

## ARGENTINE – March 4: Fr. Superior Colling writes to Arnold Janssen

“I have no good news from Chile. First of all I receive one request after the other, I should send a priest who was capable to take over the college of the Merced; it was impossible to continue to work, unless the opposition of the priest Vio, until now assistant priest at the Merced, was stopped.[...] In addition to this comes a third difficulty. It becomes clear that the relationship of the three new priests with Fr. Albers is clearly unfavorable” (Josef Alt, *Arnold Janssen SVD, Briefe nach Südamerika* [Letters to South America], vol. II, p. 183, footnote 4 to letter 248).

## CHINA – March 12: Signing of purchase contract

On this day the purchase contract concerning the purchase of land for the Society of the Divine Word in Taikachwang is signed. “The purchase contract of March 12 is for a piece of land of 1060 Mu (about 70 ha) for 18000 Tiao (about 36000 Mark) (Hartwich, *Steyler Missionare in China, Analecta SVD – 61/1*, p. 451).

## USA – March 26: Arnold Janssen writes to Fr. Superior Peil (excerpt)

“Fr. Beckert arrived safely on Wednesday, 20 March. He showed us photographs of your new building, which caused great astonishment. What a large building it is! If only the inner spiritual building is as well built! Otherwise everything is nothing, dear Father Peil. ...

“Several days ago I assigned some Sisters to you. They are the teaching Sisters, Sr. Leonarda and Sr. Alexia, and the “Rule Sisters”, i.e. working Sisters who live according to the same Rule, Sisters Foureria, Clara and Martina. I believe you will find these to be very capable Sisters. ... She [Sr. Leonarda] has been choir mistress and for the last six months has been novice mistress, to which I appointed her in order to equip her better for any subsequent position as superior. In addition, she is very talented at drawing. ...

“My warmest congratulations to you and to good Brothers Wendelin, Placidus and Blasius on the occasion of your perpetual vows and to Br. Homobonus on his third VOWS....” (Josef Alt, trans. Robert Pung and Peter Spring, *Arnold Janssen SVD, Letters to the United States of America*, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 1998, pp.107-110).

## NEW GUINEA – March 26: Arnold Janssen writes to Fr. Limbrock

In the last few days Fr. van [auf] der Heide received the following message from Bary, the North German Lloyd agent in Antwerp, dated 16.3.01: “According to the directives from our ship owners, we are no longer allowed to accept cargo for Potsdamhafen. Formerly we stopped there by way of exception, but now no longer. The delay which is caused to the [ship] Stettin by calling in at Potsdamhafen on its trip to and from Europe prevents it from keeping to its schedule. All the cargo meant for Potsdamhafen will have to be loaded off either at Berlinhafen or Friedrich-Wilhelmshafen. Please pass this information on to your friends, and also inform us at which harbor you wish to unload your cargo for Potsdamhafen.”

What adjustment will be necessary because of the coming shipping changes? Will that mean that the missionaries in Potsdamhafen will be cut off from the world, or are there still connections between the coastal stations? (Josef Alt, transl. Frank Mihalic, *Arnold Janssen SVD, Letters to New Guinea and Australia*, Rome 2001, pp. 66-67).



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MISSIONSHAUS STEYL | POSTFACH 2460 | D-41311 NETTETAL  
MISSIEHUIS ST. MICHAËL | ST. MICHAËLSTR. 7 | NL-5935 BL STEYL

## The Arnoldus Family Story

### 1901 – STEYL – ROM

#### February 4: Arnold Janssen writes to Cardinal Ledochowski in Rome

In his letter Arnold Janssen asked the Cardinal for permission to publish the 1898 Rule already before the Roman approbation, since it had already been approved by the Bishop of Roermond. “He also declared himself ready to correct individual points which the Congregation wanted corrected” (Bornemann, *The Papal Approbation of the Constitutions of 1905, Verbum Supplementum 3*, 1967, p. 37).

Fr. Arnold wrote this letter because he “knew that in order to obtain papal approbation the whole Constitutions of 1898 – over 350 pages – had to be reset on a different model. But the Society was waiting for its new rule. Many confreres had delayed taking their perpetual vows because a new rule was in the offing. They first wanted to be familiar with it before they bound themselves for life. Especially in China there was a number of priests who had made their first vows in 1888-1890, but who in 1901 had still not made any perpetual vows” (ibid., p.36).

#### USA – February 6: Fr. Superior Peil writes to Arnold Janssen

In this letter Fr. Peil describes the preparation for final vows for himself and Brothers Wendelin, Placidus and Blasius.

“Our novitiate [before final vows] is a rather poor one as yet. We have Holy Mass at 7:30 and after it pray the Rosary and litany of All Saints. After recreation following lunch there are the Stations of the Cross and litany of the Mother of God. On weekdays and Sundays we have reading during breakfast and keep to ourselves as far as possible. However, each one must do his work but keep silence while doing so. Once a week there is a conference in the evening. That is all that seems to me to be possible for the time being. A novitiate like the one held, for instance, in Steyl is not even to be thought of here during our first years. But I will strive to make up for the lost ground later” (Josef Alt, transl. Robert Pung and Peter Spring, *Arnold Janssen SVD, Letters to the United States of America*, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 1998, p. 104, footnote 2 to letter 47).

