

For your reflection

In 1878 Arnold Janssen published the family magazine "Die Heilige Stadt Gottes" (The Holy City of God) which as "Stadt Gottes" (City of God) still exists today. In its very first issue of January 6, 1878, he wrote that this magazine also wished to be an 'instructive paper for the dissemination of commonly useful knowledge, particularly out of that exalted Temple of God which is nature, into which God has placed us so that nature will teach us His existence, greatness, wisdom and all his exalted qualities.'

In the year 2000 in the Hague / Netherlands the EARTH CHARTER was presented which has concern for our earth as its content. Fr. Superior General Pernia signed it on behalf of the SVD; in that way he made the concern for our earth our very own. In the August / September 2002 issue of the Arnoldus Nota he wrote: *For us in the Society of the Divine Word concern for the earth has not only to do with the concern for its survival, but it has to do with our very own spirituality and mission. To be concerned about the earth means: creation will remain God's Word through which God speaks to us and which keeps the whole of humanity alive.*

AT THE SERVICE OF PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

Ecumenical Dialogue

Our partner in the dialogue with our Protestant brothers and sisters, apart from the World Council of Churches, is the EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE (EA).

The Evangelical Alliance was founded in 1846 in London: Evangelical Christians from ten countries met to launch "a new thing in church history, a definite organization for the expression of unity amongst Christian individuals belonging to different churches."

Today there are Evangelical Alliance Groups in 128 nations in all continents with 420 million members. They all form the WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE (WEA) which was founded in 1951.

Its members seek "holiness, justice and renewal at every level of society – individual, family, community and culture" in order to glorify God and to bring lasting transformation to the nations of the earth. (WorldEvangelicalAlliance.com/wea and wikipedia)

Interreligious Dialogue

New President

Pope Benedict XVI appointed Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. Born on April 5, 1943 in Bordeaux, France, he joined the Vatican's Diplomatic Service in 1975. In 2003 he became Cardinal. Prior to his new appoint-

ment, which will become effective on September 1, 2007, he was chief Vatican archivist and librarian.

The task of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue is the promotion of mutual understanding, respect and collaboration between Catholics and the followers of other religious traditions.

A special commission of the Pontifical Council is the Commission for religious relations with Islam. (main source: wikipedia)

EARTH CHARTER

The earth charter ends with the words

Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.

For more information on the Earth Charter see www.EarthCharter.org.

The oceans appear to me as a marvellous, harmonious, festive peal of bells praising God's greatness in the vast temple of nature
(Josef Freinademetz).

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The Arnoldus Family Story

In the previous newsletters we accompanied Arnold Janssen on his way to the priesthood and to Bocholt, his first workplace. Rev. Waldau, the principal of the Bocholt Junior Secondary School, remembers:

We lodged together but took our noon and evening meals with Father Vahrenhorst, the parish priest. Father Janssen had always been quite pious but only in the course of time did he become remarkably so. At first he did what everyone else did. He smoked occasionally; accompanied me when I was invited to visit a family, just as I accompanied him when he was the one invited. ... Later on, however, he withdrew more and more into himself. He gave up smoking and gave me his little tobacco tamp – the kind one uses to tamp down the tobacco in a pipe. I still have it after these thirty years. ...

Janssen also wanted to have a small garden connected with the house "where one could walk and pray the breviary." So I rented a small piece of land nearby. Then he wanted the paths laid out in straight lines so it would be easier to walk up and down while praying. I objected to this and told the gardener so. Also I wanted nothing but plants and shrubs that would require little care, especially since I am no special friend of flowers. But Janssen wanted flowers and he won out. He watered them himself.... The people called our little plot the "Garden of Gethsemane" (Bornemann, Remembering Arnold Janssen, p. 41).

As priest and teacher Arnold drew a good salary. Part of it came from two curacies attached to the parish and conveyed to him by his bishop in August 1862. As curate he was obliged to be present in the sanctuary of the parish church during the solemn High Mass and Vespers on the highest feast days and he had to offer Mass 142 times each year according to the intention of the original donors. These two curacies provided a combined annual income of 221 talers plus a certain number of bushels of rye, buckwheat and oats. The total came to the sum of 306 talers. The city of Bocholt paid him almost the same amount, that means that, all in all, his annual salary amounted to around 600 talers. In comparison, the priest in charge of a large parish received only 400 talers plus stole fees (Bornemann, Arnold Janssen, p. 18). Arnold's income enabled him to pay his youngest brother Johns' school- and university fees so that he could become a priest. After ordination in 1876 John joined his brother Arnold in Steyl.



Rector Waldau

What kind of a teacher was Arnold?

When he left the teaching service in 1873 the school's principal, Fr. Waldau, gave him a very good reference in which we read:

... His teaching demonstrated that he had a thorough mastery of his subject. He prepared his classes carefully and went to great pains to make the matter understandable to the students. By posing precise questions, he showed the students how to give exact answers; he also knew how to make them work hard at home. ... He knew how to maintain discipline. He really tried to introduce the students to a moral and religious life and confirm them in that, not only in school but also outside it (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 29).

