

For your reflection

On September 28, 1908 Arnold Janssen wrote to Sr. Valeria, Provincial Superior in Kaiser Wilhelmsland [Emperor William's country]/ New Guinea:

Time and again you must preach the truth that this earth is a valley of tears, because people find it so difficult to get along with each other. Through the graces of the church, patience and humility, it receives plants from paradise which make this valley of tears beautiful and easy (Alt, Arnold Janssen SVD, Briefe nach Neuguinea und Australien, p. 397).

From the beginnings of the SVD /SSpS African American Mission in Jackson / USA

On July 20, 1908 Fr. Heick, the first SVD to work amongst the African Americans in the USA, had sent Arnold Janssen his building plans for the new parish in Jackson. On August 4, 1908, five months before his death, Fr. Arnold sent him this interesting and very telling reply:

"1. I received your kind letter ..., together with the enclosed drawings. I have studied them most carefully I take it that the plans are drawn up in conformity with local conditions. The only difficulties I encountered were with the projected chapel in the school building. 2. This chapel is 31 feet, 6 inches long, and 23 feet, 6 inches wide. These are suitable dimensions, both for a school and for a chapel. But the following factors should also be taken into consideration. 3. I think you wish to use iron beams for the ceiling. But in that case the following considerations should be borne in mind. 4. Once a beam exceeds a length of 6 meters, irrespective of whether it is of wood or iron, it becomes more easily shaken and hence deprived of much of its load-bearing capacity. 5. The beams of the chapel, transversely laid, would [in your plan] be about 7,5 meters (= 24 feet) long. I wonder therefore if you could possibly shorten their length by one meter? There is one other possible solution. You could place one single beam with a length of 23.5 feet in the center and support it at its midpoint by a round column. You could then let all the other beams rest upon this [central beam] and upon the front and rear walls of the chapel. These beams would only need to be some 16 feet long and would not need to be so strong. 6. I note that the land you purchased for \$ 42,000 measures 240 by 330 feet, and that you have

received only \$ 9,000 from Mother Drexel to pay for both the land and the buildings. Now I see that you are planning four buildings: church, school, priests' house and Sisters' convent. But how will you be able to pay for all this with only \$ 4,800? 7. This is a mystery about which Father Heick is observing the strictest silence. But how am I supposed to solve this puzzle if he is incapable of doing so? There is the additional problem that, as you are well aware, there are as yet no Catholic Negroes in Jackson. How easily, then, could the whole project end in failure! ...

12. To complete the plans, the location of the playgrounds should also be indicated, so that one can see whether they are well located and sufficiently extensive. I also ask you to give thought to the following question. Since Jackson is the state capital and the Negroes make up perhaps a quarter or half of the population, it may well be that you may later obtain a very large parish. At the present time, however, the pastoral ministry also includes the establishment of associations, in order to bind the people together and protect them from harmful influences. All this should be indicated in your plan, at least in approximate outline. In addition a kindergarten and a young women's association may also be necessary. 13. The possible enlargement of the school should also be borne in mind....

kindest regards in all charity,

Your spiritual Father in the Lord, A. Janssen"
(Alt, ed., Arnold Janssen SVD, Letters to the United States of America, transl. Robert Pung SVD and Peter Spring, Steyler Verlag Nettetal, 1998, pp.449-451).

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The Arnoldus Family Story

In January 1871 the German Empire had been founded. A short time later the *Kulturkampf* (= cultural battle) began which would last until 1887. It was this *Kulturkampf*, this battle of the State against the Catholic Church, which forced Arnold Janssen to move to Steyl in the Netherlands in order to realize his plans for the establishment of a German mission house for German missionaries. Therefore, we cannot tell the "Arnoldus Family Story" without talking about the *Kulturkampf*. This word was first used by the medical doctor and leftist-liberal member of the Prussian State Parliament, *Rudolf Ludwig Karl Virchow (1821-1901)*.

The German Empire of 1871

The German Empire was a confederation of 25 member states – each with its own government and parliament. The kingdom of Prussia was the largest and most powerful of those states and its king, William I., was the German Emperor or *Kaiser* as he was called in German.

The most important political organs in the new empire were the *Bundesrat*, that is "the federal council of deputies from the states", and the national parliament, the *Reichstag*. The most important civil servant was the *Reichskanzler*, the chancellor of the empire, who was appointed by and responsible only to the Emperor (cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Empire – 22.09.2008).

Some general remarks concerning the "Kulturkampf" – "Cultural Battle"

The "Kulturkampf" of 1871-1887 had its preliminary phases in Switzerland, Austria and the German states of Bavaria and Baden. The anti-catholic driving force during the "cultural battle" was *Liberalism*, which in Germany was politically active in the *National Liberal Party* and several *Leftist Liberal Parties*. Liberalism aimed to liberate state and society from the power and control of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church had angered Liberalism particularly through the *Syllabus of Errors* and the dogma of *papal infallibility*. In 1864 Pope Pius IX published the encyclical *Quanta Cura* which had as an appendix the *Syllabus* or collection of *the principle errors of our times*, which the Pope had already mentioned in various speeches, encyclicals and other Apostolic letters. The *Syllabus*, therefore, did not say anything new, nevertheless, "it was seen as a declaration of war on the modern state and modern science, in view of its claim to authority and the sharpness of its formulations" (Jedin, ed., transl. Peter Becker, History of the Church, Volume VIII, Burns & Oates, London 1981, p. 116).

