

Sisters (John Kraus, *Die Steyler Brüdergemeinschaft und ihr Wirken* [The Steyl Brothers community and their work], Nova et Vetera, December 1976, pp. 280-281).

On March 10 Fr. Arnold wrote to his brother John: “Christopher and Michael are already managing the cooking well. Bonifatius and Andreas wash the dishes and prepare the vegetables. Four Sisters have already left. The maids [Helena Stollenwerk, Theresia Sicke, Hendrina Stenmanns, Gertrud Hegemann] are learning how to mend the clothes (cf. Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 337).

Acquisition of land near the mission house

With the growing number of residents in the mission house their needs increased. The land which Fr. Arnold had bought in 1875 was too small to be used for farming. In 1877, 1879 and 1883 and later as well the mission house acquired some pieces of land during an auction. That, however, made the people in Steyl angry. Fr. Arnold wrote: “At the same time we noticed, how unpleasant it was for the people who lived nearby when a piece of land which they had hoped to buy, was bought by someone else” (in Hermann auf der Heide, *Die Missionsgesellschaft von Steyl. Ein Bild der ersten 25 Jahre ihres Bestehens* [The Mission Society of Steyl. A picture of the first 25 years of its existence], Steyl 1900, p. 90).

The Handerthof [Handert farm] in Tegelen

In that situation it was very fortunate that the owner of the Handert farm in Tegelen, *Miss Josephine de Ryk*, several times offered the farm to the mission house provided the mission house would pay her a fixed amount of money for the rest of her life.

The farm is situated “25 minutes from the mission house at the paved road to Kaldenkirchen [Germany], in a pretty lonely area... First we had a few reservations, but then we accepted the offer and later it became clear to us how lucky we had been to take over the farm. Now we did not have to act as rivals of the local people for buying small pieces of land ...”

St. Anne’s farm

“We placed the farm under the protection of St. Anne and called it St. Anne’s farm. With papal permission a chapel was built there and we could have the Blessed Sacrament.

We were able to begin with animal husbandry, connected with a butchery. So from the farm we received meat, milk, butter and cheese which we always needed very much, since the house gradually numbered more than 600 residents. In addition, in the mission house there were the big retreat groups with quite often 100, 200 or 300 and more people” (all of this: *ibid.*, pp. 90-91).



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Missionshaus Steyl | Postfach 2460 | D-41311 Nettetal ■ Missiehuis St. Michaël | St. Michaëlstr. 7 | NL-5935 BL Steyl/Venlo

The Arnoldus Family Story

JULY 1886

July 8, 1886

On this day the General Council expressed the opinion “that it would be best to have brothers in the kitchen later” (Josef Alt, *Journey in Faith*, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p. 337).

This is reflected in *Mother Maria’s*, *Helena Stollenwerk’s* entry in the chronicle of the Sisters: “In summer 1886 Rev. Fr. Superior informed us that the Reverend Sisters of Divine Providence would be leaving the Mission House. The Brothers would take over the kitchen. We would then live in a house in the neighborhood where we would take care of the Mission House laundry. He gave us to understand that this would bring us a step nearer to our goal. For the time being, however, things remained as they were; we continued with the dishwashing, looking after the preserves in the cellar, preparing vegetables and potatoes and helping the Sisters in the kitchen.”

July 12, 1886 – Chapter of Faults

In his letter to Bishop Anzer of this date he told the Bishop how he tried to support Fr. Medit’s work in Steyl, by setting a good example, also during the chapter of faults: “Recently I asked all the priests to attend all the conferences and exercises of the novitiate”, including the chapter of faults. “Then I also have the opportunity to express my *culpa* [fault] well and truly and humiliate my proud head. [...] During this, one row comes forward and kisses the floor before and after the confession of faults. Public admission of faults is a way of making reparation to God” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 221).

July 31, 1886 – Bishop John Baptist Anzer arrives in Puoli – South Shantung

The general chapter had ended on May 12, 1886. On that same day Bishop Anzer and newly ordained Rev. Augustinus Henninghaus began their journey to China. On July 31, 1886 they finally arrived in Puoli, which was the central station in South Shantung. Before they reached Puoli, they were welcomed by Brother Ceslaus, catechists and leaders of the Christian community, riding on horses. “Then the flags waved in the wind, the brass band played, as well as Chinese pipes and clarinets; there were gun salutes and there were fireworks. At the entrance of the village all Christians, orphans, students and innumerable non-Christian spectators. . A whole week long non-Christians and Christians brought presents to welcome the new bishop” (Richard Harwich, *Steyler Missionare in China*, [Steyl Missionaries in China], vol. 1, *Analecta SVD* – 61/1, Rome 1983, p. 106).

