875 he celebrated the solemn high Mass. May the Lord reward him for everything! We urgently recommend him to the prayers of our readers and friends."

On the way to the Episcopal Ordination in Steyl

Before Fr. Anzer could be ordained bishop, the following three documents had to be issued: Establishment of the Apostolic Vicariate of South Shantung, Appointment as titular bishop of Telepte and appointment as Vicar Apostolic of South Shantung.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE APOSTOLIC VICARIATE OF SOUTH SHANTUNG

On January 8, 1886 the document establishing the Apostolic Vicariate of South Shantung was issued.

APPOINTMENT AS TITULAR BISHOP OF TELEPTE

On January 12, 1886 two documents were issued. In the first Fr. Anzer was appointed titular bishop of Telepte in Northern Africa. Hundreds of years earlier Telepte had been an Episcopal see, but was conquered by the Moslems and was an Episcopal see in name only. Fr. Anzer was ordained bishop of this nominal Episcopal see and had the title of rightful Bishop of Telepte, (he was titular bishop) and he did not have to live or work there.