

For your reflection

On June 29, 2008, Hendrina Stenmanns – Mother Josepha – will be beatified. In preparation for that great event our newsletter intends to make its own small contribution.

Hendrina was born on May 28, 1852, in Issum /Lower Rhineland. In 1878 she promised her dying mother to look after her six younger siblings. Having visited the Mission House in Steyl twice (Pentecost 1879 and Pentecost 1883) she felt that God called her to that Mission House. On January 6, 1884 she wrote to Arnold Janssen:

I have prayed earnestly for the light of the Holy Spirit that God may lead me according to the plan he has had for me from all eternity. The thought that I should enter the Mission House never leaves me. I now ask you, Reverend Father, to be so kind as to accept me into the house as a maid. I desire nothing more than, with the grace of God, to be the least and to offer myself as a sacrifice for the work of spreading the Faith. I accept God's most holy will and submit myself to your judgement. If the Lord God means me to enter a convent, I will get there one day. ...

Recommending you and yours to the most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, I remain, obediently yours, Hendrina Stenmanns (Ortrud Stegmaier SSpS (ed.), Jacqueline Mulberge SSpS (transl.), Arnold Janssen-M. Josepha, Hendrina Stenmanns, Correspondence 1884-1903, pp.33-34)

AT THE SERVICE OF PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

The annual meeting of the Joint Committee for Dialogue of the Permanent Committee of AI – Azhar for Dialogue among the Monotheistic Religions and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue took place on February 25 and 26, 2008 in Cairo/Egypt. In the final declaration of this meeting it was recommended:

1.to affirm that all religions respect the dignity and honour of the human person without consideration of race, colour, religion or conviction, and condemn any offence against personal integrity, property and honour;

2. to foster true respect for religions, beliefs, religious symbols, holy Books and whatever is considered sacred; religious leaders, both Muslim and Christian, as well as intellectuals and educators, should make every effort to inculcate these values in their activities in places of learning and in all levels of society;

3. to appeal to those responsible for the mass media, ...in all countries, to be vigilant that freedom of expression not be taken as a pretext for offending religions, convictions, religious symbols and everything that is considered sacred, but rather to oppose extremism, to encourage mutual acceptance,

love and respect for all, regardless of their religion; (source: vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_inte... 7.3.2008)

FROM THE VATICAN

Invalid formulas of baptism

Rather than saying "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit", some people might prefer to say "In the name of the Creator, and of the Redeemer, and of the Sanctifier" or "In the name of the Creator, and of the Liberator, and of the Sustainer."

The Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith was asked the following two questions:

1. Whether the Baptism conferred with the formulas "I baptize you in the name of the Creator, and of the Redeemer, and of the Sanctifier" and "I baptize you in the name of the Creator, and of the Liberator, and of the Sustainer" is valid?

The Congregation's answer was: Negative.

2. Whether the persons baptized with those formulas have to be baptized in forma absoluta?

The Congregation's answer was: Affirmative.

These two answers were given on February 1, 2008 (vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_do... 7.3.2008).



Publisher: Jürgen Ommerborn SVD
Secretariat Arnold Janssen, Steyl/Netherlands
Layout: Clemens Jansen SVD

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Volume 2, No 1
February 2008

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The Arnoldus Family Story

Arnold Janssen – Missionary at the service of the Apostleship of Prayer

As a missionary at the service of the Apostleship of Prayer, Arnold Janssen recruited new members and introduced them to the practice of the Apostleship (cf. Alt, Journey in Faith, p. 32); that is, he instilled in them an appreciation of Holy Mass as "the chief devotional exercise of the Apostleship of Prayer" and made them familiar with those prayers which "by their nature appear to be more closely allied than others" to the spirit of the Apostleship, like the Angelus, the Rosary and the Way of the Cross.

In his book *The Apostleship of Prayer, A Holy League of Christian Hearts united with the Heart of Jesus, to obtain the triumph of the Church and the salvation of souls* (London, 1866), Fr. Ramière furthermore described some special devotions which the Apostleship wished to penetrate with its own spirit. "Amongst the devotions dear to pious Christians, the first in dignity, utility... is undoubtedly that of devotion to the Sacred Heart" (p. 280). According to the will of Jesus, this devotion is to be "the instrument of his mercy for the regeneration of humankind." That it will only be if it takes hold

of the entire life of pious Christians, filling them with the spirit of Jesus Christ, and converting them into ardent and shining lights, enlightening their wandering brethren, and inflaming those who are frozen and cold.

Our very being must be penetrated with this devotion, it must cause us to live the life of the Heart of Jesus; animating our sentiments, and teaching us its language; in a word, enabling us to become its living image. We have no right to call ourselves the disciples of the Sacred Heart unless we make its intentions our own, and take an active part in those important interests which are its peculiar care... (pp. 280-281).

Dear to the Apostleship of Prayer is also the devotion to the sorrowful Heart of Mary. For Fr. Ramière

the Apostleship of Prayer is the Apostleship of the most Blessed Virgin as well. She has merited the title of Queen of the Apostles through its means, and by it laboured more efficaciously than all the Apostles together for the world's salvation (ibid., p. 282).

Her entire life was consecrated to prayer and suffering and to being a sacrifice for humankind. "It is obvious, then, that we can only love Mary if we also love everyone else who shares her heart with her divine Son Jesus."

... it is especially in the bitterness of her sorrows that we must hope to find the source and fruitfulness of this Apostleship to which we all owe salvation. We all know indeed that she could not co-operate with Jesus Christ in our redemption, without the sword which pierced the body of her Son wounding her blessed soul also (cf. *ibid.*, p. 283).

