

goal was, so small were the means. Therefore it saw great difficulties and a justified distrust before it. ...

“Thanks be to God! The very daring, and equally dubious, work has to some extent become a success thanks to His extraordinary help. The collapse, which for multiple human reasons had been considered imminent, has not happened. The Lord God who wants the mission work to be continued has treated us not according to our merits, but according to His groundless mercy. And so today we can look back at those accomplished first 25 years. Those were years of hard work, many worries, great sufferings. But what does all of this signify when blessing follows suffering! And so we have been able to gather together today to celebrate also here, at this place of the foundation, the jubilee of the foundation. ...We are now obliged to show that all the good which has happened here has received its beginning, progress and completion from the Lord God. However, men and women have to cooperate with divine grace. But this cooperation is small in relation to what God does and men and women cannot praise themselves because of their cooperation. ... With holy Scripture we have to say: ‚It is your work which has come into being here’.

God's work

“Yours it is if the small beginnings of one priest and two students has now grown to 224 priests and 556 Brothers and more than 800 students. You have called them all. You have nourished them with graces and raised them. You have given them perseverance in their state of life. And all the good which they have done until now is your work.

“It is also you who raised up benefactors and through your astonishing and graced help you gave these more than 1600 persons their daily bread. ... And so in all things God's blessing is wonderful. Out of the small house which stood here in 1875 has come a big house with many residents, and to this house there now belongs the beautiful church in which we are right now. To the house many other things belong. ... like the big house of the sisters, the novitiate, the printing press, the St. Anne's farm. And this small house was joined by three more houses in Europe: the mission houses St. Gabriel, Holy Cross and St. Wendel, all three of them with a great deal of persons. ... In all these places people pray, study, work and new workers for the Lord's vineyard are always being prepared. However, this vineyard of the Lord is very huge. It is situated on all five continents. In all of them priests of the Society are working now. They work in three pagan missions: South Shantung in Asia, German New Guinea near Australia, Togo in Africa. They are present in 8 dioceses which belong to the three biggest republics of South America, namely Brazil, Argentina and Chile. Because of this distribution over the world Holy Mass is almost continuously celebrated by one of our priests. In the morning we offer Holy Mass here and in Africa, at noon they begin the celebration of Holy Mass in North- and South America and in the evening in China and Australia. That is a sweet consolation for me. Likewise, that through the work of the Society the Divine Saviour now lives in many churches and chapels where he is adored by the holy angels day and night and where He, in union with the Father and the Holy Spirit, bestows his grace on the children of men (*To be continued*).



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The Arnoldus Family Story

1900 AUGUST – Chile

August 13-15: Arnold Janssen writes to Frs. Albers and Langenstein in Valdivia.

Since May 24, Frs. Albers and Langenstein had been in the parish of Valdivia in the diocese of Ancud. In his letter Fr. Arnold informs the two of the imminent departure for Chile of Frs. Wilde and Kaufhold, as well as Br. Justus. Furthermore, he admonishes the two priests to have courage, to trust in God and to be prudent: “But be prudent and careful in what you do and that all the more since the two of you are still young and the situation is difficult.” Fr. Arnold continues: “Be faithful in the introduction of good house rules with meditation, particular exam, etc. If you haven't started it yet, I will dispense you for the time being from the second meditation until the new confreres have arrived and everything is in good order. Smoking and similar things must not be permitted, as is clear from the Constitutions.” “For New Year I expect from each one of you a thorough report regarding the house rule and the observation of the Constitutions.” “Why Fr. Kaufhold is coming instead of Richartz: Fr. Kaufhold “is prepared to begin with a parish school and if he finds suitable people for it, to train privately house teachers later. This is important in the whole of South America and our newly ordained priests have received orders accordingly” (Jos. Alt, *Arnold Janssen SVD, Briefe nach Südamerika* [Letters to South America], vol. II, pp. 94-95).

Brazil / Germany – August 14: Fr. Arnold writes to Fr. Dold in Germany (excerpt)

Officially, Fr. Dold was the superior of the SVD missionaries in Brazil. However, because of sickness he was living in Germany. Fr. Tollinger in Brazil was only deputy superior, but had to act as superior because of Fr. Dold's absence. Through letters Fr. Dold was in contact with confreres in Brazil. In his letter to Fr. Dold, Fr. Arnold admonishes him at first, to be more reserved in his letters to Brazil (Jos. Alt, *Briefe nach Südamerika* [Letters to South America], vol. II, p. 95, footnote 1 to letter 213). “Fr. Tollinger already has a very difficult task to fulfill and it will be impossible for him to manage the situation if he is not helped.” “If this does not happen, I don't see any help for Brazil.”

P.S. Please forward the attached letters [about the situation in Brazil] as quickly as possible to Fr. Gier. Fr. Köster is still too young and therefore he does not seem welcome to Fr. Willems and others. Furthermore, the Fathers of the General Council thought that it was a great obstacle that Fr. Tollinger was only deputy superior. In addition, by nature he seemingly wavers a bit in his decisions.” “However, I hope that in due time everything will become more and more clear. I think it necessary, however, that the main superior resides in Juiz.” “... Fr. Tollinger has never written anything against you [Fr. Dold] nor has

he made any application concerning you. On the contrary, he frequently requested me to send you back there as soon as possible.” “Please, let me know on this occasion how it is with your health, for instance if the sputum has stopped.”