AUGUST 1886

August 15, 1886 – Vows on the new Constitutions in South Shantung

In Steyl the confreres had taken vows on the new Constitutions in February and March 1885. Bishop Anzer had taken a copy of the Constitutions to China, and so the confreres in South Shantung were able to take their vows on August 15, 1886 during a solemn Holy Mass celebrated by Bishop Anzer. In his capacity as Provincial, the Bishop presided over the vow ceremony before the exposed Blessed Sacrament. Fr. Joseph Freinademetz took final vows at that time. In his diary we read: “Then we pronounced our vows. I, through the grace of God and with the permission of my superiors, for life. So Brother Joseph, the die is cast. Pray, work and sacrifice, suffer and endure for the whole of your life for your beloved Chinese; then, when you come to the evening of your life and lie on your deathbed, you can sleep surrounded by your dear Chinese. Adieu! Farewell for ever, dear homeland beyond the sea!” (Fritz Bornemann, *As wine poured out, Blessed Joseph Freinademetz SVD Missionary in China*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Rome 1984, p. 105).

August 17, 1886 – Fr. Arnold Janssen celebrates his silver jubilee as a priest The celebration

At 10 am the solemn High Mass began with Fr. Arnold as celebrant. The sermon was preached by the diocesan priest Rev. Fr. Bless who, 25 years earlier, had been the altar server at Fr. Arnold’s first holy Mass. After Mass Fr. Arnold received the congratulations of his guests and then followed the festive meal. Around 4 pm there was another solemn gathering in honor of Fr. Arnold (Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote, [Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart], vol. 13, No. 12, September 1886).

What the catholic press said about Fr. Arnold

Occasioned by Fr. Arnold’s jubilee the Catholic press wrote about him: “If anyone wishes to see a truly amazing work of Divine Providence, he should go to Steyl. Arnold Janssen, the founder, was formerly a teacher in Bocholt. He is a man of prayer, mortification, with a serene and imperturbable trust in God. The founding of the mission seminary is another proof of an ancient truth. If God takes a project under his special protection, one can see immediately that it grows to greatness, not by grace of circumstances, but by God’s own providence” (in Fritz Bornemann SVD, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Arnoldus Press Manila, 1975, pp. 179-180).

Prayer and technical machinery

“Indelible is the impression one receives when attending, either in the early morning or in the evening, the common prayers of the future missionaries. The institution houses more than 300 people. One sees on every side exemplary order and cleanliness. Brothers of the Society run the press, which is equipped with the most modern technical machinery, and there is also a shop for painting and wood carving. The press, the mill and even the kitchen all run on steam power” (*ibid.*, p. 180).

The founder

“Who built the house? A man who is as firm as a rock. He is the very personification of energy. Despite his frail body, he has hardened himself; he works all day

long and seems to have his need for rest completely under control. He sleeps on a hard bed and often only a few hours a night. He occupies a room without the slightest adornment. There the mathematician and master designer drew the plans for the building and its organization. The accomplishment of a single man in scarcely eleven years. Or better: the work of God” (*ibid.*).

OCTOBER 1886

October 3, 1886 – Prayer in St. Michael’s mission house

Fr. Hermann Fischer, the biographer of Fr. Arnold, remembered: “I entered Steyl on October 2, 1886. The following day was a Sunday, the feast of the Holy Rosary. Except for the time needed for meals, we spent the whole day in the church gaining indulgences. The Founder led the prayers; he could not do enough to free as many souls as possible from Purgatory that day. By evening my knees were really sore; I was so depressed that I said to myself: ‘If things go on like this, you certainly won’t be able to stick it out.’ But things didn’t go on like that. Still a lot of praying was certainly done in Steyl during those days” (in Fritz Bornemann, *Remembering Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelgesang, Rome 1978, p. 118).

DECEMBER 1886

December 1, 1886 – Fr. Arnold Janssen becomes an Austrian citizen

On December 1, 1886 Fr. Arnold took the oath as a subject [of the Austrian Emperor] in the building of the Austrian embassy in The Hague, Netherlands, and so he became an Austrian citizen.

Part of the formula of the oath was read to Fr. Arnold to which he then responded:

“You will take an oath to the almighty God and, guaranteeing with your honor and faithfulness, you will vow to be always faithful and obedient to His Majesty..., Franz Joseph the First, by the grace of God Emperor of Austria and Apostolic King of Hungary as your rightful territorial prince and Lord, and ... also to his heirs who are of his blood and family.”

Then Arnold Janssen said:

“That which was just said to me and which I understood clearly, I must and will faithfully follow.” “So help me God!” Arnold Janssen (in: M. Csaky, *Der Untertaneneid* [oath of loyalty] of Fr. Arnold Janssen, in the K.U.K [Imperial and Royal] embassy in The Hague in the year 1886, *Verbum* 2, 1960, p. 428).

THE YEAR 1887

News regarding the kitchen and agriculture of St. Michael’s mission house

January 12, 1887

Since the Sisters of Divine Providence wanted to give up their work in kitchen and laundry, Fr. Arnold looked for Brothers to replace them. On January 12, 1887 Bros. Christopherus Knaup and Michael Fecken began as cook apprentices of the