

A new building project

Besides working for a mission territory to be administered by his missionaries, at that time another big project was on Fr. Arnold's mind: the building of a new big church in Steyl. He was also concerned about this project while staying in Rome and because of it he several times met the priest Dr. Prill who came from the archdiocese of Cologne, Germany. On February 10th he wrote to his brother about his meeting with Dr. Prill, "who, as you know is working on the plans for our church. I ask you to pray for the success of this project with the students".

At that time the mission house owned only a small plot of land between the river Maas and the public road. The terrain available for building a big church was rather small. Therefore, Fr. Prill suggested to Fr. Arnold a double church, that means two churches one above the other. Fr. Prill made the ground plan for such a church (Johannes Kraus, *Kirchen und Andachtsstätten in St. Michael zu Steyl* [churches and religious sites in St. Michael/Steyl] in Miss, Hopster, Kraus, Steyl, *Zur Geschichte von St. Michael* [Steyl, contribution to the history of St. Michael] Rome, 1980, p. 101).

WORDS OF FR. ARNOLD JANSSEN FOR THE NEW YEAR

What has the year 1881 in store for us?
That is still hidden in the womb of the future.
Whatever is going to happen, we know that the old God
is alive and that for those, who love him,
all things will work for the good.

THEREFORE, LET US GO INTO THE NEW YEAR
FULL OF CONFIDENCE.

(Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote – Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart, January 1881)



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The Arnoldus Family Story

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE "KLEINER HERZ-JESU-BOTE" – "LITTLE MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART"

With this first issue of the "Arnoldus Family Story" of January 2016, we have arrived at the month of January 1881 in our "Arnoldus Family Story". That month began the eighth year of the publication of Fr. Arnold's mission magazine, "Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote" – "Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart" and it led Fr. Arnold to reflect on the magazine's importance during the previous seven years: "Certainly the Lord God blessed the *Little Messenger* in that time; for it has become the means to start the mission house and to sustain it so far. Isn't that a blessing of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus? Therefore, may all of us confidently place everything always under this Heart's protection; there everything is safe and protected!

Let us go on then in the name of the Divine Heart of Jesus! So much is still to be done for us."

TROUBLED TIMES AHEAD FOR FR. ARNOLD

In order to be able to run the seminary academically, Fr. Arnold had employed a number of diocesan priests who could not be employed in their home dioceses because of the Kulturkampf (cultural war). They were about 8-10 priests who formed a "separate group, with their own refectory". Thanks to them it had been possible to free Frs. Anzer and Freinademetz for missionary work in China in 1879. The group's "relationship to the rest of the community was a bit awkward" (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Arnoldus Press Manila, 1975, p. 154). The winter semester 1880/81 began on October 9, 1880 and from that time on these priests began to turn openly against the founder. "When repeal of the repressive religious [cultural war] laws in Germany seemed imminent, and hopes were raised for an early return to their own dioceses, they grew restless. At first they had accepted the house routine without complaint, but now they found it too strict" (*ibid.*). Fr. Nikolaus Blum, who after Fr. Arnold's death became his successor, wrote in his diary: Especially from 1880-1881 there was the "opposition to the Rector among the teachers who were not members of the community, that is, they found fault with the teaching plan and the seminary routine. They were dissatisfied with everything – the teaching methods – the students – the daily order – the menu, etc." (quoted in Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p. 138). According to Fr. Alt, this was the "second catastrophe" for Fr. Arnold (*ibid.*); the first had been the opposition by Fr. Bill and

seminarians Reichart and Anzer in 1875/1876 which ended with the departure of Bill and Reichart.

FR. ARNOLD'S SECOND JOURNEY TO ROME

On the way to Rome

Letters from the Minister General of the Franciscans, Fr. Bernardino, of December 15, 1880 and the Prefect of Propaganda, Card. Simeoni, of December 31, 1880 convinced Fr. Arnold that the time had come for him to personally negotiate in Rome regarding Steyl's own mission territory in China.

On January 24, 1881 he left Steyl; his first stop was Roermond where he wanted to ask Bishop Paredis of Roermond for his blessing for the journey. There, however, a surprise was waiting for him. For the new papal Internuncio to the Netherlands had been asked by Propaganda to collect extensive information about the mission house in Steyl and Rector Janssen. The Internuncio then asked Bishop Paredis to arrange a "discreet" meeting between "the rector and himself so he could discharge his delicate [molto delicato] assignment. Accordingly, Fr. Janssen had now to relate the story of his undertaking to the papal representative in the Bishop's presence. The internuncio learned everything he and the officials of the Propaganda wanted to know. Bishop Paredis vouched for the truth of what Janssen said. On all important matters affecting the seminary, Father Janssen had consulted the Bishop. The latter spoke of the rector with high praise. He was respected and loved by the clergy and the laity. If any fault was to be found at all, it was the excessive strictness with which he insisted on his orders to be observed" (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, p. 138).

From Roermond Fr. Arnold travelled via Belgium and France to Turin, "where he notified the Salesians of his coming. On Sunday, 30 January, he had the chance to speak to their founder, Don Bosco" (*ibid.*). On Tuesday, February 1, he arrived in Rome. There he was able to lodge in the German college, the Anima. Since the purpose of the journey had been the negotiations about Steyl receiving its own mission territory in China, in Steyl itself, on "the following day, the feast of the Purification", a thirteen-hour adoration was held "for China."

Negotiations with the Minister General of the Franciscans

On Thursday, February 3, Fr. Arnold met with the Minister General of the Franciscans, Fr. Bernardino. There he learned that the "General had received word from China that 'several missionaries and Christians have expressed opposition to a large division of the territory. The Christians always had Franciscans as pastors and don't want anyone else'" (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, p. 138). Finally, the Minister General and Fr. Arnold agreed among other things on the following: The vicar apostolic of Shantung gives to the missionaries of Steyl the prefectures of Yenchowfu, Tsaichowfu and Ichowfu as their areas of missionary work. "The missionaries are under the jurisdiction of the vicar apostolic until such time as the Propaganda sees fit to elevate the new mission to the rank of an apostolic vicariate. The rector [of Steyl] may propose one of his own priests to the vicar apostolic as pro-vicar. The vicar apostolic will exercise his jurisdiction over the missionaries in the new mission through this pro-vicar."

"Both groups of missionaries will be united in fraternal love; they will cultivate good relations in order to attain their common objective – the honor of God and the salvation of souls" (*ibid.*). On February 11 the Minister General sent the agreement to Propaganda which two weeks later gave its written approval (*ibid.*, p. 139).

Fr. Arnold's busy schedule in Rome

On February 4th, Fr. Arnold wrote to his brother John in Steyl: "I have to make many visits and since the people are often not at home and the city is very big, much time is wasted. I am on my feet all day and in the evenings I am very tired" (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 181).

In a letter of February 10th Fr. Arnold wrote to his brother John: "Thank God, I am well. Every morning I celebrate Mass in different places; for instance, in a sanctuary over the relics of a saint. Yesterday I said Mass in the room where St. Ignatius wrote his Rule, and today at the tomb of the holy Apostles Philip and James. If the place is far from the Anima and I have to make a visit in the vicinity, I buy a [bread] roll in a shop or take a cup of coffee in an osteria. This does not cost very much. I have many visits to make and often I have to go back two or three times. This takes much time. I am on my feet from early in the morning to 7.30 in the evening. In the afternoon after dinner, I like to go to St. Peter's to pray at the tomb of the holy apostles for as long as my time permits. There I offer all of you and your intentions to God and pray for a real apostolic spirit and the great grace of true contrition of heart for you all. When I turn in spirit to Steyl, the number of those for whom I must pray is very great and I remember you all, priests, candidates, postulants and workers. So there is always much to pray for!" (*ibid.*, p. 181-182).

The people Fr. Arnold visited

Who exactly were the people whom Fr. Arnold visited in Rome? In Fr. Arnold's letter of February 10th to his brother John mentioned above, he wrote about his visit to the Roman residence of the Paris Foreign Mission Society where he met two bishops from China. From them he hoped to get better acquainted with the "conditions in the Chinese missions" (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, p. 139). He also attended "a general papal audience. Though he was in a very great hurry, the Holy Father blessed the objects I held up and imparted his apostolic blessing to the Bishop of Roermond, the candidates, and all the residents of the house and our benefactors" (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p.182).

On February 13th Fr. Arnold wrote to his brother John: "Yesterday and the day before, I was with various cardinals of the Propaganda, all of whom received me warmly and most of whom gave me more than half an hour to tell them about our house and the situation in our region. ... Yesterday I spent more than two hours with Fr. Semeenko, the general of the Resurrectionists. Like the general of the Dominicans, he lives on the fourth floor so I pitied him for the many steps he had to climb. After we had spoken for an hour in Latin, we discovered we could also carry on our conversation in German" (*ibid.*, p. 182-183).

deficient course of studies, conspired to make us fail miserably and so put pressure on the Founder. Fr. Arnold was almost reduced to tears by the fiasco of the Easter exams and suffered more than our unfortunate class” (in Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Nettetal, Steyler Verlag, 2002, p. 139).

At least one student, the afore-mentioned Anton Volpert, did not accept that “conspiracy” silently: “I protested against the injustice done and declared that all [students] had fulfilled their duties in their studies. If one had failed in his duties, it was me... and I asked for a penance. The founder of blessed memory acted as if he believed in me being guilty, gave me a penance and admonished me to be zealous. However, he surely saw through my intention to protect my fellow students for altruistic reasons” ((in Johann Kraus SVD, *P. Anton Volpert SVD, 1863-1849, 60 Jahre Missionar in Shantung und Kansu* [Fr. Anton Volpert SVD, 60 years missionary in Shantung and Kansu], *Analecta SVD* -28, Rome 1973, p. 12).

THE FIRST MISSION IN SHANTUNG

Joy and pain in Steyl did not make Arnold Janssen forget his mission in China. So on April 2, 1881 he wrote to Bishop Cosi, OFM who was prepared to give part of the Apostolic Vicariate of Shantung to the Steyl missionaries for mission work: “I have learned with great sorrow”, through a letter from the Bishop, that “your Most Rev. Father General cannot part with any other districts that contain more Catholics nor with any district that lies in the vicinity of [the port city] Chefoo.” For to be near Chefoo would have been helpful for communications with Europe. Experienced missionaries had told him in Rome “that the difficulties are enormous and the hopes very, very small that from such a tiny beginning of 200 Christians the conversion of so many millions would come about.” Together with the Franciscan Superior General he had agreed on conditions and terms of procedure, and he had learned that the Propaganda had approved them in the meantime. “If all these conditions are also agreeable to you, Very Rev. Sir, I humbly request that our mission of South Shantung officially begin on the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus [24 June] which is our primary patron, and also that you appoint Very Rev John Anzer as the superior of this mission” (Josef Alt, ed., *Arnold Janssen, Letters to China*, vol. I (1879-1897), pp. 41f).



Puoly - Here Frs. Anzer and Freinademetz began their mission work in South Shantung.



The Arnoldus Family Story

FUNDRAISING FOR FLOOD VICTIMS IN LIMBURG (NETHERLANDS)

On New Year’s Day 1881 the Netherlands suffered extensive flooding. The Steyl family magazine “Die Heilige Stadt Gottes” (The Holy City of God) reported on it and mentioned in particular the plight of many villages in the province of Limburg “which were almost completely forgotten and without help” (Die Heilige Stadt Gottes, No. 23, Vol. 4, 1880/1881, p. 224). “We consider it a holy duty of Christian charity to put in a good word for these poor people in our magazine to our compassionate readers; and this duty calls upon us all the more compellingly since the mission house was saved through God’s kind providence from the kind of suffering which hit so many townships in our neighborhood. Reminding our readers of the Lord’s promise, “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy!” - we therefore pass on a request in support of those unfortunate people. Anyone who is aware that they have been blessed by God with the goods of this earth, should not hesitate to offer a tribute of gratitude to Him who is the cause of this good fortune, by taking pity on those suffering people and joyfully contributing a donation to alleviate the needs of their fellow human beings and fellow believers. We will gladly receive gifts of love offered on behalf of the needy. They are to be sent to **Rev. Arnold Janssen, Rector of the Mission house in Steyl (poste restante Kaldenkirchen) with the remark “flood emergency”**.