The dogma of *papal infallibility* made the Liberals still more angry, for they feared “that the dogma would not be confined to the theological sphere but would claim papal jurisdiction over princes and states in nonreligious questions as well” (ibid., p. 276).

The “Kulturkampf” – “Cultural Battle” of 1871-1887

Causes of the “Kulturkampf”

In this “Kulturkampf”, in this battle between the State and the Catholic Church, the State was represented by the chancellor of the Empire, *Otto von Bismarck* (1815-1898), in association with the anti-Catholic National Liberal Party.

What were the causes for this battle?

“One direct cause of the conflict was the creation of the [Catholic] Centre Party, which Bismarck falsely regarded as a conglomerate of the Empire’s adversaries. Other causes were the dispute over the dogma of infallibility, the alliance with the National Liberals ... and his fear of an anti-German coalition of Catholic states [like Austria and France]” (Jedin, ed., transl. Margit Resch, History of the Church, Vol. IX, Burns & Oates, London 1981, pp. 26-27).

Let us look at two of these causes in a bit more detail:

Bismarck and the Liberals had several reasons to see in the Catholic Centre Party an enemy of the new German Empire: the party demanded “the inclusion of certain fundamental rights in the federal constitution, among them articles 15 and 18 of the Prussian constitution” which guaranteed the freedom of the church” (ibid., p.30). Furthermore the party supported the minorities in the German Empire like the Catholic Poles and Alsatians and it called for the restoration of the Papal States which the Pope had lost to the newly united kingdom of Italy. All of this Bismarck and the Liberals rejected as being contrary to the interests of the new German Empire.

The Protestant Bismarck had aligned himself with the National Liberal Party which was anti-Catholic. In addition, in the new German Empire, where the population was predominantly protestant, “National - Liberal, National - Protestant and also Protestant conservative writers presented the results of 1870/71”, that is the creation of the new German Empire, as a victory for the Protestant principles concerning state and society and as “a consequence of Protestant Prussian history”. The ruling Catholic Habsburg dynasty of Austria (until 1866 the leading State in the German confederation, the predecessor of the German Empire) “the papacy, the Jesuits, and the Counter Reformation were held responsible for actually or allegedly leading German history astray” (cf. ibid., p. 28).

The Beginning of the “Kulturkampf” – the “Cultural Battle”

In Germany the dogma of papal infallibility had not been accepted by all Catholics. Many of the dogma’s opponents were professors of theology and teachers of religion. When the German bishops began to withhold the *missio canonica* from them or to suspend and excommunicate them, they “appealed to the state for assistance”; and the state – contrary to the wishes of the bishops – “granted them protection and guaranteed them” their jobs in the universities and schools (cf. Jedin, ed., transl. Peter Becker, History of the Church, vol. VIII, Burns & Oates, London, 1981, p. 332). The Prussian state did even more:

Within the ministry of culture there were a Catholic and a Protestant department. On 8 July 1871 the Catholic department “was dissolved and combined with the Protestant department to form a department for ecclesiastical affairs” (Jedin, ed., transl. Margit Resch, History of the Church, vol. IX, Burns & Oates, London, 1981, p. 32).

This dissolution of the Catholic department is considered the beginning of the “Kulturkampf” in Prussia.

Some “Kulturkampf” – “Cultural Battle” Laws

Some of the laws were valid for the whole empire, some only for Prussia. Since Arnold Janssen lived in Prussia, all of these laws were of concern to him.

March 11, 1872: School supervision law

Through this law the state had the right to supervise all public and private schools and to appoint school inspectors, who until then had been appointed by the Church (cf. ibid., p.33).

July 4, 1872: Jesuit law

Jesuits and related orders like the Redemptorists and Lazarists “were forbidden in the Empire and existing foundations were dissolved.” The reason for this law was that the Jesuits were “charged with responsibility for the *Syllabus* and for the dogma of infallibility, and they were exposed as opponents of the modern state and civil liberties.” (ibid., p. 35)

May 11, 1873: Law regarding the training and appointment of the clergy

According to this law, appointment to a clerical office was dependent on “German citizenship, on education at a German university, and on approval by the state”. “All clerical educational institutions were placed under the control of the state.” Besides their theological exams, theology students had also to pass “an additional state examination in philosophy, history, and German literature” – the so-called “culture examination”. The bishops had to report each candidate for clerical office to the appropriate state authority. If that authority objected, the appointment could not become effective (cf. ibid., pp. 36-37). Priests who were appointed by the bishops without being approved by the state became “liable to punishment just for saying Mass or administering sacraments” (ibid., p.38).

May 12, 1873: Law regarding ecclesiastical disciplinary power and the establishment of a Royal Tribunal of Ecclesiastical Affairs

This law “excluded all non-German Church institutions, primarily the Pope and the Curia, from disciplinary power over the German clergy”. The newly established royal tribunal could “dismiss clergymen who had violated the law or a civil regulation to such a degree that their activity appeared incompatible with law and order” (ibid., p. 37).

May 31, 1875: Law concerning religious orders

This law excluded all religious orders and congregations from Prussian state territory. Existing monasteries or convents were not allowed to accept new members and they were to be dissolved within six months. “In case of orders whose members were teaching, the deadline could be extended up to four years”. Exempted from this law were only those congregations which were active in nursing. Their houses, however, could be closed down any time (ibid., p. 42).