

the provincial and co-founder of our Chinese mission. If some of the confreres have gone back to the missions, in the course of time he will certainly visit them. If that is the case, the feast may be celebrated in each main station. Then as many confreres as possible should gather so that all missionaries have the opportunity to congratulate him and to show the meritorious superior their respect. At the same time these gatherings may serve as late celebrations of the Society's jubilee and give the confreres the opportunity to celebrate at the side of the representative of the Society a small feast of being united in a religious family... We can't thank God enough for the gifts and benefits which he has given us over the past 25 years; we can't strive enough to cultivate brotherly love. May we prove ourselves good religious in all these things."

NEW GUINEA – September 29: *Fr. Arnold wrote to Fr. Limbrock amongst other things:*

Fr. Joseph Fischer is planning to sail from North America and arrive in Sydney on 22 November by way of the Pacific.

The 10 000 Marks were sent this summer for the steamship "Antonius".

The 12 000 Marks are being sent for the purchase of Drummoyne to Fr. Merg [MSC; he was procurator for the MSC mission in Rabaul and had also taken care of purchases for Limbrock, much to his satisfaction] (Jos. Alt, transl. Frank Mihalic, Arnold Janssen SVD, Letters to New Guinea and Australia, p. 50).

STEYL – September 29: *Celebration of the SVD jubilee in the Adoration Sisters' convent*

In the afternoon of this day there was a special celebration during which Fr. Arnold spoke about the "Martha" and "Mary" vocation.

"Martha and Mary complement one another. Whereas Martha works, Mary dedicates herself mainly to prayer.

"On all five continents the Society has achieved remarkable results. The missionaries have an enormous struggle in these places. Ordinarily they find no ready ears for their message and very few people are ready to follow them ... The fighters of our Society need the 'Mary' branch, the Cloistered Sisters, so that the priests, Brothers and Sisters will succeed in their work, so that the blessing of God will gush up and soften the alienated hearts through humility, meekness and other virtues and prepare them for Christianity. ... Be loyal fighters of prayer at the altar of the Lord" (Karl Müller, transl. Frank Mansfield, Contemplation and Mission, Rome 1998, p. 86).

September 30: *Celebration of the SVD jubilee in the convent of the Missionary Sisters*

It was a Sunday and the jubilee was celebrated with a solemn high mass and a celebration in the convent. Fr. Arnold and some priests of the Mission House took part (Stegmaier, transl. Jacqueline Mulberge, Arnold Janssen, M. Josepha, Hendrina Stenmanns, Correspondence, p. 180, footnote 75).



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The Arnoldus Family Story

1900 SEPTEMBER

September 8: *Steyl celebrates its silver jubilee (continuation)*

The pontifical high mass which the Bishop of Roermond celebrated was a mass of thanksgiving "in gratitude for the graces which God had given to this work." In his sermon Fr. Arnold gave thanks to Our Lady and to God and he then showed how God had been at work in Steyl during the past twenty five years. For him it was a personal consolation, "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."

Then Fr. Arnold gave an overview over the various missions entrusted to the SVD:

The Steyl world wide Missions

After four years of missionary work in German New Guinea there were 150 baptised persons living on two mission stations. A short while ago a third station had been founded.

In Togo there were 1500 baptised people living on six mission stations.

At Easter 1899, the *South Shantung mission* totaled more than 15 000 baptisms. If one included those who had died after baptism, altogether 20 000 people had been baptized as well as children in danger of death. The number of catechumens was 37000.

In many regions South America is like a mission country; the people have to learn once again to go to church and to receive the holy sacraments. God blesses the work of the religious working there. And among them our confreres have not been lacking God's blessing. In the places where our priests are working, church life has been re-awakened; many places tell of a rather lively church attendance and a pretty frequent reception of the holy sacraments. The fact that quite a few churches, schools and chapels have been built and that others have been extended shows the increasing religious spirit.

The situation in North America is even better. But there, as well, there is still very much to do. ... The first task is to save the youth. This is the purpose of the technical school founded in Shermerville near Chicago. Right now the completion of its building is nearing.

Considering all this, on the one hand one has to give thanks to God ... Pondering, however, everything that still remains to be done it is only rather little. The Saviour said:

“The harvest is great, the laborers are few. Ask, therefore, the Lord of the harvest to send workers in his harvest.” Following this word we have tried to increase the number of apostolic workers. ... Connected with this is the increase of candidates for ordination each year. This year there were 30. In a few years there will be 50 and more. ...

On the other hand, in Europe a lot remains still to be worked at and done for God. However, God blesses those countries which work for the missions. They increase themselves in the measure they give to others. The Society also did its best for Europe as much as it was able. That includes the supply work and retreats. More than 1800 supply places were provided for in 1899, that meant 30 each Sunday and feast day. [From the beginning in 1877] until now, more than 30 000 people took part in the retreats; last year more than 3 400...

