

solicit funds, and influence priests to join it” (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, Engl.ed., p. 45). Having said this Fr. Arnold left and went back to Kempen.

“Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote” –

“Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus” – June 1874

That Fr. Arnold was serious with his decision to prepare the foundation of the mission seminary by publicizing the project, is seen in the June issue of the “Little Messenger”. On the first page, directly under the title of the magazine, he placed a

Missionschrift für das katholische Volk.

Wir bitten, den Artikel auf der letzten Seite dieses Blattes nicht übersehen zu wollen.

reminder in bold print: “We ask you not to overlook the article on the last page of this magazine.” There on the last page we find the article entitled: “Various requests directed to various people, made in the name of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. (A word to priests, parents and benefactors.)” Towards the end of the article he turned to priests and students just before ordination asking:

*Is there not one among them in the whole of Germany who feels called to dedicate himself to the mission cause? How would it be if German priests were to work together to organize a German mission seminary in some safe place? As this writer knows well, this is in accordance with the wishes of the Propaganda in Rome and the wishes of the Holy Father himself. Belgium, Ireland, Italy and France all have mission seminaries; ...To the best of my knowledge Germany, this great country with so many genuine Christian families, has until now not even one.[...] We believe this situation must be and can be corrected. Therefore, if some who have the same idea want to get acquainted with one another and take common action for this purpose, we are ready to pass this information along to the best of our ability. We request them to write to the editor of this magazine” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, pp. 45-46)*

Fr. Arnold had written this article already before he went to visit Msgr. Raimondi. After the visit he inserted the information that Dr. von Essen had given him about the positive attitude of Propaganda and the Holy Father towards the project.

Was the article successful? Bornemann writes: “A practical echo to the article the editor did not receive. It was one of the repeated reminders about the necessity of a German mission seminary and all of them had so far been without success (Bornemann, *Der Pfarrer von Neuwerk Dr. Ludwig von Essen*, p. 73, footnote 3).



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The Arnoldus Family Story

1874 – A year of great importance for Arnold Janssen

Telling the “Arnoldus Family Story” we must mention two names: *Dr. Ludwig von Essen*, parish priest of Neuwerk /Mönchengladbach in Germany and *Giovanni Timoleone Raimondi*, Prefect Apostolic (and then Vicar Apostolic) of Hong Kong. With both of these men Fr. Arnold shared first of all a great interest in China. When Msgr. Raimondi visited Dr. von Essen in Neuwerk, Fr. Arnold went there to visit him and to interview him about China. However, as we will soon see, they did not only talk about the church in China but also about the foundation of a German mission seminary.

In the previous issue of the “Arnoldus Family Story” we already got to know Dr. von Essen and Msgr. Raimondi. Before we turn our attention to the meeting of Dr. von Essen, Msgr. Raimondi and Fr. Arnold, a few more additional remarks have to be made with regard to Dr. von Essen’s interest in mission.

Dr. von Essen’s Interest in Mission

During the final weeks of 1873, Dr. von Essen began to work towards the foundation of a German mission seminary which would train missionaries for China. His model was the mission seminary in Scheut/Belgium whose constitutions he had studied thoroughly. According to those constitutions, the community of Scheut consisted of missionary priests and missionary brothers; therefore Dr. von Essen did not only think of German missionary priests for China, but also of missionary brothers (Bornemann, *Der Pfarrer von Neuwerk Dr. Ludwig von Essen und seine Missionspläne* [The parish priest of Neuwerk Dr. Ludwig von Essen and his Mission Plans] Studia Instituti Missiologici Societatis Verbi Divini, No. 8, Steyler Verlag, St. Augustin 1967, p. 68). He also thought of a congregation of missionary sisters, and he had already found a candidate for that congregation, the Baroness Theresia von Wüllenweber, aged 40. Dr. von Essen was her spiritual director and confessor. Years later she wrote about Dr. von Essen: “He became my strict, but true director. Just now that the cultural struggle has started, he said, new foundations are necessary. He spoke of missionary brothers and missionary sisters” (*ibid.*). She also said that Fr. von Essen had told her to found a congregation of missionary sisters (*ibid.*, p. 133).

Pentecost 1874 in Neuwerk / Mönchengladbach

On Friday, May 23, 1874 Msgr. Raimondi arrived at Dr. von Essen’s parish in Neuwerk. To the superior of the seminary for foreign missions in Milan/ Italy of which

he was a member, Msgr. Raimondi wrote: “On the way to Brussels [Belgium] I am spending Pentecost here with a friendly Monsignor, a Papal Domestic Prelate. He intends to found a Mission Seminary, and since I negotiated about this matter in Rome, I had to meet him” (*ibid.*, p. 66). The topic of Dr. von Essen’s and Raimondi’s conversation was, therefore, the foundation of a Mission Seminary. On Saturday, May 23, the day before Pentecost, Msgr. Raimondi wrote for “his host a warm recommendation for the Mission House.” In it we read:

Before leaving Germany, Monsignor, I am pleased to assure you of the good reception given in Rome to your proposal regarding the opening of a Mission Seminary in Germany or Austria. I have spoken about it with Monsignor Simeoni, Secretary of Propaganda, who testified to me his great satisfaction. I have also pointed out in a document, which I presented to Propaganda, the advantages which would come to the Missions of China by having a Seminary for German Missionaries.