THE BUILDING OF THE DOUBLE CHURCH IN STEYL

The Laying of the Foundation Stone for the Double Church in Steyl

During his stay in Rome at the beginning of 1881, Fr. Arnold discussed with the priest Josef Prill, who resided in Rome but came from Cologne, the plans for a new big church in Steyl. Prill suggested building a double church (see “Arnoldus Family Story”, January 2016). In September 1877 a new chapel had been blessed in the first new building just completed. However, by 1879 it had become clear that it was too small for the constantly increasing number of residents in the mission house. Already in the October 1879 issue of his mission magazine “Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote” (from now on cited as “Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart”) Fr. Arnold mentioned the need of building a new church and at the same time asked for donations. In December 1879 the Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart reported the first donations: from Aachen 330,- Mark; 30 Mark from a poor widow and a further donation of 20 Mark. Some

donations were much smaller: in the February 1881 issue of the Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart we find a donation of 3 Mark and in the March issue one of 4.40 Mark. Even though the donations were coming in rather sparsely, Arnold nevertheless decided, with just one tenth of the needed total amount available, to start building the church, which was to be named "Church of the Angels". The May 1881 issue of the Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart reported about the laying of the foundation stone on March 25, 1881. The day was purposely chosen, for on this day the church celebrates the feast of the annunciation to Mary, the day "on which the highest mystery of faith that has ever happened took place, the incarnation of the eternal Word in the Virgin Mary."

Bishop Paredis of Roermond, who was already advanced in age, wanted to lay the foundation stone himself. However, "unfortunately the weather turned so unfavorable," that the Bishop, having blessed the water, "had to leave to the Dean of Venlo the ceremony of blessing the cross which was erected at the spot where the main altar was going to stand, as well as the blessing and laying of the foundation stone and the blessing of the foundations". Incidentally, on behalf of Bishop Paredis, that very same Dean had blessed the new mission house on September 8, 1875.



Reasons for building the new church

In the article of May 1881 just mentioned, the following reasons were given for building the church:

The chapel which was being used at the time had only "room for 120 people to stand or kneel. The residents of the mission house, however, number about 150". In a footnote the writer tells us: "I have still to add that our pews are without seats, the space between the pews is as narrow as possible, the places near the altars are as small as possible; therefore solemn and fitting worship cannot take place as it should." Then in bold print: "**Is that fitting for a church which is to become the mother of many new churches in the missions**, and from which, as from any mission seminary, with time many priests and even bishops will go forth, which is inevitable for a seminary of the size of ours, if the Lord God continues to give us his grace."

Many missionary vocations

Another reason for the building of the church as well as for the other new buildings already put up or still to be built, was the continuously growing number of men who wanted to become missionaries. At the time that article was written the mission house numbered 150 residents, "and still many are standing outside and knocking at our door to be accepted into it. Certainly, we could refuse them. But would that be the proper thing to do at a time when the Holy Father is complaining so strongly and urgently about the lack of missionaries? Would it be right in the light of how Divine Providence has up till now let us find everything necessary for all of us to live here and to be fed - even when things were lacking just for a short while? ... How clear and

expressive a monument to divine power and the ever watchful Divine Providence has our house become! And then should we suddenly become so faint-hearted and set limits to divine grace that is urging us to increase the number of apostolic laborers **Whoever wants to do that should do so, but the Rector of the mission house can and may not do so after so many signs from God and after such remarkable divine help.**

Simple way of building

In this article of May 1881 Fr. Arnold emphasizes the simplicity of the new building. He writes that he feels, "as if out of too great a purely human prudence one mistake was made in the planning, namely that the design of this church which is built in honor of the Eternal Word and of the holy angels and their Queen is not sufficiently precious. In order to save costs, the columns will be made of red bricks and the windows kept very simple, without a stone shaft in the center; and as it is, quarry stones are to be used as little as possible. Certainly, the honorable readers will recognize our efforts to work as thriftily as possible and nowhere to exceed the limits set by what is absolutely necessary. May, therefore, those who feel so moved, come and bring us their donations or rather bring them to the holy angels in whose honor this church will be built ... Then on September 29, 1882, the feast of St. Michael, when we hope the church will be blessed in honor of the holy angels and Mary their Queen, the holy angels, who still have so few sanctuaries, will have one more new sanctuary that will radiate opposition to the spirit of darkness that at present extends its rule throughout the world ... We have begun the work with God. May helpers come and makes its completion possible."

FR. ARNOLD CRUSHED ALMOST TO TEARS

March 25, 1881 had been a day of joy for Fr. Arnold: the foundation stone for the new church had been laid and Bishop Paredis had given the tonsure and the four minor orders to eight of his seminarians. And on April 2nd one of the first Steyl students, John Holthausen, was ordained sub-deacon by Bishop Paredis in the seminary church of Roermond. However, shortly afterwards his joy was to give way to deep distress. The January issue of the "Arnoldus Family Story" already reported the opposition to Fr. Arnold of those diocesan priest-teachers who had not joined the mission house as members. What means they finally used in order "to humiliate" Arnold Janssen we see from the notes of the China missionary Anton Volpert who was a student in Steyl in those days: "Once, on the occasion of the Easter examinations, our class was taken for a ride by the examiners. Only the most stupid members of the class were asked questions and the answers made us laugh. After the 10 o'clock intermission no more questions were asked. In the meantime the faculty decided to hold another exam at Pentecost. We were allowed to go for a walk among the sand dunes. I intoned the Miserere. When the test was held again at Pentecost, only the best students were asked and the exam results were excellent. By way of explanation it has to be said that the extern teachers, who caused the Founder so much trouble because of the

TOWARDS THE FOUNDING OF A COMMUNITY OF MISSIONARY SISTERS: HELENA STOLLENWERK

In his mission magazine “Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote” (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart), Fr. Arnold published two articles about the missionary apostolate of women already in 1874. When Bishop Comboni, who was working in Sudan visited him in Steyl at the end of 1877, the Bishop suggested to him to start his own missionary congregation of women. However, at first Fr. Arnold did not do anything about it. That was to change when a young woman from the small village of Rollesbroich in the Eifel region of Germany entered his life in 1881. Her name was Helena Stollenwerk; she was born in 1852, and she wrote: “From early childhood on I felt strongly attracted to the Holy Childhood Association.” Reading the Association’s magazines, “it seemed to me, as though I were abroad and receiving news from home.” She felt a strong desire to go to China herself and help in particular the poor abandoned children; and this desire never left her. It was some years later that she finally disclosed her wish to her confessor and that was at the beginning of the cultural war (Kulturkampf) in Prussia, when all religious congregations were threatened with expulsion from Prussia. That alone made the realization of her dream right from the start most difficult. Helena would have to wait for several years until finally, in 1881, she met the director of the Holy Childhood Association in the diocese of Cologne, Rev. Cremer, who gave her the address of Fr. Arnold Janssen in Steyl, as well as that of another congregation. Her confessor then wished the Dean to take charge of the matter since, “as my confessor, he was very worried about breaking the seal of the confessional.” The Dean promised to write to Steyl. However, when after several weeks of waiting she had not heard anything about the matter, she inquired from the Dean whether Fr. Arnold had written to him, only to find out that he had not written at all to Fr. Arnold. He had not seen any point in doing so; she should go to Steyl herself. From then on, her confessor, Rev. Jülich, “energetically took charge and the way everything went after that showed that God had helped him faithfully and he obtained my admission to the Mission House, thanks be to God forever” (all this from “Mother Maria’s Vocation”, translated from the German text “Berufsgeschichte”, Rome 1990). Yet even after she had received admission to Steyl, Helena had to go through a further long period of waiting, until finally in 1892 she received the habit of the Sisters, Servants of the Holy Spirit and in 1894 was able to take her first vows.



Parental home of
Helena Stollenwerk



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The Arnoldus Family Story

A GLIMPSE INTO THE LIFE OF OUR FIRST MISSIONARIES

Arrival of Frs. Anzer and Freinademetz in Shantung

On June 16, 1880 Fr. John Baptist Anzer had arrived in Tsinanfu, Shantung. His first task had been to negotiate with the Vicar Apostolic of Shantung, Bishop Cosi OFM about giving a part of his vicariate to the Steyl missionaries as their very own mission. Since the two of them could not reach an agreement, they asked their respective Superiors, Fr. Bernardino in Rome and Fr. Arnold Janssen in Steyl for help. The latter two were finally able to draw up a contract which was approved by Propaganda in February 1881.

Now Fr. Josef Freinademetz was also able to leave Hong Kong and join Fr. Anzer in Shantung. On May 23, 1881, he began his long journey and on July 15, 1881 he finally arrived in Tsinanfu. “Today I have finally attained the goal so long desired. At long last I have reached Tsinanfu”, he wrote (Fritz Bornemann, *As Wine Poured Out, Blessed Joseph Freinademetz SVD, Missionary in China 1879-1908*, Rome 1984, p. 63).

Fr. Anzer’s first serious sickness

Still in his first year in Shantung Fr. Anzer suffered from typhoid. On March 19, 1881 he wrote to Steyl: “Yesterday I got up from my 16 days sickbed and I am still so weak, that I can hardly write. Until now I can’t speak a single word, therefore I write as long as I have the strength for it. Soon you had almost received a death notice. Here there was typhoid and to a certain extent it still is. Several people died. Lately my throat is very much swollen on the inside. I should have a warm room, but... Now it has just begun to snow. In my room the temperature stays at one degree above or one degree below zero. Since my room has only three walls and I myself made the fourth one from paper, there is a continuous draft. That is why it takes so long for my throat to heal (in: *Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote* [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart], vol. 8, No. 9, September 1881, p. 71-72).

First serious crisis: Fr. Anzer’s conflict with Bishop Cosi

When Fr. Anzer got to know the content of the contract signed by Fr. Arnold and the Minister General of the Franciscans about the region to be left to the Steyl missionaries as their own mission, “he was extremely disappointed... Impetuously he independently demanded from Msgr. Cosi such an extension of the area that a number

of long-time Christian communities with about 1500 Christians would be added to his mission area.

He also demanded that the international harbor of Chefoo belong to his mission territory.

The bishop was so angry about Fr. Anzer's demands that he let the Steyl missionaries know: 'Since you do not want to stick to the terms of the contract, I hereby withdraw my approval of leaving you those three prefectures named in the contract. Our contract is invalid. Everything remains as it was. You may go wherever you want. Leave my Vicariate'" (Richard Hartwich SVD, *Steyler Missionare in China* [Steyl Missionaries in China], I. *Missionarische Erschließung Südshantungs* (Missionary development of South-Shantung), *Analecta SVD* – 61/1, Rome 1983, p. 22).

Fr. Arnold's attempt to mediate

Through letters to Bishop Cosi and Fr. Bernardino, Fr. Arnold tried to "smooth the troubled waters" (*ibid.*). On August 5, 1881 he wrote to Fr. Anzer: He informed him of a letter sent to him by the Minister General of the Franciscans: "With reference to its content, I ask you to control your wishes and not trouble Msgr. Cosi any longer as you have been doing. ... But take pains to stay in the good graces of Msgr. Cosi. That is the road to follow, not by grandiose plans but humility. Humbly ask his pardon and tell him that you now see that your plans for the future had led you too far ahead. ... But don't try to get anything by force. In that way a person sometimes attains his goals and sometimes he doesn't; but he easily antagonizes people whose good will he needs, and who begin to fear us when they should be loving us. Please, take note of this! ... You can achieve many things by your strong willpower; but please ask the good Lord for the grace to control your wishes, even when you think that they are not selfish and are serving a good purpose" (Josef Alt, ed., *Arnold Janssen*, transl. Frank Mihalic, Vincent Fecher, *Letters to China*, vol. I (1879-1897), *Analecta SVD* – 83/1, Rome 2002, pp.48-49).

Fr. Arnold's support for Fr. Anzer

The relationship between Bishop Cosi and Fr. Anzer deteriorated so much, that the Bishop asked Fr. Arnold to replace Anzer with another "who is more prudent, a bit more mature, and more peaceable by nature" (*ibid.*, p. 52, footnote 1). However, Fr. Arnold did not want give in to the Bishop's wish; for in the spring of 1876 when two of his first fellow workers left him, Anzer stayed on during that difficult situation. Arnold Janssen "felt indebted to him out of thanks. On the other hand, Freinademetz came to Steyl on 28 August 1878. That means that until his departure on 2 March 1879, he had been in Steyl only six months" (*ibid.* footnote 2). Fr. Arnold felt, however, that Fr. Freinademetz had a role to play in that conflict situation and he wrote to Fr. Anzer: "I think that Fr. Freinademetz, because of his milder temperament and his knowledge of Italian will be more agreeable to Msgr. Cosi. Make good use of him as a mediator in thorny situations" (*ibid.*, p. 53).

Tsinanfu – the first residence of Frs. Anzer and Freinademetz

"Tsinanfu was a large city with a population of more than 250,000 inhabitants. Since 1376 it had been the administrative center of Shantung, one of China's 18 pro-

vinces. The governor, who exercised authority over a territory of 145,000 km in extent, with a population of about 30 million, resided in Tsinanfu". A Jesuit had established the first Christian community in Tsinanfu in 1636. Since the 19th century Italian Franciscan missionaries worked in Shantung. In 1848 Shantung became an Apostolic Vicariate with an Italian Franciscan as bishop. In 1863 Tsinanfu became his residence and the major seminary was also located there.

