

the experience of the Holy Ghost missionaries and the Trappists in Natal. Their success will be our inspiration. We can hope to emulate their achievements because we have so many missionary Brothers who know farming and the manual trades in which they were engaged here in the seminary.” Finally, Fr. Arnold asked Msgr. Montel to “present the case as effectively as possible before the Propaganda” (*ibid.*).

IMPORTANT EVENTS IN AUGUST 1891

August 15, 1891

Fr. Arnold once again appointed Helena Stollenwerk superior of the small community of the future missionary sisters.

August 24, 1891 - The new mission house in Prussia

In the minutes of the General Council’s meeting of this day we read: “Rev. Fr. Superior brought a letter of the Prussian minister of education to the notice of the council. It said that nothing stood in the way of the establishment of a mission house in Prussia and we could count on his (the minister’s) support. In the minister’s letter Fr. Superior missed the concession regarding teachers and expressed his reservations about beginning the foundation without it. The rest of the councilors were of the opinion that it would be best to accept the minister’s statement and take a gamble with a small beginning.” In the huge kingdom of Prussia the mission house was to be located in Silesia which in those days belonged to Prussia and today to Poland. The reasons for choosing Silesia as the location for the new mission house were:

- “a) because of the need for such an institution in the country itself;
- b) because of the substantial help provided by the Huch family [Mrs. Huch had given him the original idea of a mission house there];
- c) because of the great courtesy of the Prince-Bishop” (*Jos. Alt, Journey in Faith, p.440*).

To the participants of the last General Chapter Pope Francis said:

REMEMBER THE ORIGINS, THE ROOTS AND LOVE THEM!

THINK OF CEMETERIES IN DISTANT REGIONS;

IN ASIA, AFRICA, AMAZONIA:

MANY OF YOU ARE THERE –

HAVING DIED YOUNG AND HAVING GIVEN THEIR LIVES.

DO NOT FORGET: ROOTS AND CEMETERY!



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The Arnoldus Family Story

SOME EVENTS IN MAY AND JUNE 1891

May 1, 1891

On this day Adolphine Tönnies entered Steyl. At the beginning of the novitiate she received the name Sr. Michaela and later as Mother Mary Michaela she became the co-foundress of the Adoration Sisters. Before entering Steyl she worked as a teacher in a Catholic School in Northern Germany. One of her talents was to play the keyboard and soon after her entering Steyl she gave music lessons to the future sisters.

May 7, 1891

Fr. Arnold wrote a circular to all members of the society about the proceedings and work of the second General Chapter. “It was to be passed on to all the houses of the Society” (*Jos. Alt, Journey in Faith, transl. Frank Mansfield, Jacqueline Mulberge, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 2002, p. 229*).

May 10/14, 1891

In Goch Fr. Arnold’s mother, Anna Katharina Janssen died at the age of almost 82. On May 14, Fr. Arnold celebrated the Requiem Mass for her and the parish priest of Goch conducted the funeral.



June 21, 1891

Once again Fr. Arnold took up work on the Sisters’ rule. It was to be modeled on the SVD Rule, but with appropriate adjustments to the life of the Sisters (*ibid.*, p. 347f).

June 29, 1891

Adolphine Tönnies’ entering Steyl had born first fruits. The singing practices conducted by her enabled the sister postulants to enhance with their joyful singing the first High Mass celebrated in their chapel, as Mother Maria wrote in her chronicle.

NEW MISSION HOUSE IN PRUSSIA – NEW MISSION IN AFRICA

Correspondence Arnold Janssen – Paul Kayser / Wish of Cardinal Simeoni

July 4, 1891

Fr. Arnold had a very good relationship with Mr. Paul Kayser, the head of the colonial office in Berlin. To Mr. Kayser he wrote on July 4, that he had not undertaken any further steps regarding a mission house in Prussia. Concerning the acceptance

of a mission in Africa, the Propaganda Fide favoured it. And then Fr. Janssen connected the issue of a new mission house with the acceptance of a new mission in the German protectorate areas: “As soon as I am assured of the necessary support for our seminary in Prussia, I am resolved to take the matter of a mission in the German colonies seriously in hand” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, Manila 1975, p. 280).