#### CHINA – February 7: Fr. Arnold writes to Fr. Freinademetz (excerpt)

I strongly insist that the Society acquire its own property. As I wrote to you, it should be in or very close to Tsingtao and in Taikia, because that has been promised and assured to us already for a long time.

I therefore kindly ask the Most Rev. Bishop, to comply with the wishes of the

Society and in case that something of his big property in Tsingtao is good for us and its sale does not stand against the interests of the mission, to sell something there to us.

See to it that somebody represents you and the interests of the Society in the Eastern part. Don't you think of Fr. Henninghaus? If you feel that the work which the Most Rev. Bishop has given you, is too much, then ask him to make the burden lighter. In any case, the matters of the provincial administration are your first duty. Naturally, you seek to avoid as much as possible all harshness towards the Bishop, but there where your office obliges you, you will not shy away from speaking a serious and decisive word. Otherwise in all your worries have courage and remember the word of the Lord: for those who love God all things will turn out well.

I had a jubilee book given to Cardinal Satolli and he thanked cordially, looked at the pictures and had them explained to him. Furthermore he remarked that now he was in favour of our title [Societas Verbi Divini]. Initially he had not been clear about it and he sent his cordial greetings to me. Therefore, courage and trust in God. ... Console and strengthen your confreres. God will not leave us. In spite of everything, He leads us on crooked paths straight to the goal (Josef Alt, *Arnold Janssen SVD, Briefe nach China* [Letters to China], Vol. II, p. 134-137).

#### **BRAZIL – February 15:** Fr. Köster writes to Fr. Arnold

Fr. Köster asks for Holy Spirit Sisters to be sent: 3 teaching and 1 Work Sister [domestic work]. At least two of the teaching sisters should be able to speak French well and fluently; for this is the only thing which the people are interested in. Finally, one of the Sisters should be a good musician as well as a proficient teacher in feminine work. [...]

At least those sisters who can't teach in French must give the hope that they will learn the Portuguese language well and therefore they must have a talent for languages and they must not be too old. The Sisters could start work immediately since they will teach in French. It wouldn't be good at all, if they studied first Portuguese; on their arrival they would neither speak Portuguese or French well, unless there is among them a sister with a special talent for languages. If at least the one or other speaks and teaches French well, everything is won.. – For classes in Portuguese the Sisters must take a Brazilian teacher; there are number of good ones here, one even would like to become a Sister for quite some time (Josef Alt, *Arnold Janssen SVD, Briefe nach Südamerika* [Letters to South America], vol. II, pp. 168-169, footnote 2 to letter 244).

#### **USA – February 24:** Fr. Superior Peil writes to Arnold Jansse

“Brothers Wendelin, Placidus, Blasius and I made our perpetual vows today; Br. Homobonus his last triennial vows. Everything went really well. Rev. Fr. Beckert celebrated the High Mass and gave a fine sermon. The celebration lasted for over two hours. Many guests from Chicago came for the event. Most of them had never seen anything like it. In the main, we followed the order of the service used at Steyl. After the celebration in church we entertained our guests in the new guest room, which

was finished just in time (Josef Alt, trans. Robert Pung and Peter Spring, *Arnold Janssen SVD, Letters to the United States of America*, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 1998, p.104, footnote 1 to letter 47).

#### **STEYL/ROME – February 24:** Arnold Janssen writes to Cardinal Satolli in Rome

In this letter Fr. Arnold “again took up in detail the objection that the rule was too long, too ascetical and too devotional.” He wrote:

“It is not easy to keep a Society in its true spirit when it has establishments and fields of activity in all parts of the globe. Add to this dangers which are bound up with missionary work. ... and the superiors responsible are still often somewhat young...”. In conclusion Fr. Arnold asked that the commission on rules again consider this question (Bornemann, *The Papal Approbation of the Constitutions of 1905, Verbum Supplementum 3*, 1967, p.37).

#### **MARCH 1901**

##### **Steyler Herz-Jesu Bote [Steyl Sacred Heart Messenger], 28, No. 6**

In the edition of the Steyler Herz-Jesu Bote of March 1901 the Decree of “the approbation of the Society of the Divine Word through the Apostolic See” is published.

##### **Decree**

Due to the zealous efforts of Rev. Arnold Janssen in Steyl, Diocese of Roermond, the pious Institute of the Missionaries of the Society of the Divine Word was established there in the year 1875.

This pious Institute has made the propagation of the faith and the conversion of pagans its special task and has been entrusted until now with several missions by the Holy See; to reach its purpose more and more it has also founded new houses in various dioceses.

When therefore the afore mentioned Rev. Janssen made the request that the Holy See may strengthen the afore mentioned institute through its approbation, the holy Consilium for the propagation of the Christian name was of the opinion, that with regard to the progress of Christianity by the Fathers of the mentioned Society of the Divine Word in the missions entrusted to them and with regard to the letters of recommendation by those bishops in whose dioceses the houses of the pious institute have been established, the approbation was to be given to the Institute of the Society of the Divine Word.

This decision of the holy congregation was presented in the audience of the designated day to our most holy Lord Leo XIII, by God's providence Pope, and His Holiness confirmed it and ordered to issue the present decree.

Given to Rome, in the house of the Holy Congregation for the propagation of faith, on January 25, 1901,

M. Cardinal Ledochowski  
Aloysius Veccia, Secr.