Frs. Anzer and Freinademetz lived in Tsinanfu for the first months after their arrival in Shantung. Fr. Freinademetz had to start learning the Shantung language which was different from the one his former parishioners spoke. Fr. Anzer on the other hand had already studied the Beijing dialect in Hong Kong which was similar to the Shantung one; and he had had half a year's time to learn the local dialect when Fr. Freinademetz was just able to begin his language study (on all of this see: Bornemann, *As Wine poured Out*, p.63-64).

THE STEYL MISSION HOUSE INCREASED IN NUMBERS AND IN NEEDS

In the July 1881 issue of the "Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote" (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart) Arnold Janssen expresses thanks for the financial donations of his readers. At the same time he also points to a different kind of support: "Instead of money also other items are welcome, for instance linen, cloth, pictures, things used in church", as well as meat, grain, butter, cheese, fat, eggs, fruit, peas, beans and similar things. The house numbered almost 160 residents and there was a great need of linen, for instance for bedding. In addition to the residents, the house also hosted retreatants for seven weeks a year. "It is understandable that all this needs a great deal of linen."

SUPPORT FROM THE GERMAN CATHOLICS

In September 1881 the General Assembly of the German Catholics took place in Bonn. At that time Fr. Arnold "witnessed the acceptance of the application of Vicar Laurenz Loison of the Geilenkirchen deanery 'that St. Michael's Mission House in Steyl be energetically supported'" (Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p.165).

FIRST STEYL MISSIONARY BROTHER TAKES FIRST VOWS



On **May 23, 1881**, the first Steyl Missionary Brother, Bro. Marcolinus Elskemper, took his first vows. "On that day he asked Rector Janssen in writing to treat him with all severity for his own good. Then he added, 'According to your wishes and with the fullest agreement of my own will [...] I promise in writing' complete obedience, celibate chastity and renunciation of property." Fr. Josef Alt comments: This "document is more of a serious declaration of intent than a vow. But it would appear from the Brother's Book that Fr. Arnold allowed it to be recognized as a vow" (*ibid.*, p. 314).

HELENA STOLLENWERK

After Helena's confessor, Rev. Jülich, had written on behalf of Helena for the first time to Fr. Arnold, the latter invited her to send him her curriculum vitae (CV); "perhaps later on he could still do something for her". On October 24, 1881 Helena then wrote her CV; in it we read among other things: "The devotion to the Sacred Heart has always been my favorite devotion. If there is an order which is consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that would be my greatest preference; ... Reverend Father, I beseech you as earnestly as I can, for the love of God, please help me; as far as I am concerned, as long as that convent has a true religious spirit, it is all the same to me where I am admitted, even if I were immediately sent to China. My health is good, I am 28 years of age and my parents are fairly well off. My father is 66 years old and my mother 56; two of my sisters live at home, one is 32 and the other 18 years old. My confessor, Reverend Jülich, parish priest of Simmerath, said it would be best if you would kindly reply to him. Reverend Father, if I may be so bold, I beg you to answer as soon as possible because my confessor probably will not take further steps until he has your advice and approval" (Ortrud Stegmaier SSpS., Ed., *Mother Maria Helena Stollenwerk 1852-1900, Groundwork*, transl. Jacqueline Mulberge SSpS, Rome 2003, p. 87)

A new Mission Sisters' congregation? – First application for acceptance

Even before receiving Helena's CV, on October 7, 1881, Fr. Arnold had invited her to visit Steyl on December 3 (*ibid.*, p. 85).

In reply Helena wrote on November 21, 1881 that on the suggested date she could not come to Steyl without her parents getting to know it. Therefore she asked Fr. Arnold what to do. Then she adds a most interesting remark: "My confessor told me you intend to found a new congregation if you discern that to be God's will; I confidently hope that a new society will be established to the greater glory of God and the salvation of our neighbor and I humbly ask to be accepted as your spiritual daughter". She promises "not to shrink from any effort or difficulty" and declares her willingness, "to dedicate myself to serving the Gospel with all my love and all my life" (*ibid.*, p. 89).

DECEMBER 17 – FURTHER PRIESTLY ORDINATION

The tumultuous year 1881 ended on a happy and encouraging note. On December 17, 1881 Bishop Paredis of Roermond, ordained in the Munster Church there, the Steyl deacon Anton Wewel as a priest and the theology student Gottfried Riehm as subdeacon. According to Fr. Arnold's plans the two were to leave soon, if possible on January 15, 1882, for China where Frs. Anzer and Freinademetz were waiting very much for new missionaries (Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart], January 1882).



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The Arnoldus Family Story

REORGANIZATION OF STUDIES IN STEYL – THE INTRODUCTION OF THE "LYCEUM"

The course of studies in Steyl

Up to the beginning of the summer semester 1881 Steyl had a "short secondary school" which was followed by philosophical and theological studies. "From the first, Father Janssen had combined science lectures with classes in philosophy, perhaps because he [the founder] enjoyed it, perhaps also to help fill out an often skimpy class schedule" (Fritz Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Arnoldus Press Manila, 1975, p. 155).

The Reorganization

The reorganization of studies was influenced by a series of articles written by the Jesuit Fr. Michael Pachtler, SJ in the years 1879-1880. Fr. Pachtler was known to Fr. Arnold since he lived not far from Steyl and preached retreats in Steyl for priests and lay people. According to Fr. Pachtler's vision, a 5 year secondary school with emphasis on the classics, that is Latin and Greek, should be followed by a "lyceum" of 2-3 years. The curriculum in this "lyceum" concentrated on a thorough introduction to philosophy together with mathematics, physics, astronomy, and physical – mathematical geography (see *ibid.*). Fr. Arnold translated these thoughts into the Steyl course of studies: From 1881 on High School in Steyl was followed by this type of philosophical and natural science studies, that is the "lyceum", which was a two year program. After that the students did the one year novitiate and then went on to study theology for three years (Johann Kraus, *P. Arnold Janssen als Studiendirektor von St. Gabriel* [Fr. Arnold Janssen as director of studies in St. Gabriel], *Verbum Supplementum* 6, 1968, p. 13).

The timetable of the first semester with the "lyceum" program looked like this: "1 period of logic, 2 of psychology, 4 of theodicy, 6 of physics and astronomy, 1 period for English, German and catechetics... 2 periods Bible studies – altogether 18 lectures" (Bornemann, *P. Wilhelm Gier, Analecta SVD* – 50, Rome 1980, p. 384, endnote 24).

The importance of the reorganization

The SVD historian Fr. Johann Kraus writes: "Finally, just in time, the vital school issue in Steyl made considerable progress with regard to its organization. After having waded through sandy terrain for a long stretch, they finally found the paved road (Johann Kraus, *Ein Jesuit als Initiator des Steyler Lyzeums* [A Jesuit as initiator of the Steyl lyceum], *Verbum* 8, 1966, p. 20).

The following was particularly important for the founder: “With the lyceum according to Fr. Pachtler’s suggestion, Steyl got a ready-made educational support program which had proven itself for centuries in the famous Jesuit schools, which was still continued in the Romanic countries until the present, and which naturally had not lost the church’s approval. What more could the founder have wished for at that moment?” (*ibid.*, p. 21).

Seeming initial difficulties with the name “lyceum”

Fr. Kraus adds an interesting piece of information: Beginning with the summer semester of 1881 and for the first time, philosophy and theology students had separate lectures. “At the same time the name ‘lyceum’ appears. In the beginning it is used only for the first year philosophy students; in the winter of 1881/82 two philosophy courses are distinguished, the first one has the addition of the word ‘lyceum’. Only from 1886/87 on the students of both philosophy courses are called ‘lyceum students’. It almost looks as if in the beginning they had used the word only hesitantly, not to say bashfully; perhaps the reason being that in Germany girls middle schools were mainly, but not exclusively called ‘Lyceum’” (*ibid.*, p. 20-21).

ESCALATION OF UNREST AMONG THE PRIEST-TEACHERS FROM OUTSIDE

The demands of the teachers

Seven of the outside priest-teachers who had been restless for some time gave Fr. Arnold a catalogue of their demands:

All teachers must be invited to conferences when students are discussed.

A teachers’ conference must be held before a student is dismissed.

Teachers must be addressed by their official title, ‘professor’.

The term ‘secular priest’ as applied to them, has overtones of disrespect and is not to be used in the future.

Fathers Adams and Lehr ask that they be reassigned to teach religion this semester (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, p. 154).

Outgoing mail should be taken care of immediately by messengers or the porter (see Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag, Nettetal 2002, p. 139).

Seriousness of the situation and eventual separation

How serious the situation was we learn from a letter of Fr. Arnold, who was on retreat in a Franciscan convent in Remagen, to his brother John in Steyl. The latter had urged Fr. Arnold to return to Steyl: “I did not accept your invitation to come home. I thought it would be better for me to wait until the excitement had somewhat abated” (*ibid.*, p. 140). A year later he wrote about the “terrible summer of 1881” in a letter to China: “I received a petition signed by seven of our professors and, due to its expressions, I had to look the danger boldly in the face, dismiss all seven of them, or be obliged to hand over the reins!” (*ibid.*). However, he did not decide to dismiss them immediately, but began negotiations with them. Unsuccessfully, however, for they all left the house in 1881/82.

Consequences of the separation

The fact that those priest-teachers finally left the house meant for the teachers who remained in Steyl an extra teaching load and that in turn meant that, because of the overload, teachers and classes suffered. Fr. Arnold himself had also quite a teaching load: He had to “fill the breach when a teacher left”. Thus he taught one or two semesters “of physics, chemistry, geology, zoology. He also taught Italian and English for two semesters; three semesters of philosophy and one of canon law”. In addition, for a few semesters he took on pastoral theology, “but probably did not conduct classes often, since no grades are recorded for them” (*ibid.*, p. 155).

However, not everything looked bad; for Fr. Arnold gained two new priest-teachers: the two diocesan priests Peter Hüls for theology and Dr. Abel for philosophy. In 1876 Peter Hüls had already thought of joining the mission house as a full member and Dr. Abel did eventually become a full member of the society (*ibid.*).



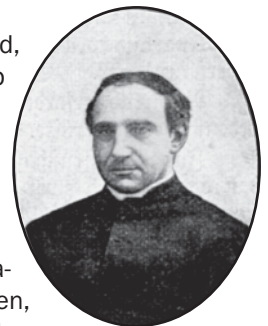
Dr. Abel

Schedule of classes in the winter semester 1881/82

On October 3, 1881 the winter semester began. There were classes on each of the six days of the week. A day of classes had five periods, before noon two for 55 minutes each, the third one for 53 minutes; in the afternoon there were two periods of teaching for 50 minutes each. On Sunday morning at 11 am there were religion classes; for instance exegesis of St. John’s gospel for the theology students. On Sunday evening there was declamation, for the higher courses catechetical or homiletical exercises. Singing practice was held during free time on Saturdays and Sundays (Bornemann, *P. Wilhelm Gier*, p. 382-383, endnote 6). This schedule was in force until 1887 when a free day was introduced, from 4 pm on Wednesday afternoon to Thursday afternoon 4 pm.

Ordination of the first fully Steyl trained priest

On September 21, 1881, in the Dutch village of Simpelfeld, in a convent of the Sisters of the Poor Child Jesus, Bishop Emeritus Laurent gave the sacrament of priestly ordination to the Steyl Deacon Johannes Holthausen. He was the third priest who was ordained for the Steyl mission house on the title of Mission. The first had been John Baptist Anzer who had done only his last year of theology in Steyl; the second, H. Müller, had joined St. Michael’s mission house after graduation from high school in his home town. Johannes Holthausen, however, had joined St. Michael’s at the age of 22 as one of the first students on November 4, 1875 and had done all his high school, philosophical and theological studies in Steyl and he was part of the history of St. Michael’s almost from its beginning (About Holthausen see: Bornemann, *In Memoriam... Verbum Supplementum 20*, Rome 1972, pp. 159-204).



Johannes Holthausen

and works there as a maid. Talk with her. If you want to live together like nuns do and if you want to observe a suitable daily order with prayer, meditation, reading at table and silence at work: that will be fine with me. But even though it is possible that later on there will be a congregation of missionary sisters here, for the time being I cannot bind myself and I must not make any promises. If the congregation is not founded, I will, as far as I can, help you to enter another convent. But for the time being I can accept you only as a maid and therefore I have to fix an annual wage” (Hermann auf der Heide, *Die Missionsgesellschaft von Steyl. Ein Bild der ersten 25 Jahre ihres Bestehens* [the Mission Society of Steyl. A portrait of its first 25 years of existence], Steyl 1900. pp. 541-542).



