

In his review Fr. Arnold refers to an article which he had published in the *Little Messenger* in November 1874: “Kurzes Wort an fromme Liebhaber Jesu” – “A short word to pious lovers of Jesus.” In that article he first of all regrets that Germany has no mission house of its own while smaller countries like Belgium and Ireland and others had one. Then he continues: “Furthermore, let us just remember the word of that so illumined and respected ‘heavenly teacher’ Dionysius the Areopagite: ‘To work for the salvation of souls is the most sacred, even divine task.’...”

“What was the result of that article at the beginning of the new year 1875?” Fr. Arnold asked. His answer: At first there was nothing, but then, thanks to the article, in March, the month of holy Father Joseph, “the project received 9000 Mark from a single benefactor whose name, place, status and gender is still today completely unknown to me.” In the same month of March Fr. Arnold also received a donation of ca. 6000 Marks from a ‘quiet, pious domestic worker’, “with whom I never had any contact, neither orally nor in writing.” This benefactress died one month after having made the donation; about her Fr. Arnold wrote in the article: “And so a domestic worker, unknown to the world, has become one of the main founders of our mission house. For what is weak in the eyes of the world, the Lord has already so often chosen in order to put to shame what is great in the eyes of the world.”

Arnold Janssen ends the article with the words:

“Up till now our dear Lord has helped our Mission House mainly through the gifts of the poor and the little ones. And we thank him for that; for those are gifts to which most blessings are attached. May they also help us so that we ourselves become truly small and poor in spirit; for to the poor belongs the kingdom of God. As necessary as money is and as much as we will still need a great deal, for instance at first for a big additional building next spring, it is actually our smallest worry. For the Lord says; ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its justice, and everything else will be added unto you!’ And this word is valid particularly for houses such as these. Therefore we particularly ask Him incessantly through the holy patrons of this house, that He may make us truly good and pious ourselves, and that He may send us good and pious people as laborers into His vineyard. – Dear reader, will you also help us in this through your prayer?”



The Arnoldus Family Story

Fr. Peter Bill

In the previous issue of “The Arnoldus Family Story” we read that Fr. Peter Bill taught the high school students Latin and French. Regarding the French language, Fr. Bill relates an experience which annoyed him very much: “One day quite by chance Janssen and I got to talking about the current usage of *au moins* and *du moins*. I thought the two expressions did not differ very much in meaning. But Janssen quoted Plate’s French-German Grammar according to which the two expressions were used in quite different meanings. When I said that I had studied for three years in a French school in Belgium, he smiled in a superior sort of way as if to say, it seemed to me, that he knew French better than I did. I remained silent but I began to see more clearly that I did not count for much whatsoever with him. He seemed to believe he knew everything and could do everything better” (Bornemann, *Remembering Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelsang, *Analecta SVD* – 42, Rome 1978, p. 76).

Not having a big teaching load, Fr. Bill had a lot of free time. He writes: “Even before classes for the students had begun and also when they had begun (they were frequently interrupted for the one reason or another), I had a lot of free time. Therefore I made several journeys to orientate myself and to get some information. In the middle of October I went to Bredevoort in Holland, near the German border, to Fr. Smorenburg; formerly he had been a missionary in China and he had promised Fr. Janssen to introduce the future missionaries to the Chinese language and to prepare them for missionary life in China. ... I did not get much advice and encouragement from him; he seemed to stay neutral; in any case he did not agree with Fr. Janssen’s plans. ...

At the beginning of November (or the end of October) I visited Dr. von Essen, the parish priest of Neuwerk... Fr. von Essen was annoyed because he felt that Fr. Janssen had sidelined him quite skillfully (not to say disgracefully). I explained to him the situation in Steyl; he did not agree with Fr. Janssen’s views. Even though he himself was a member of the Third Order of St. Dominic, he did not want to see the Rule of that Order introduced into Steyl, at least not with four days of abstinence and one day of fasting per week as Fr. Janssen had introduced it. Fr. von Essen himself did not keep this abstinence and fasting. But he

did not make any definite suggestions. Maybe because he was annoyed or because he had made an agreement with Fr. Janssen, that he would not be concerned about the interior running of the house (Peter Bill, *Memoirs*, pp. 32-34).

Arnold Janssen: On with new enterprises!