“My wish is for the whole mission: From the Catholic parish school to the teachers’ college, even if in the beginning only privately for a few students. But without school and good teachers we won’t achieve anything permanent” (*ibid.*, pp. 95-97).

August 15: Arnold Janssen writes to Fr. Tollinger in Brazil

“If you have understood correctly my plan concerning the beginnings of teachers’ colleges, then present them to the Most. Rev. Bishops when there is an opportunity. Discuss them also with the confreres and then report back to me. I hope much from them for America. Presently, our first concern for teachers’ colleges must be the acquisition of suitable schoolbooks.” “... I wrote to you and asked for a report regarding the hacienda [property] you bought in Biririca and concerning the Missionary Sisters. I haven’t received an answer yet” (*ibid.*, pp. 97-98).

TOGO

August 15/16: At the order of the Apostolic Prefect Fr. Bücking in Togo, the first more important mission conference of the Togo missionaries took place on the mission station ‘Porto Seguro’ (Karl Müller, *Geschichte der katholischen Kirche in Togo* [History of the Catholic Church in Togo], p. 157).

Steyl – Rome

August 18: Arnold Janssen writes to the Prefect of the Propaganda, Cardinal Ledochowski:

In his letter Fr. Arnold asked the Cardinal about the decree of the approval of the Society. He hoped to receive it before the silver jubilee of the Society on September 8. However, he “did not receive an answer to this, nor any congratulations for the great feast”.

After the jubilee Fr. Arnold wrote again to Cardinal Ledochowski and sent him the jubilee book of 600 pages. “Whereas the Roman Congregation for the Missions had not found a friendly word for the work of the Mission Society,” in his letter Fr. Arnold thanked the Propaganda and the Cardinal for all the good the Society had received from them. Then he “again requested the approval of the Society.” “In response to this letter a belated congratulation on the jubilee soon arrived from the Prefect of the Propaganda”. With regard to the title and approval of the Society, the Cardinal would inform the founder in his own time. (Bornemann, *The Papal Approbation of the Constitutions of 1905, Verbum Supplementum 3*, 1967, p. 32-33).

SEPTEMBER 1900 – Steyl – Missionary Sisters

September 4: Mother Josepha writes to Arnold Janssen regarding the retreat for women in their convent:

“The good Lord has sent us numerous retreatants, there are 301 unmarried women here. The large sewing room, the ironing room and flower room are all occupied with beds, and so are the two large dormitories on the third floor, and seventeen beds are in the corridor. The sisters who normally sleep in the dormitories now sleep mainly in the attic. The sisters are working hard, they have a great spirit of sacrifice.

We have divided up the work in such a way that everything goes along smoothly and well in spite of the many guests. Since the noon meal is so late, we have given the sisters a good lunch. The sisters in the kitchen and those doing the serving eat even later. They speak during their meal because they cannot be at the common recreation. I am sure Your Reverence has no objection. ...

The paper folding machines work well, they get a good number of pages finished every day” (Stegmaier, Ortrud, transl. Jacqueline Mulberge, *Arnold Janssen M. Jospha, Hendrina Stenmanns, Correspondence 1884-1903*, pp. 177-178),

8. September: Steyl celebrates its silver jubilee

In the *Steyl Herz-Jesu-Bote* (Steyl Messenger of the Sacred Heart) we read in October 1900 [from October 1900 the name of the *Little Messenger* was changed into *Steyl Messenger of the Sacred Heart*] (excerpts):

A solemn celebration took place in the Steyl Mission House on September 8, the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, since on this day 25 years ago it was born. For the occasion of this jubilee the house was decorated inside and out. For several days the students had done their best, sacrificing their free time to make wreathes and triumphal arches. A magnificent triumphal arch was put up in front of the gate. Beautiful flags were flying from the towers. The church, and in particular the altar, was changed into a flower garden. A big hall was decorated with garlands and flowers to be the festive hall. High up between the two church towers was a wreath of flowers with the numbers 1875-1900.

Pontifical High Mass

The Bishop of Roermond, Dr. Drehmanns, celebrated a solemn pontifical High Mass at 10 a.m., together with the community of SVD and guests “in gratitude for the graces which God had given to this work.” – The preacher was Arnold Janssen.

Thanksgiving to Our Lady

Amongst other things Fr. Arnold said: “Today we celebrate... the birthday of a religious congregation, the Society of the Divine Word. Today 25 years ago it was born here under the protection of the holy Mother of God.

Therefore we have to greet her in particular who has become our Mother. Under her protective mantle a meagre, lowly child has grown up. Under her protection it has come of age now, and it comes today to greet its dear Mother and give her thanks and praise....

Thanksgiving to God

“It was on the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, September 8, 1875, when there began a work, most lowly, small and unappealing here in this location, a work which at the same time had a great and important goal in its sight. It wished to offer itself to the German-speaking people as a means to train those of their sons and daughters who felt called for the missions, and to lead them then to the missions. As great as the