Sr. Anna, Theresia Sicke

Helena's overall impressions

Still on March 19 Helena Stollenwerk returned home. Years later she wrote: “I can hardly express the impressions I had during the short time of my stay in the mission house. I don't think that I have ever been so happy. I really felt that here was the place where people did the work for which I believed God had called me. I could only thank our dear Lord and surrender myself to him wholeheartedly” (in: Assumpta Volpert, *Mutter Maria Stollenwerk, Mutter Josepha Stenmanns* [Mother Maria Stollenwerk, Mother Josepha Stenmanns], p. 30).

First opposition

The first opposition to her wish to join the mission house in Steyl as a maid came from her parents and her confessor. “The latter told her openly, that he would never give his approval for her accepting a position as a maid in the mission house. She should enter a convent in which she would immediately be accepted as a postulant.” Helena, however, stuck with her plan to join the Steyl mission house. On June 8, 1882 she wrote to Fr. Arnold: “Ever since I left Steyl, my hope has been that I would be admitted to the new Mission House in Steyl, and I promise once again that I will shirk no effort or difficulty. On the way home and since then I have felt the greatest longing to serve the Mission House as a maid until it is possible for me, with God's help, to be accepted as a novice (Mother Maria Helena Stollenwerk, *Groundwork*, Ortrud Stegmaier SSpS ed., transl. Jacqueline Mulberge SSpS, 2003, p.91).



The Arnoldus Family Story

DEVELOPMENT IN SHANTUNG

John Baptist Anzer is appointed Pro-Vicar

The year 1881 ended with the priestly ordination of Anton Wewel and the subdiaconate ordination of Gottfried Riehm. Both had been appointed for China, to where they were to travel as soon as possible in order to support the two missionaries, John Baptist Anzer and Joseph Freinademetz. The new year 1882 began with the appointment of Rev. John Baptist Anzer as Pro-Vicar by the Vicar Apostolic of Shantung, Bishop Cosi OFM. Rev. Anzer was to work as the Bishop's deputy in the region of Yenchowfu, Ichowfu and Tsaohowfu. The bishop would rather have appointed Joseph Freinademetz, but he rejected the office and on his knees begged the bishop to appoint Anzer, which he eventually did in January 1882. (see Richard Hartwich SVD, *Steyler Missionare in China*, [Steyl Missionaries in China], Vol. I, *Analecta SVD-61/I*, Rome 1983, p. 23).

Birthday of the South Shantung Mission

January 18, 1882 is considered the foundation day of the South Shantung mission. On that day, at 9 a.m. Rev. Anzer arrived in Puoli, the new residence of the missionaries, and was welcomed with great pomp. Fr. Anzer writes: “At 10 a.m. I celebrated holy Mass for the first time in our new mission and it was attended by all, young and old, without exception” (*ibid.*, p. 24).

First missionary activities in Puoli

Fr. Anzer writes: “On January 21st I began a (folk) mission which lasted until February 2nd. I heard 161 confessions and gave 142 communions, baptized two children and administered the sacrament of confirmation to one person” (*ibid.*). The Christians were happy about his arrival and many non-Christians came as well to see the new European and to listen to him. Even though he did not yet know the language and culture well, Fr. Anzer tried to explain to his listeners “the purpose of his coming and in a general way the basics of the Catholic religion”. There was applause, but there were also objections. In spite of those, around 50 people applied for the catechumenate (*ibid.*). Fr. Freinademetz was still in Tsinanfu, the bishop's residence, to get a better grasp of the North-Chinese language. In March 1882 he moved to Puoli.

DEVELOPMENT IN STEYL

March 25: A further priestly ordination

On March 25, Bishop Paredis of Roermond ordained the Steyl deacon Francis Bartels to the priesthood. He was the fifth priest to be ordained for the mission house since its foundation in September 1875.

April 30, 1882: Profession of vows of the Brothers in Steyl

On this day Brothers Bernard Schwerdtfeger and Martinus Juergens made their first vows. They had “signed their handwritten vow formulas with reference to the three traditional vows. Each of the formulas bears the title ‘First Temporal Vows’. So the brothers took vows before the priests. The priests only took a vow of obedience on the



Bernhard Schwerdtfeger



Martinus Jürgens

Statutes of 1876”. On this day the two Brothers also received a religious habit tailored for them which “reached to just above the knee and was rather tight”. Such a habit “goes back to the style worn by the White Father brothers of Cardinal Lavigerie” (for all this: Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, pp. 314-316). In the evening of this day Fr. Arnold announced that from now on the title BROTHER was to be used for the lay brothers as had been customary in the old religious orders. At the same time a short rule came into effect. It spoke of temporal vows, which were to be made three times for three years, followed by perpetual vows (Kraus, *Die Steyler Brüdergemeinschaft und ihr Wirken* [The Steyl Brothers community and their work], *Nova et Vetera*, Sept. – Dec. 1975, pp. 246-25,7). On May 8, 1882, Bro. Markolinus Elskämper, who a year earlier had already made vows, signed a similar document to that of the two above-mentioned Brothers; it also bore the title: “First Temporal Vows” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 314).

TOWARDS THE FOUNDING OF A MISSION SISTERS’ CONGREGATION

Helena Stollenwerk’s first visit to Steyl: March 18-19, 1882

Helena Stollenwerk expressed her expectations of this visit in these words: “I had no other hope than that the Rev. Rector would advise me to whom I could turn. My only wish was to enter a religious house in which I was given the possibility to be used for the foreign missions” (Assumpta Volpert, *Mutter Maria Stollenwerk, Mutter Josepha Stenmanns* [Mother Maria Stollenwerk, Mother Josepha Stenmanns], *Herz Jesu Kloster* [Sacred Heart Convent] Steyl, 1920, p. 28).

First conversation with Fr. Arnold Janssen and first impressions

Still in the evening of March 18, Helena Stollenwerk had her first, though short conversation with Fr. Arnold. He promised her to do for her whatever he could. In the evening she participated in the evening prayer of the Mission House community. Later on she wrote: “I just cannot describe my feelings, especially when we made the acts of faith, hope and love during the evening prayer. Even now the remembrance of it fills me with enthusiasm” (*ibid.*, p. 29).

Second conversation with Fr. Arnold

The following day, March 19, she had a longer conversation with Fr. Arnold. He explained to her the religious life, the three religious vows and pointed out the sacrifices and difficulties connected with the missionary vocation – the missionary had even to be prepared for a martyr’s death. Instead of causing her to waver in her wish to become a missionary, these words of the founder made her courage and enthusiasm grow: “It got lighter and brighter in my soul. I began to hope that I could be used for just those purposes the mission house pursued.”

Criteria for recognizing God’s will

Rector Janssen mentioned to her that the Vicar Apostolic of Central Africa, Comboni, had advised him to start a congregation of missionary sisters. But before doing that he still had to find out more certainly whether such a foundation was according to God’s will. He mentioned three criteria which could show him that such a foundation was God’s will: “firstly, if the founding of a congregation for missionary sisters was necessary; there was no doubt about that; secondly, if enough young women would join. Without great difficulty this question could also be answered with ‘yes’; thirdly, if those who applied had trust in the founder. This question he left open” (*ibid.*, pp. 29-30).

Helena’s possible life in Steyl

In case Helena would like to come to Steyl then, so Fr. Arnold told her, “I cannot accept you in any other way than that you will live in that wing of the mission house in which the Divine Providence Sisters live who take care of the kitchen, so that you could work as their maid. Since 1879 another young woman, Theresia Sicke, lives

ing for a convent but not for a position as a maid. This, however, Helena **did not want to do** (Assumpta Volpert, *Mutter Maria Stollenwerk, Mutter Josepha Stenmanns* (Mother Maria Stollenwerk, Mother Josepha Stenmanns, p. 34). At Helena's request the confessor himself finally wrote to Fr. Arnold and told him that he did not really like Helena's acceptance as a maid. He also asked for further clarification.

State of Fr. Arnold's development regarding the foundation of a religious congregation of missionary sisters

On November 20, 1882, Fr. Arnold answered the confessor: "I cannot proceed with the matter concerned until I clearly recognize God's holy will. A plan such as this cannot be carried out with spiritual building blocks which have yet to come ... ; there must be at least sufficient to be able to make a good start." In case Helena did not want to wait, but would like to join another convent, she should apply for it. "If, however, she is inclined only towards our house, then I cannot do other for now than to take her as a maid. For I consider it unjust to make promises to which one cannot bind oneself so strictly." As a maid she will have time for prayer, "since I wish above all that she may grow spiritually here" (Ortrud Stegmaier, ed., *Mutter Maria Helena Stollenwerk, Groundwork*, p. 97).

Having received this letter, the confessor gave his approval for Helena to join the mission house in Steyl as a maid.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ST. MICHAEL'S MISSION HOUSE IN STEYL 1875-1882

When Fr. Arnold opened St. Michael's mission house on September 8, 1875, he had only thought of the education of missionary priests. Yet the development turned out differently: By the end of 1882 there were five priests ordained for the mission house who had done their studies in Steyl either partly or in full. Two of them were already in China (Frs. Anzer and Wewel). Then the mission house counted among its members five missionary brothers in vows and –as we can say now in hindsight - with the acceptance of Helena Stollenwerk as a maid into the mission house, an important step had been taken towards the founding of the congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Holy Spirit. That congregation was to consist of sisters who would work in the mission countries, particularly for the well-being of women, and of those sisters who would see it as their vocation to work in greater seclusion and pray particularly zealously to the Holy Spirit for the missions and the task of the entire society. Thus Fr. Arnold wrote in the St. Michael's almanac of 1891. In this development we can see the truth of what Fr. Arnold wrote in February 1874: **It necessarily belongs to God's guidance that he reveals his intentions to us only gradually. How else would we otherwise learn to live before him in the light of faith and unconditional trust!**



The Arnoldus Family Story

PRAYER AND MISSION

Prayer and mission in the mission field

January 18, 1882 marked the beginning of the Steyl missionaries' mission work in that part of the Shantung province which had been entrusted to them – that is in South Shantung. During the year 1882, two new missionaries had arrived, the recently ordained Fr. Wewel and the sub deacon Riehm. At the end of the year, in a letter of December 13, 1882 to Fr. Anzer, Fr. Arnold reminded him of the importance of prayer for missionary work. "Strive with all your might to make our Christians zealous by means of sermons, instructions, devotions before the exposed Blessed Sacrament, community Way of the Cross, and community prayers with them for the conversion of the poor heathen. Pray often, at least once a day, five Our Fathers with outstretched arms for the grace and strength of the sacred wounds to help convert the poor pagans. This is best done after the community Mass. It is impossible to do too much for this intention" (Josef Alt, ed., *Arnold Janssen, Letters to China*, Vol. 1, 1879-1897, *Analecta SVD* – 83/1, p.79).

Prayer and mission in Steyl

Not only should the missionaries living abroad pray with their faithful for God's blessing for the mission work, however, the same was done in Steyl. On May 4, 1882 Fr. Arnold wrote to Fr. Anzer after his appointment as pro-vicar: "Every time we receive one of your letters of concern, I offer a Holy Mass along with the students to gain for you the grace of God you need to carry out well the duties of your office, to thank the Lord for the blessings received and to call down grace on your new catechumens. At present we recite the following every day at morning prayers: 'Let us pray for the Christians and catechumens of our mission, that the Lord may make them pious and fill them with zeal for the spread of our holy faith'" (*ibid.*, p. 67).

THE TEACHER AND SPIRITUAL LEADER FR. ARNOLD JANSSEN IN STEYL

On August 18, 1882, exams were held for the students. In the evening of that day Fr. Arnold wrote to his China missionaries Anzer, Freinademetz, Wewel and Riehm that he still had to mark 19 papers and to correct two compositions "and now it is already 9.30 in the evening after three days of heavy work". For sure, Fr. Arnold was not the only teacher in Steyl, but as Fr. Hermann Fischer SVD wrote: "In

reality the founder Fr. Arnold Janssen himself was the educator and the soul of all the teaching and of the spiritual life in the mission house. In frequent religious exercises, recollections, talks and through his personal example he made a lasting impression on the still small mission house community. His way of doing things was so characteristic for him and original, that he had an effect on everybody who lived with him. It is true, some thought he was too serious, too dry and too much of a schoolmaster. However, the more zealous students soon felt, that Fr. Arnold was a truly spiritual man and that he had a lot to offer and that his classes and his leadership showed a lot of his own way of doing things and that he was not fixed in a rut and that his strict education did them as much good as his deep faith life edified and strengthened them” (Hermann Fischer SVD, Augustin Henninghaus, *Ein Lebensbild* [A biography] Steyl 1940, p. 40).