Festive Banquet – Address of Bishop Drehmanns (excerpt)

During the banquet the Bishop of Roermond said among other things:

“In the festive sermon this morning we heard that the thought of founding a mission congregation was a divine thought.” The Bishop agreed and his reason was: “For twenty five years ago there was nothing here, except just a poor needy Bethlehem and now the Society has spread over the whole world and like holy church it gives its light to the whole world. *Digitus Dei* is here. Here is the finger, here is the power of God, everybody said ...

How many thousands of souls are being led from the night of paganism to God, how many have already come into this house and found God again with the peace of their conscience; how much good has happened through the magazines which go out from here to all German regions; how many graces may the prayers which so often ascend from here [to God] have drawn down also upon others!

It is true, this thought is a divine thought; however, what comes from God is to last a long time. When during the first 25 years in spite of the great difficulties of the beginning the Society has spread so much, so the society with its many priests, brothers and students has the guarantee of still greater achievements. This was certainly your prayer this morning that God send His Holy Spirit upon this congregation and that he may enable it to do great things in future....That was your wish that the young form themselves according to the example of the first fathers of the Society. That was your wish that when this generation has already received the reward for their merits, the future generation may continue the work in the same spirit, and that this blessing remain with the Society and that it may increase throughout the centuries.”

Fr. Arnold thanked the Bishop for his words and praised the bishops of Roermond for everything they had done for the Society (from Steyler Herz Jesu Bote [Steyl Mission Messenger], October 1900).

Apostolic Blessing

Fr. Arnold received the apostolic blessing for himself and all the members of the Society; furthermore he obtained permission to give the apostolic blessing with plenary indulgence to all present at the jubilee celebration on September 8 (Bornemann, Die päpstliche Approbation [The papal approbation] der Konstitutionen SVD im Jahre 1905, endnote 5 to p. 29).

September 8: Mother Josepha congratulates the Founder and the SVD

“Reverend Spiritual Father,

In our beloved convent we have already shared in many an uplifting occasion of the Mission House and also celebrated many joyful occasions ourselves; today's occasion, however, unique as it is, surpasses all and gives rise to feelings of the greatest joy among the entire community of sisters, together with the most fervent wishes for blessing. Our deeply revered Spiritual Father and the members of the Mission House are celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the foundation of the Society of the Divine Word. For a quarter of a century you, Most Reverend Fr. Superior, as the Founder, have worked tirelessly and with great effort for the well-being of those God entrusted to you. In the course of time, we, the sisters, with the help of the holy triune God and your great kindness also had the good fortune to number among these. In view of that, this highly welcome celebration urges us to offer the most respectful congratulations of the Missionary Sisters to you, Reverend Father, our greatest benefactor, in recognition of your immeasurable merit, as well as that of the revered Society, especially the oldest revered priests of the same ...” (Stegmaier, transl. Jacqueline Mulberge, Arnold Janssen, M. Josepha, Hendrina Stenmanns, Correspondence, pp. 178-179).

USA – September 11: Fr. Peil writes to Arnold Janssen

“The new building is progressing rapidly.[...] The 4th story is now being built. We hope to put the finishing touches to the building by the end of October. We will then still have time to think about our workshops” (Alt, transl. Robert Pung, Peter Spring, Arnold Janssen SVD, Letters to the United States of America, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 1998, p. 102, footnote 5 to letter 46).

CHINA – September 21: Arnold Janssen congratulates Fr. Freinademetz on his silver jubilee of ordination

May the Lord God help you to always do his most holy will. During the past 25 years since your priestly ordination on August 3, 1875 you have brought numerous and great sacrifices for his divine honor and the salvation of the immortal souls.

May he let the richest blessings flow to make your many labours and sacrifices fertile! That is my cordial congratulation and wish of blessing for your silver jubilee. ...

On the part of the Society I thank you in my name and on behalf of all our confreres for your faithful devotion which you have shown to her... I thank you that you have accepted the office of the provincial in spite of the great weight and burden and labour which is connected with it.

I ask God that he allow the richest blessings to come forth from the great hardships of this office... May God the Holy Spirit bless you and may he grant you full recovery of your health and still many years of blessed work for the best of the Society and the MISSION (Alt, Arnold Janssen SVD, Briefe nach China, Band II, Se. 102-103).

September 21: Fr. Arnold writes to Fr. Vilstermann

“Please, inform all confreres that it is my wish that Rev. Fr. Provincial may celebrate his joyful feast with everybody. This should happen in the following way: If all of you are still in Tsingtao, then he should celebrate it with all in the most solemn way, as it is fitting for