However, after the death of Arnold Janssen in January 1909, Rev. Waldau wrote to Steyl in a different tone:

Judging from my own memories, I believe that in connection with his teaching work, it would be better to confine ourselves to some general remarks.... True, he prepared well for his classes.... But he did not know how to win the hearts of his students. (ibid., p. 30).

What did Arnold's students say about him? As what kind of a teacher did he live on in their memory? Here are some statements of former students of his:

John Joseph Schueling:

During the years 1869-1870, Assistant Rector Janssen was my teacher in religion and the natural sciences in the third and fourth years. In spite of his modest, rather plain appearance we respected him highly, more, in fact, than we did all the other teachers. His classes in natural history were especially interesting. Even when we sometimes brought a relatively rare flower to class he immediately identified it. Most interesting of all, however, were his classes in astronomy, even for us youngsters in the third and fourth years. Young as we were he made us acquainted with the heavenly bodies and the marvels of the universe (see Bornemann, *Remembering Arnold Janssen*, p. 35).

John Behnen:

He was my teacher and for two hours every day he also supervised us during the silent study period, checking closely whether or not we were doing our lessons. Although he took his duties seriously he was very kind. On one occasion he saved me from being punished (ibid., p. 39).

In those days Assistant Director Janssen, like the other teachers, smoked a long pipe the stem of which served a double purpose. It was not only a pipe stem but also a rod with which to inflict light punishment on erring students. ... There was an occasion once when a student in the fifth year deserved to be punished and the assistant director seemed determined to inflict it. But the student was big and strong. He simply twisted the pipe out of the frail little co-director's hands. I had the impression that Father Janssen was glad the boy did so; now he did not have to punish him (ibid., p. 38).

The students also experienced Arnold Janssen as a very pious priest:

Ignaz Dunker:

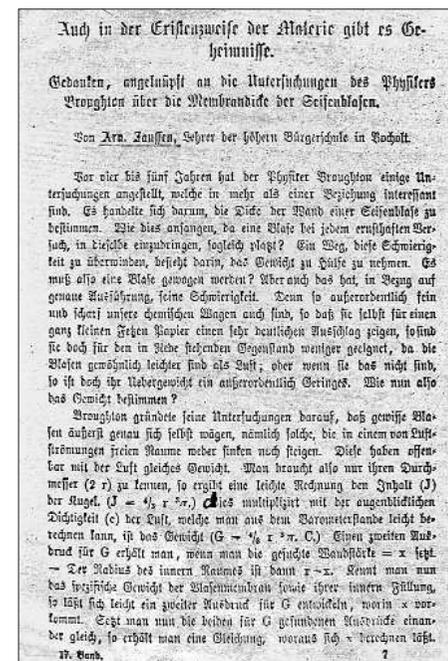
Arnold Janssen was my teacher for two years. He was especially fond of physics and modern languages. He was a good teacher. We students knew that he sometimes prayed the whole night through and so it sometimes happened that during French classes he could hardly keep awake. Then we would say: "You see, Janssen didn't go to bed again last night" (ibid., p.39).

William Boytinck:

Father Janssen, the assistant rector, was my teacher from 1870 to 1873. One of my fellow students was Heinrich Doering, who later became a Jesuit and archbishop of Poona in India. During those years I frequently served the Mass of Father Janssen. ...

I remember, too, how eagerly his arrival was awaited in the hospital when he brought Communion to the sick. One cold winter morning he made his way from the parish church through the various streets of the town until he came to a narrow lane that led to an ancient little house where in a narrow room a woman lay extremely ill. After he had administered Viaticum, Father Janssen prayed so earnestly and devoutly that the sick woman became quite calm and peaceful. One could see from her face that she was at peace. For many decades now that has remained one of my fondest recollections of that pious priest (ibid., pp. 36-37).

Arnold Janssen was not only a teacher. He also wrote natural science articles. In "Natur und Offenbarung" [Nature and Revelation], 'a magazine for bringing together natural scientific research and faith, for the educated of all classes' [transl.JO], Arnold published an article in 1871 the topic of which reads in the English translation: 'Even in the manner of the existence of matter there are mysteries. A few thoughts based on the research of the physicist Broughton about the thickness of the membrane of soap bubbles'. Already in 1869 the same magazine had published Arnold's article *Die Hauptzüge der vulkanischen Tätigkeit auf Erden* (The main characteristics of volcanic activity on earth). With these articles Arnold wanted to encourage people interested in the natural sciences to have faith in God the Creator. Towards the end of the first mentioned article he wrote: *And in that way our research will become a life-giving action and will lead us to the Creator instead of moving us away from him* [transl.JO].



p. 1 of the article "Auch in der Existenzweise der Materie gibt es Geheimnisse. – Even in the manner of the existence of matter there are mysteries".