ARNOLD JANSSEN AS RETREAT MASTER FOR LAY PEOPLE

Fr. Arnold was not only interested in the formation of religious and priests but also in the spiritual formation and renewal of lay people. Therefore, from September 1878 until October 1882 he conducted five retreat courses for men, one of them specifically for teachers. For his talks he closely followed talks given by the Franciscan Fr. Ignatius Jeiler. Some of the topics he spoke about were: “About the final goal of human beings, about hell, judgement, death, kingdom of God, the life of Christ, three stages of humility, the humility of Jesus, sanctifying grace, prayer, repentance, chastity... All of these topics are found also in Fr. Jeiler’s talks, except the two topics on the humility of Jesus and on sanctifying grace. These will probably contain Fr. Arnolds own thoughts” (Albert Rohner, *Die Vortragstätigkeit P. Arnold Janssens* [talks of Fr. Arnold Janssen], *Erster Teil: Exerzitien* [Part One: Retreat], *Analecta SVD* – 30, Rome 1974. pp. 38-39).

ARNOLD JANSSEN – THE MEDIA MAN

Since 1874 Fr. Arnold had been publishing a mission magazine, “Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote” [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart] which from 1876 on was printed in Steyl. From January 1878 on he published the weekly illustrated family magazine “Die Heilige Stadt Gottes” [The Holy City of God]. Because of its large size it could not be printed in Steyl but in the printing press of the Dutch publisher Bogaerts who had given Fr. Arnold the idea of publishing the magazine. In 1880 there appeared another, this time annual publication: the St. Michaels-Kalender [St. Michael’s Almanac].

The new look of “Die Heilige Stadt Gottes” [The Holy City of God]

In October 1882 the “Heilige Stadt Gottes” [The Holy City of God] started its sixth year of publication. It was of a smaller size that could be printed in Steyl. It was no longer a weekly, but a monthly paper.

Explanation of the magazine’s name “Heilige Stadt Gottes”

The magazine is called “Heilige Stadt Gottes” – holy city of God, “because it wishes to place before its readers the picture of the city of God, and in as much as it

is able to do so, to help the readers enter there. The true city of God is twofold, or if you wish, it is even threefold. For it is the kingdom of God in heaven, the kingdom of God in the church and the kingdom of God in the hearts of people, but always and everywhere the kingdom or the city of God.” The magazine still exists today with the same name.

TOWARDS THE FOUNDING OF A RELIGIOUS CONGREGATION OF MISSIONARY SISTERS

Helena Stollenwerk visits Steyl for the second time

In connection with a pilgrimage to Our Lady’s shrine in Kevelaer, Helena visited Steyl for the second time. However, this time her heart was not full of joy. Her soul was full of fear. Feeling depressed she arrived in Steyl. But then, hardly had she set foot in Steyl when all fear left her soul and all of a sudden her heart was once again filled with deep peace. “I hoped and once again I desired most greatly, that our dear Lord would lead me into these consecrated rooms” (Assumpta Volpert, *Mutter Maria Stollenwerk, Mutter Josepha Stenmanns* [Mother Maria Stollenwerk, Mother Josepha Stenmanns], Steyl 1920, pp. 31-32). She left Steyl with the hope to be accepted as maid, perhaps not in Steyl but on a farm in Germany that had recently been given to St. Michael’s mission house.

Another letter to Fr. Arnold Janssen

When in October 1882 Helena had not received any word from Fr. Arnold, she wrote to him on October 8. She wrote about her temptations against her vocation: “My parents and my sisters wept and cried and did all they could to make me change my mind; they did say, however, they would not hold me back; in addition I often felt a great coldness during prayer; I frequently felt quite indifferent about my vocation ... Oh, Reverend Father, I am pouring out my troubles to you as a child to its father and I beg you to help me ... Reverend Father, may I hope soon to receive the news that I will be permitted to live in future only for God? I close my letter in this firm hope and earnestly request a prayer for myself and also for my dear family, that we may joyfully overcome the struggle, to the glory of God” (Ortrud Stegmaier, ed., transl. Jacqueline Mulberge, *Mother Maria Helena Stollenwerk 1852-1900. Groundwork, Quellen* (Sources) 10, 2003, p. 94-95).

Acceptance

On October 28, 1882, (Feast of the Apostles Simon and Jude), Fr. Arnold wrote to Helena Stollenwerk: “Most Esteemed Helena, You can enter the house as a maid, and that would be here in Steyl. We will have to leave further developments to God. In one way or the other, further provision will be made for you. You do not need to settle your inheritance affairs yet, however; we have not yet reached that stage. ... Let me know whether you will come and when! May the heart of Jesus live in the hearts of all people! Amen” (*ibid.*, pp. 95-96).

Negative reaction of Helena’s confessor

When Helena’s confessor read Fr. Arnolds letter he was against her going to Steyl. He told her to write to Steyl that she would not enter as a maid; she was look-

Petition to establish the Apostolic Prefecture of South Shantung

On April 19, Fr. Arnold wrote a “detailed memorandum for the Propaganda and asked that South Shantung be made a prefecture apostolic.” He described the history and the present situation of the mission: “Five new stations had been built, complete with chapels; three of these had a residence for a priest; all this had been done without outside help. He concluded with a description of the Steyl Mission seminary, the course of studies, number of students, and number of priests expected to be ordained in the years immediately ahead” (*ibid.*, p. 145). Cardinal Simeoni received the petition “graciously”, but “it would take a few weeks to prepare the formal decree” (*ibid.*).

AUDIENCE WITH POPE LEO XIII – APRIL 23, 1883

On April 23, at noon, Pope Leo received Fr. Arnold in private audience. To his brother John in Steyl he wrote: “The Holy Father was tired. Yet he listened to my report about the house with great friendliness and showed much interest in the pictures of the house I gave him. At the end of the visit, he gave me his apostolic blessing for everyone” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 195).

Two important questions regarding the development to a religious congregation

During the audience Fr. Arnold submitted questions in writing to Pope Leo which the latter promised to answer. The first question was, “whether it was more perfect to introduce the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience or remain with the one vow of obedience which was taken for some time as a private vow, because there was as yet no definitive Rule. With regard to this question, one had to consider whether the three vows should be introduced with or without reference to the missionary task. He had doubts about this because in the case of newer institutes dedicated to the mission mandate only a few had all three vows, although Jesus Christ had prescribed poverty for the apostles. So he would like the Holy See to instruct him as to which was the more perfect” (*ibid.*, p. 205). The second question dealt with “the possibility or permissibility” of introducing together with the Rule of the Third Order of the Dominicans also the Rule of the Third Order of the Franciscans (*ibid.*).

Return to Steyl

In the evening of that April 23 Fr. Arnold started his journey back to Steyl, however with a detour. His next main stop was to be Vienna with regard to matters of a mission house in Austria.



The Arnoldus Family Story

DECEMBER 1882 – A BEGINNING

Inner struggles

On December 30, 1882 Helena Stollenwerk arrived in Steyl. However, first she had to face very difficult inner struggles, as she wrote on December 17, 1882 to Fr. Arnold: “I have been going through terrible struggles against my own natural inclinations and I will still have to struggle until I arrive, with God’s help, in Steyl; for father and mother and sisters have been crying and lamenting almost day and night. In addition, I have not the least consolation in prayer. The thought that I have done nothing good that could give me reason to hope for the grace of the missionary vocation causes me anxiety. All I could do, cold and dry as I felt, was to recommend myself constantly to God with the plea that he would not allow me to make a decision contrary to his holy will. Yesterday and today, since I received the good Lord in my heart, I feel so happy and strengthened in my difficult struggles, in the firm hope that, with God’s help, at the intercession of all the saints and under your fatherly direction to which I confidently submit, I will better my life and consecrate myself unconditionally to God for time and eternity” (Ortrud Stegmaier, ed., transl. Jacqueline Mulberge, *Mother Maria Helena Stollenwerk, Groundwork*, 2003, p.98).

Arrival in Steyl

Accompanied by her parents Helena arrived in Steyl on Saturday, December 30, 1882, shortly after twelve noon. They were welcomed by Fr. John Janssen, the brother of Fr. Arnold. Later Fr. Arnold welcomed them as well.

From now on Helena was to work as a maid with German Sisters of Divine Providence from Muenster, who at the time looked after the kitchen and the mending of the laundry. There was already another maid working in the kitchen, Theresia Sicke. Besides her work, she participated as much as possible in the religious exercises of the mission house. She lived a quiet life of prayer without thinking of the foundation of a congregation of missionary sisters. It was only after Helena came to Steyl that her wish to become a missionary sister also arose.

First work in the kitchen

Even during her first evening in Steyl, after evening prayer, Helena went to the kitchen to join Theresia Sicke. Because of the forthcoming feast days a lot of work was still left. “Full of joy I worked late in the evening with Theresia”, Mother Maria later wrote.

Helena and Theresia did not remain alone for long. On January 3, 1883 they were joined by another young woman: Maria Theresia Volpert. The three women lived in a small room which served as bedroom, dining room and sometimes also as a work room.

First retreat

Soon the three women were given their first retreat; “Since we had joined the mission house only a short while ago and everything was very new to us and we also had to do our work in the kitchen, I do not think that I got much out of the retreat for the benefit of my soul,” Helena wrote.

The women lived a secluded life, filled with work – in line with the way of life of religious women. They did not wear a religious habit, but simple dark clothing, somewhat similar to the clothes of a convent postulant (H. auf der Heide, *Die Missionsgesellschaft von Steyl* [The Mission Society of Steyl], Steyl 1900, p. 542).

ST. MICHAEL’S MISSION HOUSE ON THE WAY TO BECOMING A RELIGIOUS CONGREGATION

The introduction of the vows for candidates to the priesthood

When Fr. Arnold founded St. Michael’s mission house, the members belonged to the third order of St. Dominic: they themselves, however, were not yet a religious congregation. A step towards the founding of a religious congregation was taken in 1882 when the first Brothers made their first vows and the religious title of “Brother” was introduced. Gradually Fr. Arnold had become certain that membership in the third order of St. Dominic was not sufficient for a missionary community. From March 1-10, 1883 he gave the retreat to four seminarians who were to be ordained to the subdiaconate. He spoke to them about the “dignity” of being a religious and amongst other things he told them: Work in the service of pagan missions is only possible in a religious congregation. “So we are striving for that.” Therefore these four young men should make their first vows for this [mission] house; they should do so with the intention to bind themselves later through perpetual vows. “Therefore, dear friends, also make a decision for the religious state”, (Albert Rohner, *Die Vortragstätigkeit P. Arnold Janssens, Erster Teil, Exerzitien* [Albert Rohner, Conferences of Fr. Arnold Janssen. Part One, Retreat], *Analecta SVD* – 30, Rome 1974, p.67). Fr. Arnold added: “The observation of everything that has become a duty because of the three vows belongs to the perfect development of this [religious] state. Now we must observe a. poverty at least in various ways; for the strict following of the right to property is the death of communitarian life. b. Through ordination to the subdiaconate we oblige ourselves to observe chastity even more strictly than religious do. c. The most essential vow, however, that according to St. Thomas is able to replace all the others, is the vow of obedience, which we also make. Therefore I apply the word “religious state” also to us, which will be a fact as soon as our rules have been precisely formulated and received ecclesiastical approval” (*ibid.*).

First vow ceremony for candidates for the priesthood

The first time that candidates for the priesthood made their first vows before the subdiaconate ordination was on March 5, 1883. On March 10 the subdiaconate

ordination followed. They were Henry Erlemann (the first student in Steyl who however had first to work as a carpenter and building supervisor before he could take up full-time studies), John Laxhuber, Eberhard Limbrock and Josef Weber.

APOSTOLIC PREFECTURE SOUTH-SHANTUNG?

The Steyl missionaries had only taken over their own mission territory South Shantung in January 1882. They were, however, still under the jurisdiction of the Vicar Apostolic of Shantung, Bishop Cosi. Since the mission house in Steyl developed favorably, one year later Fr. Arnold already felt entitled to work for the establishment of the Apostolic Prefecture of South Shantung to be independent of Bishop Cosi. On March 13, 1883 he wrote to Cardinal Simeoni, the prefect of the Propaganda Fide. In that letter he pointed out: “The Cardinal had told him earlier that the mission could become an Apostolic Prefecture once there were five or more apostolic co-workers in the mission. “Now there were four, with prospects that another three would be sent within the next few months, and another three by the following year. In two years the seminary in Steyl would have 28 priests in the community. Accordingly some thought could now be given to a future independent status, especially since Bishop Cosi was currently in Rome, and the matter could be taken up directly with him” (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Arnoldus Press Manila 1975, p. 144).

On April 2, Cardinal Simeoni agreed to the negotiations. Since the Superior General of the Friars Minor would be away travelling in the second half of April, the Cardinal suggested to Fr. Arnold to come to Rome as soon as possible in order to settle the question of an independent mission territory (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p. 184). So Fr. Arnold left for Rome on April 7, 1883.