While Fr. Bill was unhappy about the situation in the new mission house and was convinced of the incapability of the Rector, he was disheartened concerning the future of the mission house. Fr. Arnold's motto on the other hand was: "Never be disheartened!" as he wrote in December 1875 in his mission magazine "Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote" (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart). In the article "Ein Wort an die Leser zum Jahresschluss 1875" [A word to the readers at the end of the year 1875] he wrote amongst other things:

"Already our dear Lord has obviously blessed this small magazine very much. Only with the help of this paper has the foundation of the increasingly flourishing German Mission house been possible in such a short period of time. And so may the magazine continue on its way, though hardly noticed by many, but all the more blessed by God. Even if it is particularly a paper for the "little ones", the little ones are often the ones who are great in God's eyes. Therefore, do not be disheartened! Those who put their trust in what is externally great and glorious seek support with a brittle staff which can't really give support." Then Fr. Arnold announces the news: "Through the help of various benefactors the Mission House served by this magazine is in a position to install its own mission press. With the help of that it will be possible from now on to publish the magazine regularly at the beginning of every month since the publisher, editor, shipping department and press are all in one place" (see Alt, *Journey in Faith*, pp. 151-152).

Why had Fr. Arnold decided to have his own printing press?

The "Kleine Herz-Jesu-Bote" (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart) had been printed by the St. Boniface printing press in Paderborn/Germany. However, after "some disputes about the keeping of deadlines on both sides, at the end of February 1875, Arnold Janssen received from the press in Paderborn the recommendation, 'Towards the end of the year perhaps you could look around for another publisher...'" (ibid., p. 151). Fr. Arnold was faced with the choice to look for another printing press or to start his own; he opted for his own press. For he realized that a printing press could become a good source of income; furthermore, since missionaries needed skills in various trades, the press could also "be a workshop in which students of the Latin school could receive vocational training" (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, transl. John Vogelsang, Manila, 1975, p. 69). After Bishop Paredis of Roermond had approved the plan, during July and August Fr. Arnold began preparing to establish the press. In Muenster/Germany he got in touch with Joseph Stute, born in 1852, "a typesetter and printer, who was willing to come to manage the shop. They reached a final agreement on 6 December at

Steyl. Stute would be given free board and room, plus nine Marks a week as of 27 December. In their discussions, Stute must have soon realized that the Rector was no stranger to the printing business. He was familiar with the technical details of type face and size, the weight and surface qualities of the paper. He also knew paper dimensions and how much was lost in cutting the various sizes. They spoke one another's language. ... For his travel expenses, Stute was given 11 Marks" (ibid., p. 77). Already on that December 6, the feast of St. Nicholas, the definite order for the printing press was placed, on December 10 the first type fonts were ordered (see Alt, *Journey in Faith*, p. 152).

On December 6, Fr. Arnold notified Msgr. Dr. von Essen in the parish of Neuwerk/Mönchengladbach of the establishment of the printing press about which he had already spoken with him during the summer. On December 13, Fr. von Essen answered:

"Regarding your kind letter, I respectfully reply that right now it is impossible for me to come to Steyl. The establishment of a press is truly desirable and can be an advantageous contribution to raising the level of the whole.- Deep in my heart I am truly happy about your other news and I hope that the Lord God will guide everything in such a way as is most suitable for His honor and the salvation of souls" (Bornemann, *Der Pfarrer von Neuwerk Dr. Ludwig von Essen und seine Missionsspläne* [The parish priest of Neuwerk Dr. Ludwig von Essen and his mission plans], Steyler Verlag St. Augustin, 1967, pp. 116-117).

On December 28, Mr. Joseph Stute moved to Steyl and already on the same day the first shipment of printing fonts arrived. "On 7 January, 1876, the hand press was delivered from the factory in Worms [Germany]. It printed sheets up to 45x60 centimeters, that is four pages of the *Sacred Heart Messenger*, in one run. - The press cost 2,032 Marks" (Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen*, Manila 1975, p. 77).

Good luck for the year 1876!

This is the headline over the first article of the "Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote" (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart), January 1876. Below this article we read in brackets: "A word of review and encouragement from St. Michael's Mission House in Steyl."

The article begins with the words:

"Dear Reader, when we enter on a new year, it is our bounden duty particularly to give thanks to God, the giver of all good gifts, for all the good that he has given us during the past year. This unfortunately so often forgotten duty will not be forgotten by the 'Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote' (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart) especially now. For just at this time the little Messenger has all the more reason to carry it out. Therefore let us give thanks to God, the giver of all good things, for all the graces which He in his goodness has granted to this Little Messenger during the past year."