In Sirach 7:27 we read: "Forget not the groans of thy mother." With the devotion to the "sorrowful heart of Mary" we obey these words. At the same time we implore her to make use of her powerful intercession for the salvation of all peoples. In a very special way we ask her to pray to God "that He would be pleased to raise up worthy ministers, living images of every virtue, and faithful instruments of His love, men powerful in word and work," men who will be for the Church today, what the first apostles were for the church of their time (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 284-285).

The devotion to St. Joseph is another important devotion for the Apostleship of Prayer. The church proclaims him 'the cooperator of Jesus and Mary in the great work of the world's salvation'. Devotion to St. Joseph is "an encouragement for our zeal. If while using his tools he could be an apostle who, then, can believe himself excluded from the Apostleship?" (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 286-287). From St. Joseph we learn that EVERYTHING done with an apostolic spirit will serve the salvation of people.

The Apostleship of Prayer is also devoted to the holy Angels. Their apostleship offers us a most beautiful example: "With what devotion do they consecrate themselves to the salvation of those souls which have been confided to their care!" They implore God to save even the most wretched sinners (cf. *ibid.*, pp.289-290). Therefore: "Let us imitate them; let us unite ourselves to them; and frequently invoke their aid. ... Let us in future make the holy angels ... the model of our apostleship, and doubtless its fruitfulness will be increased a hundredfold" (*ibid.*, p. 292).

"The Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Joseph, and the holy angels, are certainly most powerful patrons for us to have", Fr. Ramière writes, but they are not our only patrons. Our patrons are also all the saints in heaven. Among them, however, there are some "whose protection is more powerful than others, and whom we can invoke with greater confidence. Such are those who during their mortal life exhibited greater devotion to our dear Lord, and who laboured and suffered most for the prosperity of His Church" (*ibid.*, p.295).

To them belong "all the members of our Saviour's family, St. Joachim, St. Anne, St. Elizabeth, and those holy women who with Mary accompanied Jesus Christ in all His travels, provided for His sustenance, consoled Him in His Passion for the cowardly flight of His disciples, and thus inaugurated the glorious Apostleship of women." Special patrons are also the Apostles, the illustrious Popes like St. Leo and St. Gregory the Great and also those saints like St. Dominic, and St. Francis of Assisi, St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier, St. Philip Neri, and St. Frances de Sales, St. Vincent de Paul, and St. Alphonsus Liguori "who carried the light of faith to unbelievers, or rekindled it amongst Christians." Among the women saints, St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Clare, and St. Teresa [of Avila], St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, and St. Frances de Chantal excel, "those heroic women whose hearts burning with zeal, yielded in nothing to that of the most zealous apostles..." (cf. *ibid.*, pp.295-296).



Vincent de Paul

"There still remains another devotion, which may be associated to no less advantage than the preceding with the Apostleship of Prayer" and that is the devotion to the souls in purgatory. "They may be at once both the object and the fellow helpers of the Apostleship" (*ibid.*, pp. 296-297). Through our prayer we can open for them the gates of heaven. On the other hand, they can be our helpers through their prayer for us:

...when, by virtue of the indulgences we have gained for them, these holy souls shall see the gates of heaven opening to their view, then especially they will feel compelled to pray for us, they will recommend our intentions to God, and give our Apostleship their aid. Let us not fail to take advantage of this help; and gain every indulgence in our power for the souls in purgatory. Let us attach to the application of these indulgences the condition that the souls whose sufferings are thereby shortened will obtain an increase of zeal for us from God, that they will interest themselves in the Apostleship of Prayer, and unite their prayers with ours, for the salvation of poor sinners" (*ibid.*, p. 297-298).

At a later stage we will see how all these different devotions were also part of Arnold Janssen's and his foundations' spirituality.

One of Arnold Janssen's tasks as Diocesan Director of the Apostleship of Prayer in the diocese of Muenster was the distribution of the Apostleship's monthly magazine, the "MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART". A former student of Arnold Janssen in Bocholt, Ignaz Dunker, remembers:

His zeal for the Apostleship of Prayer was incredible. He regularly provided us with copies of the magazine of the Apostleship and urged us to give them to our parents. Time and again he repeated the words: "Pray, pray more and more." (Bornemann, Remembering Arnold Janssen, *Analecta SVD-42*, p.39).

About this magazine Fr. Ramière writes:

This publication, already extended throughout the greater part of the earth, is to the Apostleship of Prayer as blood to the body, communicating heat and life to its members. It stimulates their love for Jesus Christ, and for His holy Church. It helps to bind closer together the union of all Christian hearts with the Heart of their God, and thus to render more efficacious the co-operation which the divine Heart demands, for the ... salvation of souls (Ramière, *The Apostleship of Prayer...*, p. 350).

The Messenger of the Sacred Heart appeared every month "in numbers of sixty pages, ... forming at the end of the year" two volumes "of 360 pages" (*ibid.*, p. 354).

Why was the title "MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART" given to this magazine?

Because it is the only suitable title. The Apostleship of Prayer is in reality nothing else than the fusion of our interests with those of the Heart of Jesus, of our intentions with His intentions; ... It is then in reality the interests of the Heart of Jesus that this publication will come every month to plead before its readers; ...; it is His desires and His necessities that it places before their eyes; [therefore] it will truly be the Messenger of His Divine Heart (*ibid.*).