Fr. Arnold in Rome for the third time: April 11-23, 1883

On April 11, Fr. Arnold arrived in Rome and still on that day he visited the Superior General of the Friars Minor and handed him a letter of petition, which read much the same as the above-mentioned letter to Cardinal Simeoni. Conditions “for independent status have practically all been met... the Propaganda is prepared to divide the mission, if the Minister General approves” (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, p. 144). The petition ended with the direct request that the Minister General would agree to the separation of the Steyl mission territory from that part of the Apostolic Vicariate of Shantung which had been entrusted to the Franciscans (Original text in Latin in *Verbum* 3, 1961, p. 104).

Consent to the separation

On April 12, the Minister General asked Bishop Cosi, who was staying in central Italy, “for his opinion.” The Bishop “gave it at once and referred with humor and not a little sarcasm to the great success of the young missionaries and their haste to be on their own. On 16 April the Franciscan General gave the rector his *nihil obstat*”, that is his approval (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, pp. 144f).

Stollenerk, Mutter Josepha Stenmanns, Steyl 1920, pp. 50-51). However, it was still to take until 1884 before she would enter in Steyl.

ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD AND DIACONATE

On May 19, 1883 Bishop Paredis ordained the two Steyl deacons Nicolas Blum and Theodor Bücken to the priesthood. After the death of Fr. Arnold, Blum was elected his successor. On the same day, four Steyl seminarians were ordained deacons: Henry Erlemann, Limbrock, Laxhuber and Weber. After missionary work in China, Limbrock became the founder of the New Guinea mission.

A SUGGESTION FOR THE QUARTER HOUR PRAYER

In a letter to Fr. Arnold, dated June 9, 1883, Fr. Medits suggested adding an invocation to the Holy Spirit to the quarter hour prayer. He wrote: "I have long felt moved to write to you... I feel impelled, most worthy Rector, to ask you also to encourage the fervent veneration of the Holy Spirit in your institute. It certainly was not by chance that the first religious service was held in the newly completed church [in Steyl] on Pentecost Sunday, as I have read in the newspaper. Your church is dedicated to the Holy Angels. Shouldn't he who honors the servants be even more dedicated to their master? And doesn't that mean, in first place, the Holy Spirit who is the King of the angels? Therefore, I feel impelled to write to you that you should show this by adding the following invocation to your very beautiful quarter hour prayer: 'Send us from the Father the Holy Spirit.' Let us clearly realize his holy inspirations and learn to follow them faithfully."

The use of the invocation of the Holy Spirit

P. Medits continues: "All bad habits of priests arise because they follow the lead of their own spirits and not the lead of the Holy Spirit. ...God cannot let a community whose members, as one man, call on him every 15 minutes 'Send us from the Father the Holy Spirit', become the prey of evil spirits and a slave to the spirit of the world."

Connection between the veneration of the Divine Word and the Holy Spirit

P. Medits writes: "... in your holy community you honor, revere, and praise the Divine Word with all your hearts." May it always be done with these thoughts: "The more similar my life becomes to that of the Divine Word, the better I am prepared to receive the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. In this way, I will become richer in experiencing the operations of the Holy Spirit, the king of the interior life, in my own soul" (The whole letter in: Hermann Fischer SVD, *You are the Temple of the Holy Spirit: The Spirituality of Blessed Arnold Janssen*, transl. Paul Laforge SVD, Logos Publications, Quezon City, 2nd ed. 1999, p. 22-23).



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TOWARDS THE FOUNDATION OF A MISSION HOUSE IN AUSTRIA

St. Michael's mission house in Steyl had also been founded for Austria. Therefore it is not surprising that already in 1875 Fr. Arnold thought of a foundation for a mission house there (*Alt, Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p. 194). However, in 1880, as well as in 1881, he was told that the time was not yet right for such a foundation. Before Fr. Arnold left Rome in April 1883, he visited the former ambassador of Austria to the Holy See, Count Huebner. He advised Fr. Arnold to present his wish personally to the Emperor and he wrote him a letter of recommendation for Dr. von Braun, the head of the imperial office in Vienna, who happened to be a friend of his. In his great joy over this Fr. Arnold told the Count: "Excellency, up until now I was indecisive about going to Vienna. But now here in your presence I have made up my mind. You have put the key in my hand and I will see if I can open the door of the castle with it" (*ibid.*, p. 195). So in the evening of April 23 Fr. Arnold left Rome for Vienna. In Salzburg he visited the archbishop who gave him the address of the Vincentian/Lazarist Fr. Medits in Vienna with whom Fr. Arnold had corresponded earlier but whose name he had forgotten.

In Vienna

In Vienna the Vincentians welcomed Fr. Arnold cordially. On April 29 he wrote to his brother Fr. John Janssen in Steyl: "Here in Vienna I have a feeling that things are falling into place. I found doors open everywhere. His Excellency, Mr. Braun, told me there was no doubt the Emperor would be open to the suggestion. I already have permission from the Archbishop of Vienna for a foundation in his archdiocese" (*ibid.*, p.196).

Audience with the Emperor of Austria

On May 7 Fr. Arnold was granted a short audience with the Emperor. About 100 audiences had been planned for that day, so he "had only a moment to speak". In that moment he handed the Emperor the written memorandum or request, for permission for the foundation of a house for foreign missions – similar to the one in Steyl. "I will see what can be done in this matter," said the Emperor. The Emperor attached his sovereign signature to this memorandum and with that it was forwarded to the Minister of Education (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Arnoldus Press Manila, 1975, p. 200).

The Minister of Education and the foundation

Since the Emperor had attached his signature to Fr. Arnold's memorandum, the Minister of Education was obliged to act on it. He first sought information about Arnold Janssen from the Austrian ambassador in The Hague (Netherlands). He wrote that Fr. Arnold was "a zealous, pious, diligent priest who lives for the purpose of his institute and does not meddle in politics."

The Minister then wanted to know what kind of school Fr. Arnold intended to build: "Is it to be a secondary school for which definite state regulations exist, or a private school which would be relatively independent of state regulations? No matter what kind it was, the director and the faculty would have to be Austrian citizens and give evidence of their professional qualifications. In special cases the national School Board might dispense from the requirement of Austrian citizenship" (*ibid.*, pp. 200-201).

Miss Magdalena Leitner

During this visit of Fr. Arnold to Vienna not only was the relationship already existing between Frs. Arnold and Medits revived, but the visionary Miss Magdalena Leitner, who was under the spiritual direction of Fr. Medits, entered his life. She was born in Bohemia (today Czech Republic) and as a young girl with no education she came to Vienna. There she earned her living by doing odd jobs, perhaps even as a laundress. At the insistence of Fr. Medits, she learned to write at the age of 30. When Fr. Arnold came to know her, she was 40 years old. Her piety was focused on the veneration of the Holy Spirit. Fr. Bornemann SVD describes Miss Leitner's piety as follows: "Fr. Medits had organized a confraternity of the Holy Spirit in the Vincentian church in Vienna and it had received papal approbation in 1882. Both the confraternity and Miss Leitner fostered devotion to the Holy Spirit and believed a special bond existed between the Holy Spirit and priests, and they prayed for an increase of priestly vocations and the sanctification of priests. They venerated Mary under the title of the Immaculate Spouse of the Holy Spirit... It is not altogether clear whether Miss Leitner was influenced in her spirituality by the Confraternity or vice-versa. It is possible that she was the actual motivating force, and Medits himself was influenced" by her. "The question remains open to discussion" (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, p. 185).

Miss Leitner's visions

In prayer Miss Leitner often heard the voice of the Holy Spirit and received messages from him for herself and others. "She was enveloped in a bright light in which she perceived many things, otherwise hidden from men." She had foreseen an earthquake which was to have destroyed Vienna. "But at the Holy Spirit's command", she took upon herself "severe sufferings for several days" to prevent the disaster. The earthquake did in fact occur, but did not do any damage to the city (*ibid.*). Generally, Fr. Medits was convinced of the genuineness of her visions, but in individual cases he was skeptical.

Arnold Janssen – Miss Leitner

When Fr. Arnold stayed with the Vincentians during his first visit to Vienna, Miss Leitner saw him celebrating Holy Mass and was very much impressed by him. However, they got to know each other personally only in 1884. On the other hand, through

Fr. Medits she already sent messages to Fr. Arnold earlier. By nature the latter had great reverence for everything which might be a revelation of God; however, with regard to Miss Leitner's visions he was "in general more prudent and critical than Medits"; he was actually so critical that Miss Leitner angrily said about him in 1883: "This reverend gentleman is often like Saul: he is blind; he carries out God's wishes only in part" (*ibid.*, p. 188).

THE NEW ANGEL CHURCH IN STEYL

Laying of the foundation stone and blessing of the lower church

On March 25, 1881 the by then very old Bishop Paredis of Roermond laid the foundation stone of the church dedicated to the angels which was to become a double church.

On May 12, 1883, the day before Pentecost, the lower church was blessed by Fr. Pennings, parish priest of Tegelen, acting on behalf of Bishop Paredis. The following day, Pentecost Sunday, it was used for the first time.

The blessing of the lower church according to an article in the "Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote" (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart)

The article read: At Pentecost, 76 older men and young men made their retreat in Steyl. "How lucky we were, that at Pentecost we were able to use our new lower church for the first time. How could our old chapel have seated all the people, since it was not even big enough for the residents of the mission house! At the same time during these days we had the grace of the 40-hour prayer. Certainly, there could not have been a more worthy way to inaugurate the new church.- May it become a place of grace for the residents of the mission house, as well as for all those who pray there and bring their intentions to the Savior who is hidden there in the Blessed Sacrament."

The building's supervisor

The basic design for the church was drawn up by Rev. Prill, a priest of the archdiocese of Cologne. However, the actual building plans were drawn up by the Steyl seminarian and trained carpenter Henry Erlemann. "He supervised the whole building, having agreed to interrupt his studies for two or three semesters – certainly no small sacrifice for a young man past his mid-twenties" (H. auf der Heide, *Die Missionsgesellschaft von Steyl. Ein Bild der ersten 25 Jahre ihres Bestehens* [The Mission Society of Steyl, a portrait of the first 25 years of its existence], Steyl 1900, p. 87).

A very special visitor

Among the first people present during Holy Mass in the new church on Pentecost Sunday was a very special visitor, who at that time had no idea how important she would one day be in and for Steyl: Hendrina Stenmanns, later Mother Josepha. When she learned that the foundation of a congregation of missionary sisters had been planned and she saw Theresia Sicke and Helena Stollenwerk as the first candidates, "she felt more urgently than ever the wish to become a religious woman and to dedicate herself to the service of the missions" (*Assumpta Volpert SSpS, Mutter Maria*

seminary and our mission. Now I must be frank and admit that I have grave misgivings about your suggestion that someone other than Anzer be proposed as pro-vicar. Everyone has his limitations, his weak points. Yet God guides everyone through good days and bad to gradual improvement. But it seems to me it is extremely difficult to pass certain judgment on one who is far away and to make a wise decision in so confused a situation. In how far should good will be decisive and how far prudent foresight?" Then Fr. Arnold proposed to call Anzer back to Europe for the necessary writing of a Rule for the mission house. Once "this joint effort had been concluded, there would be time enough to take a fresh look at the matter of independent status for the mission and the appointment of an ecclesiastical superior. Meanwhile, however, Freinademetz could fill in for Anzer as pro-vicar" (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, pp. 146-147).

FUND RAISING APPEAL FOR THE CHINA MISSION

In the August 1883 issue of the mission magazine "Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote" [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart] Fr. Arnold published a fund raising appeal for the South Shantung mission. In response to Fr. Anzer's telegram of June 30 Fr. Arnold wrote: "Isn't it true, dear reader, such an emergency call can cause buzzing in your ears and a headache. In such a situation prolonged thinking and deliberation are out of place, but help has to be given as soon as possible". Fr. Arnold then explains the reasons for the financial problems of the Shantung mission; but he also mentions the needs of the mission house in Steyl itself which has to raise the money for the mission.

The financial needs of the Steyl mission house

From where does the mission house get the money for South Shantung? Fr. Arnold's answer: "Dear reader, this is an absolutely justified and burning question, and for its solution we urgently need and ask for your help." Therefore: "Think of all our other needs, think of the costs of the building of the church and of the living costs of the 200 persons who belong to our house. In addition we are faced with the huge costs which will again be caused by the departure of the four priest and two brother missionaries to China." The reader may reflect on all of this and come to the effective help of the mission house "through prayer and alms", "The divine Heart of Jesus, for whose honour the members of the mission house here and in China work, will most generously reward you now and in all eternity."