“For my part I shall always be ready to assist you in whatever way I can in order to have German missionaries in China. ...

I wish you great success in your holy undertaking and I have no doubt that Their Excellencies, the Bishops of Germany and Austria, will support your good desires and will help you to accomplish a task which will bring glory to the Bishops and to the Catholic Clergy of Germany (Ralph M. Wiltgen, *The Founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Melanesia and Micronesia, 1850-1875*, Pickwick Publications, Eugene, Oregon, 2008, pp.503-504).

Thanking you already in advance for everything you do for the China mission, I have the honor, Monsignor, to be your most devoted servant T. Raimondi, Prefect Apostolic of Hong Kong and Procurator General of Propaganda for All of China. Neuwerk, May 23, 1874 (see Bornemann, *Der Pfarrer von Neuwerk Dr. Ludwig von Essen und seine Missionspläne*, p. 67).

“From the content and solemnity of Raimondi’s letter, and because of his mentioning Secretary Simeoni and giving his own complete and official title, it was evident that Raimondi had a special purpose in writing the letter. He wanted to put something in the hands of von Essen, which could be quoted in letters that he might send to the bishops and clergy of Germany and Austria” (Ralph M. Wiltgen, *The Founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Melanesia and Micronesia*, p. 504).

On Pentecost Sunday, May 24, Msgr. Raimondi was visited by the Baroness Theresia von Wüllenweber mentioned above. About this visit she wrote in 1892: “The Reverend Bishop of Hong Kong came to Neuwerk and encouraged me very much to begin the foundation; he even prophesied [May 24, 1874] [the foundation of German missionary sisters] would happen soon. This really made me enthusiastic and I saw the fulfillment of my wishes coming closer (in Bornemann, *Der Pfarrer von Neuwerk Dr. Ludwig von Essen und seine Missionspläne*, p. 68).

14 years later Theresia von Wüllenweber would become foundress of a congregation of sisters. But first, on April 25, 187, she took the vow to “dedicate herself wholly to the missions” (*ibid.*, p. 69). *She also entertained the*

thought of founding a congregation of missionary sisters in Steyl, together with Arnold Janssen; and so she visited him on November 21, 1879. However, Fr. Arnold never even mentioned her nor her work (*ibid.* p. 142f). *Finally she joined – as did Dr. von Essen – the newly founded “Apostolic Teaching Society” of Fr. John Baptist Jordan [known as founder of the Salvatorians]. In 1888, together with Fr. Jordan, she cofounded the congregation of the “Sisters of the Divine Savior”, also called Salvatorian Sisters. Her religious name was Sr. Mary of the Apostles. She died in 1907 and was beatified in 1968. Today 1.200 Salvatorian Sisters work in Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America.*

Pentecost Monday, May 25, 1874

On May 23, 1874 Fr. Arnold read in a newspaper of Msgr. Raimondi’s visit to Neuwerk which was close to Kempen where he lived. Two days later, on Pentecost Monday, he went to Neuwerk. Both Dr. von Essen and Msgr. Raimondi gave him a friendly welcome. For their conversation they used French. At first Fr. Arnold sought to get as much information about China as possible, and then he brought up the topic that was foremost on his mind. “Whilst otherwise he spoke slowly and while he spoke French only clumsily, now the words poured out of him and he spoke with warm enthusiasm” (*ibid.*, p. 71). Fr. Arnold remembers:

I told him [Raimondi] my regret that Germany, where Catholic life was so vigorous, did not have a single mission house for the training of missionaries. On the other hand, France, Italy, Belgium and even Britain, where Catholic life was so weak, did have such institutions (Alt, *Journey in faith*, p. 44).

When Fr. Arnold stopped speaking, Dr. von Essen said: “*The matter of founding the German mission house has already been taken up, it is in good hands* (Bornemann, *Der Pfarrer von Neuwerk Dr. Ludwig von Essen*, p. 71). He told him furthermore that the Archbishop of Cologne, who was his own Archbishop, as well as the Holy Father himself had given the project their blessing (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, German ed., p.47-48).

Fr. Arnold was completely taken by surprise and at first he was not able to say anything. There was a tense atmosphere. “A letter from von Essen ...illustrates the atmosphere and tension even at the first encounter of the two men in the presence of a genuine missionary” (Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 45). In that letter (of November 1874) Dr. von Essen wrote to Fr. Arnold:

“When you came over for the first time in May or June you expressed your enthusiasm for the cause so eloquently to Mgr. Raimondi and me that we thought you would be delighted to hear that the project had already been started.[...] But instead of being glad you fell noticeably silent and remarked suspiciously, ‘Then you have undertaken a difficult project’” (*ibid.*).

“Msgr. Raimondi,” so Bornemann writes, “sought to bridge the rather unusual situation and told his visitor: ‘Team up with Rev. von Essen.’” (Bornemann, *Der Pfarrer von Neuwerk Dr. Ludwig von Essen*, p. 72) “Thereupon Janssen declared most emphatically that he would never start the seminary himself; he only wanted to publicize the project,