

Then the Requiem Mass began, celebrated by Bishop Drehmanns assisted by the Dean of Venlo. Deacons of honor were Cathedral Chapter Canon Hüls of Muenster and Canon Everts of Roermond; deacons were Fr. Mertens, parish priest of Tegelen, and Fr. Joosten, rector of the Steyl village church just opposite St. Michael's Mission House. After the Requiem Fr. Giese SVD, Director of the Catholic Teachers College in Vienna, preached the sermon. He described the late Fr. Superior General as a man of prayer, of work and particularly of suffering. He did a great deal of work, so he suffered much. "I have seen him trembling for sorrow, crying like a child, but he did not say a word," the preacher said. He shared his sufferings with no one, but he shared all his joys with his brethren. "Sometimes," so Fr. Giese continued, "we did not understand how he could be so hesitant. However, once the ecclesiastical superiors called him, he firmly took up the task given to him; for in their wish he recognized the will of God."

Since the Upper Church was too small to accommodate all the mourners, Fr. Fischer celebrated a Requiem in the Lower Church of St. Michael's at the same time, where the Missionary Sisters sang a solemn Mass with three part harmony. Here Fr. Giese had delivered his homily before Mass began. Only about 40 of the older Missionary Sisters were able to attend the Requiem in the Upper Church.

When the Masses in the two churches had ended, a long procession accompanied the coffin to the cemetery. The coffin was followed by the members of the General Council, Fr. Arnold's close relatives, the Missionary Sisters (white veils) and finally people from Steyl village and other places. On behalf of the frail Bishop Drehmanns, the Dean of Venlo now presided over the ceremonies at the cemetery chapel. "As soon as the mourners were well grouped around the cemetery chapel, the coffin was lowered into the vault in the chapel to the accompaniment of the music of the Tegelen brass band 'Harmonie'." After the final prayers, Fr. Assistant General Blum "visibly moved, thanked all who had attended the funeral in order to honor the dear late Fr. Arnold".

Until 5pm in the afternoon the vault remained open, and many people came once more to pray silently. Since part of the top of the coffin had been pushed back, they could see Fr. Arnold's mortal remains through a plane of glass. Some of the last visitors were the 60 oldest Missionary Sisters.

During lunch Bishop Drehmanns, who had known Fr. Arnold since 1889, told the confreres:

***We have buried a just man.
May the good spirit, the spirit of faith and prayer and sacrifice,
which your venerable Founder implanted and instilled in his Society,
always remain alive in it. Then his work will never die.***

(Sources: Bornemann, Nachrichten über Krankheit und Tod unseres Stifters, Verbum Supplementum 10, Rom 1969; Bornemann, Arnold Janssen (Engl. Ed.), 1975; Alt, Journey in Faith; Nuntius SVD, No. 12, Febr. 1909, Chronik des Mutterhauses der Missionsschwestern [chronicle of the motherhouse of the Missionary Sisters](1908-1911, Sr. Paula, Anna Jostock).

Publisher: Jürgen Ommerborn SVD - Secretariat Arnold Janssen, Steyl/Netherlands - Fotos SVD - Layout: Cl. Jansen SVD

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Special Edition: 100th anniversary of the death of Arnold Janssen

Tuesday, January 19, 1909 - Funeral of Fr. Arnold Janssen SVD



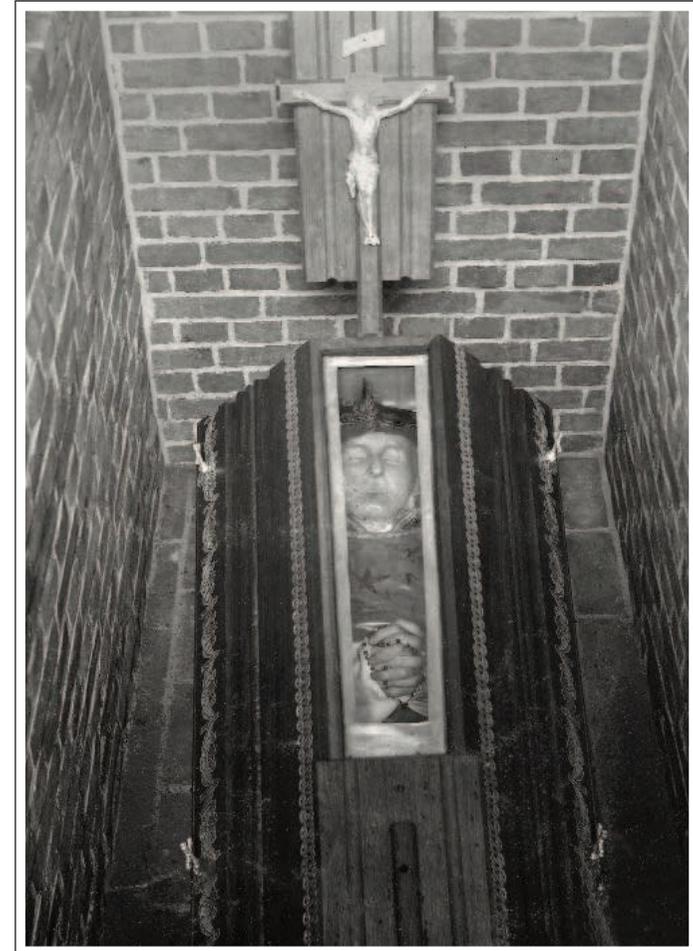
Requiem Mass in the Upper Church



Mourners in front of St. Michael's Mission House.



Mourners at the cemetery chapel.



Fr. Arnold's mortal remains in the vault of the chapel

"Heaven seemed to wish to favor us with the most beautiful weather just for this day. During the previous days there had been rain and storms, and the day after the funeral it was raining again."

8.15 am: Bishop Drehmanns of Roermond arrived at St. Michael's mission house.
9.15 am: Students, Brothers and priests, as well as Fr. Arnold's close relatives and many guests, fetched the coffin with Fr. Arnold's mortal remains from the generalate building [today St. Gregory], after Fr. Assistant General Blum had blessed the body with holy water. They went in procession to the Upper Church of the Mission House, while the brass band "Harmonie" [Harmony] from the township of Tegelen, to which the village of Steyl belongs, played solemn music.