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ARNOLD JANSSEN'S IDEAS ABOUT A MISSIONARY RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

Statutes of 1876

In 1876 when Fr. Arnold together with John Baptist Anzer wrote the statutes for St. Michael's mission house, he already thought that a religious congregation could develop from the mission house and at the time he called it "Societas Divini Verbi in ministerium Regis et reginae angelorum" [Society of the Divine Word in the service of the king and queen of angels] (Fritz Bornemann, *Ferdinand Medits und Magdalene Leitner in der Geschichte des Steyler Missionswerkes* [Ferdinand Medits and Magdalene Leitner in the history of the Steyl Mission Enterprise], *Verbum Supplementum* 4, Rome 1968, p. 47). At the beginning of the year 1883 Fr. Arnold seems to have felt that the time for such a missionary religious congregation had come.

Some thoughts regarding the structure of a religious missionary society

In the spring of 1883, but before July 1883, (Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, Steyler Verlag, Nettetal, 2002, p. 207, footnote 14) Fr. Arnold wrote a draft about the future form and structure of a religious missionary society. At the time the founder had already decided on having a general chapter, and had "done some preparatory work" (*ibid.*). Here are some important points of this draft:

One Society – three groups

The society was to be "both one and three, for it embraces three societies": clerics, brothers and sisters. "These three groups are related to the three archangels, Michael, Raphael, and Gabriel – not the Trinity. The basic Rule for the clerics is to be the Rule of the Third Order of St. Dominic, for the brothers the Rule of the Third Order of St. Francis and for the sisters the Augustinian Rule (*ibid.* p.208).

Name and leadership of the society

The name of the society is to be: "Congregatio sanctissimi Verbi incarnate" – "Congregation of the Most Holy Incarnate Word" or the short form: "Congregatio Verbistarum". The society's members are therefore called "Verbist Fathers, Verbist Brothers, Verbist Sisters" (*ibid.*). There is one and the same superior general for the three groups. The lay brothers have also a vicar general. "He will be chosen from the

clerics or the brothers, whichever seems to be more appropriate (*ibid.*) For the sisters there will be a vicar general as well, with Bornemann speaking of a “*Generalvikarin*”, meaning a female vicar general (Bornemann, *Ferdinand Medits and Magdalene Leitner...*, p. 122, endnote 2).

The goal of the society

The three groups have the same goal: “the propagation of the kingdom of God on earth”. The particular goal of the brothers is to be helpers of the clerics. “They either live together with them to help them in their external works or have their own houses,” depending on the needs of the mission, for instance “orphanages, schools, institutes for agriculture or trade schools” (see Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 209).

APOSTOLIC PREFECTURE FOR SOUTH SHANTUNG

On April 19, 1883 Fr. Arnold had applied to the propaganda in Rome to separate South Shantung from the Apostolic Vicariate of Shantung and establish an Apostolic Prefecture, entrusted to the Steyl missionaries. On June 12, 1883 the propaganda answered: “The Cardinal Prefect would follow the customary procedure and actually erect the new apostolic prefecture only after it had been determined who the apostolic prefect would be. Some doubts had been raised against the present ecclesiastical superior in South Shantung [Anzer].... Though they were not mentioned by name, Bishop Cosi and his co-workers must have occasioned the doubts...” (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Arnoldus Press Manila, 1975, p.145).

Fr. Anzer in urgent need of money

In a letter to Steyl of June 29, 1883 Fr. Anzer described his bad financial situation. On June 30, 1883 Fr. Arnold received a telegram from Fr. Anzer: “Rector Janssen, near Venlo: Immediately [send] 8000 Mark; otherwise mission will collapse” (Richard Hartwich, *Steyler Missionare in China* [Steyl missionaries in China, *Analecta SVD* – 61/I, Rome 1983, p. 63]).

THE VISIONARY MAGDALENE LEITNER AND THE FOUNDATION OF A MISSIONARY SISTERS’ CONGREGATION

During Fr. Arnold’s visit to Vienna the Vincentian Fr. Medits, influenced by Miss Magdalene Leitner, spoke with him about the founding of a sisters’ congregation. Fr. Arnold must have found the topic interesting since Helena Stollenwerk und Theresia Sicke were already in Steyl to become sisters. So back in Steyl, he asked Fr. Medits in a letter what exactly “the particular soul” (Fr. Medits had not mentioned the name of the visionary) had told him about the foundation of a sisters’ congregation. On July 9, 1883 Fr. Medits wrote his answer; here follow some points of his letter: “The congregation was to be called the ‘Daughters of the Holy Spirit’.” They were to pray for the priests and religious and make atonement for them. Our Lady should be venerated by them as their protector under the title “Immaculate spouse of the Holy Spirit”. The congrega-

tion was to consist of choir and lay sisters. “The choir sisters would wear a rose coloured dress, a blue mantle and white veil. The lay sisters would wear blue and white (red symbolizes love, blue humility, white purity)” (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, p. 225). Fr. Medits closed his letter with the words: “May the Holy Spirit enlighten Your Reverence and may he give us the grace and joy to see you and your two congregations pretty soon in Austria. I believe the Lord had his special intentions when he brought us together” (Bornemann, *Ferdinand Medits und Magdalene Leitner...*, p.63).

THE FIRST BROTHERS SENT TO CHINA

On July 26, 1883 the first two brothers were sent to China: Brothers Francis Dewes and Ceslaus Blas. Since they were to work in China, they had made their first vows on July 22, 1883 for nine years. On July 26 they received the mission cross together with the newly ordained Frs. Bartels and Bückner, as well with the deacons Limbrock and Laxhuber.

BISHOP COSI OF SHANTUNG VISITS STEYL

Announcement of the visit – Giving of the mission crosses

In the morning of the same July 26 just mentioned, Fr. Arnold received a telegram announcing the visit of the Vicar Apostolic of Shantung, Bishop Cosi. At 11.am the Bishop, accompanied by the Chinese priest Fr. Hieronymus Shan and the Franciscan Fr. Cornelius, arrived in Steyl.

During the mission sending celebration of the above-mentioned new missionaries, the Bishop gave them the mission crosses. All six of them were to work in his Vicariate, however in that part which was entrusted to the Steyl missionaries (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, p. 146).

The Bishop’s real reason for his visit

Once the celebrations were over and the new missionaries had departed, the Bishop told Fr. Arnold the real reason for his visit and it had to do with the person of Fr. Anzer. He was impossible as ecclesiastical superior. Some of the Bishop’s complaints were: “Anzer was impulsive in speech and actions, sometimes unjust to others, lavish in spending, [incurring debts], and often for useless things” (*ibid.*).

FR. ARNOLD’S PROPOSED SOLUTION OF THE ANZER PROBLEM

On July 30, 1883 Fr. Arnold answered a letter the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda, Simeoni, had written to him on June 12, 1883 expressing reservations against Fr. Anzer. In his answer Fr. Arnold wrote: “When such problems arise, it all comes down to this: What is the best thing to do? I must form my own opinion about the whole matter and have therefore first tried to find out what others think. At the same time, I must be mindful of both fraternal charity and the truth, as well as the welfare of the



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THE BROTHERS OF ST. MICHAEL'S MISSION HOUSE

Formation and numbers

In a letter to Fr. John Baptist Anzer of August 1, 1883, Fr. Arnold wrote about the formation and the numbers of brothers at that time:

After the postulancy there will be a two-year novitiate, then vows for three years in honor of St. Raphael, three years in honor of St. Gabriel, three years in honor of St. Michael, then final vows in honor of the most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Until now we have five brothers who made their first vows for three years. The two brothers Dewes and Blas made their first vows for nine years, because they went to China. There are 14 novices and some postulants (see Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 315).

In the St. Michael's Almanac of 1884 we read that two brothers were appointed for China; one of them learned in Venlo to repair watches and the other studied in Bonn in order to be able "to cure the Chinese people's eyes of the body".

Br. Clemens Lanze and his special contribution to the press apostolate

Br. Clemens Lanze was born in 1858. By profession he was a factory worker and coal miner. In August 1883 he entered the Steyl mission house. His first job there was to work in the garden. However, already after three months, he, who was still a postulant, proposed to Fr. Blum a new way to win new subscribers to the Steyl magazines: Brothers of the mission house should go from house to house in towns as well as in the countryside and canvass readers in Catholic families for the magazines. The subscribers should be gathered in groups and each group should be entrusted to a special promoter who would receive the magazines, distribute them to the subscribers, collect the subscription fee and send it to Steyl. The publishing house in Steyl should be in contact only with those promoters, not with the individual readers.

The new element in this proposal was the employment of brothers and their contact with the special promoters. These were the trusted liaison persons with Steyl or, as it was later said, "fellow missionaries. The success was dependent on their zeal and trustworthiness." Fr. Blum remembers: When Br. Clemens made the proposal to him, the whole thing looked to him "at first like a fairy tale." However, he accepted the proposal and it did not take long and the success was obvious. Br. Clemens explained



Josef Freinademetz – on the way to perpetual vows

At the end of 1883 Fr. Josef Freinademetz asked Fr. Arnold if he could make the perpetual vows. On January 4, 1884 Fr. Arnold responded: "Your application for perpetual vows gave me much joy and I have nothing whatsoever against it. However, since vows are always made on a particular rule and we are now about to finalize it as soon as Provicar Fr. Anzer has arrived here, we are necessarily obliged to wait with the vows until the rule has been confirmed" (Bornemann, *Die Gelübde in Steyl bis 1884* [The vows in Steyl until 1884], Nova et Vetera, September 1960, p. 470).

Hendrina Stenmanns (Mother Josepha) applies for acceptance in Steyl

Discernment and decision

Since her last visit to St. Michael's mission house on Pentecost 1883, Hendrina Stenmanns strongly felt the call to become a nun "and to dedicate herself to serve the missions." When Lambert Welbers whom she had helped to study in Steyl heard about her wish, "he sought to encourage her and get her to apply [in Steyl] for acceptance" (Assumpta Volpert, *Mutter Maria Stollenwerk, Mutter Josepha Stenmanns*, Herz-Jesu-Kloster Steyl, 1920, p. 51). After much deliberation and prayer, by Christmas 1883 she was sure. There was no doubt in her mind that it was God's voice that called her to the mission house in Steyl. On the feast of the Three Kings 1884 (January 6, 1884) she wrote her application to Fr. Arnold.

Application and acceptance

Hendrina wrote to Fr. Arnold: "I have prayed earnestly for the light of the Holy Spirit that God may lead me according to the plan he has had for me from all eternity. The thought that I should enter the Mission House never leaves me. I now ask you, Reverend Father, to be so kind as to accept me into the house as a maid. I desire nothing more than, with the grace of God, to be the least and to offer myself as a sacrifice for the work of spreading the Faith. I accept God's most holy will and submit myself to your judgment. If the Lord God means me to enter a convent, I will get there one day. In May I will be thirty-two and it was not possible for me to seek admission elsewhere before this, because I could not leave the promise I gave my dear mother on her deathbed unfulfilled. [At the wish of her mother she had promised to care for her younger brothers and sister].

Please, Reverend Father, kindly answer me and let me know whether I should enter at Easter or when I should come. My father agrees to this" (Ortrud Stegmaier SSpS, ed., transl. Jacqueline Mulberge, *Arnold Janssen, M. Josepha, Hendrina Stenmanns, Correspondence 1884-1903, Quellen* [Sources] No. 14, pp.33-34).

On January 10, 1884 Fr. Arnold accepted her into Steyl (*ibid.*, p. 35, footnote 4).

his method like this: “For one or two days I looked for good people who as volunteers would sell 5-15 copies of the St. Michael’s almanac. If they had not sold them after a few days I got them back and took them to other people. That is how I learned to look for the special promoters and the ideal system of the promoters gradually developed” and, so we can add today, it is still in place. Fr. Blum expressed his appreciation of Br. Clemens’ work by saying: “To this man we owe simply everything. Through his system of gaining and looking after the special promoters he made the printing press great and with it ourselves as well.” According to a calculation by Br. Benno Loeb SVD, in the active period of his life Br. Clemens made 377 journeys comprising 9219 days= 25 years and 94 days, covering a total of 230.500 km”. Br. Clemens died on July 20, 1940. The SVD historian Fr. Kraus says: “In Steyl as well as in the SVD Br. Clemens is unforgettable” (all quotes taken from: Johannes Kraus, *Die Steyler Brüdergemeinschaft und ihr Wirken* [The Steyl Brothers’ community and their work], Nova et Vetera. September – December 1975, pp. 277-281).