July 12, 1891

Mr Kayser answered Fr. Arnold: “... Concerning your choice of a mission territory, the Government has no objections to Togo, though it is not a very healthful place. Still we do not wish to offend the Pallotines who have always been most obliging. The matter is one for the Propaganda to decide.” He was definitely opposed to South West Africa, partly in deference to the old Protestant mission there. He thought the right place for Steyl was the area around Lake Tanganyika in Uganda, “where the White Fathers are ... Most of them are Alsations but the superiors are French. It is his wish that missionaries trained in Germany and working under German superiors, be sent to East Africa” (*ibid.*, p. 280f).

On this day Prince Bishop Kopp of Breslau wrote to Fr. Arnold, “that the Imperial Chancellor in Berlin wanted to take a closer look at Steyl’s application about Togo now and was waiting for the corresponding steps to be taken” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 634).

July 16, 1891

Bornemann writes: “By a remarkable coincidence, Cardinal Simeoni of the Propaganda wrote only a few days later.” “I am very much concerned about the missions in South Africa. It is no longer possible to cope with the growing needs. More missionaries are needed to maintain the Catholic position against the Protestants. When Your Reverence was in Rome recently, I suggested that you select some territory in South Africa which would then be given the status of an independent mission and entrusted to your society. May I ask Your Reverence to inform us as soon as possible whether you are able to accept a mission in that area” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Jansen*, Manila, p. 281).

South Africa according to the understanding of the Propaganda

Fr. Arnold realized that South Africa, in the Propaganda’s view, seems to have meant all of the African continent south of the Sahara. Looking for a mission area, he limited himself to the German colonies. “That meant I would have to make a thorough study of travelogues, books and mission reports lest I venture rashly into unknown waters. So I immediately ordered various books, the most important travelogues, and so forth, and studied them as thoroughly as I could. All but the most necessary work I set aside. There was so much to learn: health conditions, climate, location, ethnic background of the tribes, rainy season, dry season, the possibility of having the entire mission transferred [to the SVD], future plans, etc.” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, Manila, p. 281).

THE DECISION ABOUT THE PREFERRED AREAS FOR A MISSION IN AFRICA

The preferred areas

On August 5, 1891 Fr. Arnold and his councilors decided to request Togo from the Propaganda in first place and in second place a mission in East Africa.

What areas in East Africa were under consideration? Fr. Arnold writes: “For a long time I did not know myself. Only yesterday – the eve of the last session – I got a clear idea of the health hazards in German East Africa from a report in the *German Colonial Review*.” The report cited exact statistics about the cases of malaria and other illnesses among Europeans and local people. So he decided in favor of the most healthful location, Saadani harbour... and the adjacent regions of Usega and Nguru, about 17000 square kilometers. “On the map it looks somewhat small. I hope the Holy Ghost Fathers won’t mind the division. After all they have not yet opened any stations in that direction. Besides, after Kilva, Saadani is the most healthful place along the coast, and the hinterland is beautiful.. With Bagamayo it has developed into the jumping-off point for caravans setting out to the Great Lakes” (Bornemann, transl. John Vogelgesang, *Arnold Janssen*, Manila, p.281-282).

Further Plans for East Africa

Fr. Arnold usually thought big, and so he did here as well. He thought that from Saadani as starting point “later on other missions could be taken over in the Sudan in the north. The Austrian ambassador in Rome had told him as well as Bishop Anzer “that the Austrian protectorate over a few mission stations along the Upper Nile might serve as the basis for a larger Austrian mission in which the interests of Church and State might coincide.” Fr. Arnold was agreeable to this suggestion, “since Austria had allowed him to build the major seminary of St. Gabriel in Vienna.” But to do so now was impossible for him - later it might be possible. (*ibid.*, p. 282).

Application to Cardinal Simeoni

On this very same August 5, 1891 Fr. Arnold wrote this application to Cardinal Simeoni: “In the first place I ask for Togo, the German colony in Africa which has a population of about 600 000, but no missionaries. If this is not possible, I ask in the second place for a small part of the apostolic vicariate of Zanzibar. ... It comprises about one third of the entire vicariate and one-eighth of the German part of the vicariate. As far as I know, no mission station has been erected there.” (*ibid.*)

Letter to Msgr. Montel in the Vatican

The application was accompanied by a letter of instructions to Msgr. Montel in the Vatican: “Because of its importance, the matter has caused me a good deal of trouble... A thoroughgoing study had to be made. ... We must choose first of all a place that is not too difficult, where we can test our strength and ability and find out what we are capable of doing. The experience we gain there will show us how much more we can do later on. The Holy See is also interested that we begin in a place where success is not so doubtful and which is neither too harmful to the health of the missionaries nor too difficult to reach. In the territory referred to, we shall be able to profit from