CONSTITUTIONS FOR THE SOCIETY OF THE DIVINE WORD

Letter of Bishop Paredis of Roermond

During his audience with Pope Leo XIII in April 1883 Fr. Arnold had presented two questions to the Pope which had to do with the form his foundation should have: should it be a congregation with vows or a community of secular priests without public vows and would his community be allowed to use the Third Order rules of the Dominicans and Franciscans. The Pope forwarded these questions to the Congregation for Bishops and Religious that in turn told Bishop Paredis of Roermond to ask for the opinion of the missionaries and the other members. On October 25, 1883 the Bishop forwarded this request to Fr. Arnold. He wrote that the Congregatio Episcoporum et Regularium [Congregation for Bishops and Religious] had written to him, stating that the Rector of Steyl intended to give a religious rule to his foundation with the usual religious vows; “the basis of the rule should be the rule of the Third Order of St. Dominic together with a few points from the rule of the Third Order of St. Francis; the Bishop would now like to know what the co-workers, in the mission as well as in Steyl, thought about this plan. (Bornemann, *Die Gelübde in Steyl bis 1884* [the vows in Steyl until 1884], Nova et Vetera, September 1960, p. 456)

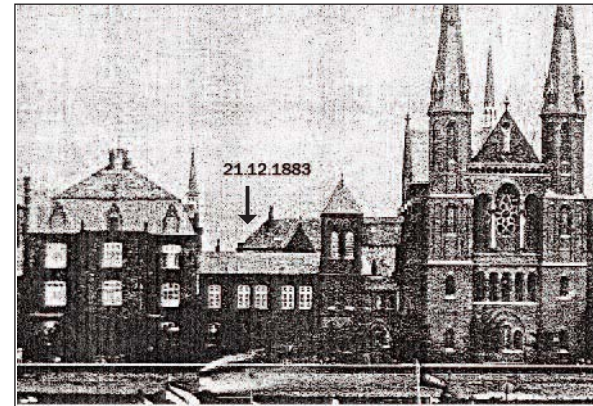
Fr. Arnold’s questionnaire to the missionaries

“We still have the draft of the questionnaire put to the missionaries. Even if only those who were full members were entitled to a say in the establishment of a Rule, Fr. Arnold wrote, “regarding one or the other point I reserve the right to hear the opinion of those who are still only provisional members.” This applied to the question whether the statutes being drawn up were to include the obligation of religious poverty. So the missionaries were asked to state if they were basically for or against it; and if they would subject themselves to it even if they had voted against it. Finally the decisive question came, “If you are in favor, what would you think about taking the vow of poverty? What about pronouncing the vow of chastity?’ So that each individual would be really free in his response and there would be no upset or arguments,

there should be no discussion about the question. Each individual should hand in his personal position in writing, having implored the necessary enlightenment from the Holy Spirit in prayer for one week” (Joseph Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 206).

December 1883 – another new building completed

In the summer of 1883 the construction of a building began which was to connect the mission house with the new church. In the “Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote” (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart) of February 1884, we read that in December 1883 the construction of the interior of the building had been so far completed that “at least



several rooms could be used. In this new building, besides a new and bigger kitchen, there is also the sacristy, furthermore a stone staircase to the upper church and sacristy, finally a hallway three meters wide. This hallway provides a better connection to all the other parts of the house. However, while the other three corridors are almost one meter narrower, and are

also situated in the middle of the respective buildings with rooms to their right and left and are therefore less light and friendly without being outright unfriendly, the new hallway is constructed differently. It is brighter, higher and friendlier. In the middle it widens out into a six-sided hall. From there the new staircase leads to the upper church. We give thanks to the Lord for the happy completion of this hallway and the whole building of which it is a part.“



Towards an Austrian mission house

After his audience with the Austrian emperor in May 1883 Fr. Arnold was told by the ministry of education, that the head of the new school had to be an Austrian citizen and had to give proof of his academic qualifications. At the end of December 1883 Fr. Arnold submitted “his Prussian teacher’s certificate, and asked that it be recognized by the Austrian Government. At the same time he submitted the planned curriculum of the six-year Latin school, the two-year college [lyceum] and the three-year course of theology” (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Arnoldus Press Manila, 1975, p. 201).

The other day she went out to Wiener Neustadt and was there all day until late in the evening. On Tuesday she was in the St. Poelten area, a three-hour trip. Wednesday again the whole day. What is more, all my efforts to get her to accept money for her expenses have been in vain. No, she says, I am doing it for the dear Lord and in order share in this good work. And she is not a wealthy woman, though she is not exactly poor” (ibid.).

Miss Fanny Stefko

Miss Stefko’s contribution was quite different. On the occasion of her name day, Fr. Arnold wrote to her on March 9, 1893 thanking her for everything God had done through her for him and for all the SVD. Concretely: “How often did you kindly refresh me, when I came to you tired and exhausted; and you gave me the opportunity to take notes in your house which hopefully will prove useful in the future. They will still be doing good long after you will have been resting in the grave and they will continuously increase your heavenly crown. At the same time I thank you for everything you have done for St. Gabriel’s since then”(Arnold Janssen Archives, Generalate SVD, Rome).

The decision

Eventually Fr. Arnold decided “on a place that lay midway between the railway stations of Brunn and Moedling, in the municipality of Maria Enzersdorf, seven miles south of the heart of Vienna... The property was considerably larger than what Fr. Janssen had in mind. Still six hectares were not too much, and were cheap at 12,500 Austrian Gulden” (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, Manila Press, p. 202).

Reasons for the choice of the property

The decisive reasons for choosing this property were the proximity to the capital Vienna, the excellent connection to the railway and trams, and the location in the open plain and yet close to the magnificent Vienna forest mountains. Furthermore, “the thought of the proximity of a large university and the many scientific advantages which the museums and libraries of the capital offered must have influenced him to build his house near Vienna.” Last, but not least, there was a lack of priests, “and the founder hoped that his spiritual sons might at least to some small extent be of help in rebuilding the religious life of that region” (on all of this see: Hermann Fischer SVD, *Life of Arnold Janssen*, transl. Frederick M. Lynk SVD, Mission Press, Techny Ill., 1925, p. 298.299).

ON CHRISTMAS DAY
CHRIST WANTS TO BE BORN IN OUR HEARTS.

(*Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote – Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart, 1891,*
Mission Magazine founded by Fr. Arnold)

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OF YOU!

Editor: Jürgen Ommerborn SVD ■ Arnold Janssen Sekretariat Steyl ■ Layout: Clemens Jansen SVD



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The Arnoldus Family Story

HENDRINA STENMANNS – MOTHER JOSEPHA

On January 10, 1884 Fr. Arnold had accepted Hendrina Stenmanns as a maid of the Divine Providence Sisters in St. Michael’s mission house. On January 18 Hendrina wrote to Fr. Arnold: “Thank you wholeheartedly for accepting me to share in the work of spreading the Faith. I will remain truly grateful to God for this great grace. I will also pray fervently that the good Lord may support me with his grace and enable me to give myself wholly to him. I beg your Reverence kindly to have a little patience because I cannot come sooner than three weeks from now, Tuesday, 12 February” (Ortrud Stegmaier SSpS, ed., transl. Jacqueline Mulberge, Arnold Janssen, M. Josepha, Hendrina Stenmanns, Correspondence, Rome 2005, p. 35).

TWO STUDENTS FROM STEYL IN INNSBRUCK /AUSTRIA

On March 29, 1884 Rev. Josef Weber had been ordained priest together with the first Steyl student, carpenter and building supervisor Henry Erlemann. Rev. Weber was sent to Innsbruck to study Natural Sciences (geology) there. His companion was subdeacon Augustin Henninghaus who later became the successor of Bishop Anzer in China. He also was to study Natural Sciences. The two lived in a Catholic boarding house. Rev. Weber celebrated daily holy Mass in the nearby church and Henninghaus was the altar server. Their main subject of studies was geology, and in addition experiential physics and chemistry. They also attended theological lectures by famous Jesuits. Fr. Arnold had given strict orders regarding how they were to live as students: They had to observe faithfully all the religious exercises as in Steyl; they always had to wear their cassock, they did not own an overcoat. Only for excursions into the mountains with their professor were they allowed to wear a shorter cassock, called *soutanelle* (in Hermann Fischer, Augustinus Henninghaus, pp. 42-44).

THE MAIDS – SISTER CANDIDATES CHOOSE A SUPERIOR

On June 15, 1884 Fr. Arnold met the four maids. Mother Maria wrote in the SSpS chronicle: “If I am not mistaken, it was Sunday after Corpus Christi in 1884; on that day there was the Corpus Christi procession in Tegelen and therefore no High Mass in the mission house. During the morning Rev. Superior asked us to meet with him; his voice was still hoarse; he had not yet fully recovered from pneumonia [from which

he had been suffering since June 7]. He told us that he intended to travel to Austria in the afternoon in order to establish a mission house there. He asked us to pray zealously in that intention. He thought that there would also be something special for us in it. Then he also recommended to us the prayer for the election of a superior; until then there had been a change each month. Each one was to write on a piece of paper the one she chose as superior. That was done. Helena Stollenwerk was elected and Fr. Arnold approved it.”

ON THE WAY TO VIENNA

In the afternoon of June 15, 1884 Fr. Arnold began his journey to Vienna. He broke his journey a number of times and finally arrived in Vienna in the afternoon of June 19. He stayed with the Vincentian Fathers who welcomed him warmly.

IN VIENNA

Difficulties made by the Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education had informed Fr. Arnold that “a plan for a complete course of studies such as at Steyl would run into serious difficulties. A program of higher studies for Austria should be abandoned for the present. The plan should be limited to a private school with humanistic studies without state recognition. This would require the approval of Father Janssen’s Prussian teacher’s certificate as well as Austrian citizenship; however, an exemption could be obtained from the latter condition.” These difficulties caused Fr. Arnold to ask for admission to a general audience with the Emperor (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Manila, Arnoldus Press, 1975, p. 201).

July 3, 1884: Audience with the Austrian Emperor

Fr. Arnold was admitted to the general audience with the Emperor which lasted 5-7 minutes. To his brother John in Steyl he wrote: “Because I am a priest, my turn came rather quickly. It is important to have one’s points prepared in writing as clearly as possible, and that this be given to the Emperor. The matter will then be taken care of, whereas the mere spoken word is soon forgotten. First, I thanked him for the audience of last year, and for his gracious interest in the establishment of an Austrian mission seminary. Then I asked leave to show him a photograph. I showed the view from the Meuse [Maas], and he thought it was beautiful. All this, I told him, had been developed in nine years. Then I showed him pictures of the mission, and told him about the extraordinary success achieved there in two years. I also showed him where Father Freinademetz from Tyrol is working. I asked whether I might, perhaps, leave both photographs with him. He accepted them gratefully, and concluded by assuring me that he would see what more could be done in the matter. ... I hope he will do something about it, though I can’t say for certain that he will.” However, Fr. Arnold had not mentioned to the Emperor anything about the exact nature of the curriculum of the planned institute. “I informed him that I hoped to solve the problems and to

make a small beginning in the fall of 1884 or the spring of 1885, in a favorable location in Lower Austria (either in the dioceses of Vienna or St. Poelten). I also asked him to permit me to speak with him again should problems arise now or later, and to be gracious enough to take the project under his own protection, or to allow me to ask his son, Crown Prince Rudolf, to do so...” (*ibid.*, pp. 201-202).

Fr. Arnold’s immediate plans

On July 4, 1884 he wrote to his brother John: “I still have to write out the most important and most difficult applications to the department of education and the governor’s office. I realize I cannot complete the latter until I have found a suitable place. It seems I will have to extend my stay here; I still have a number of important visits to make. As it happens, I arrived here only just in time because all the real ‘big fish’ have already left for their summer resorts. ...” (Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Nettetal, Steyler Verlag 2002, pp. 198-199).

Fr. Arnold in action

Since Fr. Arnold was staying with the Vincentians, the Vincentian priest Fr. Medits was able to write about Fr. Arnold’s daily activities: “He usually left the house by nine o’clock in the morning and not infrequently had to wait for hours in the ante-chambers of the officials, often until one or two o’clock in the afternoon. It would be after five o’clock when he returned home completely exhausted. Yet not a single word of complaint crossed his lips. If I sympathized with him he would say: ‘Be silent, my friend; good works demand sacrifice. God and immortal souls deserve that we be ready to make every sacrifice’” (Bornemann, *Remembering Fr. Arnold*, p. 133).

The choice of a place for the new mission house

Fr. Arnold had to get the exemption from the requirement of Austrian citizenship from the government of the district in which the school would be located. “Therefore he had to decide on a definite location, and he resolved at once to buy some property. He wrote a brief advertisement: ‘Anonymous buyer wishes to buy property, one and one half to seven hectares in the vicinity of Vienna’” (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, Manila Press, p. 202). Fr. Medits published the ad in several Vienna newspapers. The offers came in ...

Co-workers of Fr. Arnold helped to find a place for the new mission house

They were two women who both had Fr. Medits as their spiritual director.

The widow Mrs. Biber

The incoming offers were “screened with painstaking care by a kindly widow, the shrewd Mrs. Biber”. Fr. Arnold wrote about her: “She learns everything she can. She goes to the recorder’s office, examines the size, location and any encumbrances against the title, inspects the property itself, and supplies me with a detailed report.