

TERTIATE RENEWAL MEMORIES
77TH INTERNATIONAL TERTIATE RENEWAL
GROUP NEWSLETTER – NEMI, ROME
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EDITORIAL

‘There is a time to sing; a time to pray; a time to relax; and there is a time to reflect’, the memorable words from our Bible, echo in us always. Yes, this is a time for us, the tertiate participants of the 77th International Tertiate Renewal Program, to reflect, to take a pause, to look back and to look ahead as well after many years of our priestly and missionary life. It’s almost a month since we came together to begin our renewal journey. The first three weeks of our renewal journey have been full of memorable events, listening and sharing our own stories and that of the origins of the Arnoldus Family and visiting places close to the story of the Arnoldus Family. In this first issue of our Tertiate Newsletter different participants share their experiences with the members and friends of the Arnoldus Family and others who accompany us on our renewal journey by their well-wishes and prayers. May the Triune God accompany us on our journey and reflections. Have a pleasant reading.

FR. AMALADOSS Rethinasamy SVD

For the Editorial Team

WORDS OF WELCOME

With joy we heartily welcome each one of you to the 77th International Tertiate Renewal Program.

We would like also to express our joy to receive in our renewal community two Diocesan priests participants, and they are Fr.

Gustavo from Chile working in Archdiocese of Cuenca, Ecuador and Fr. Alex Jolius from the Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu of Sabah, Malaysia. We are happy that you are with us and please feel that we are your brothers and companions in the journey with the Lord.

This Tertiate Renewal Program is happening within this year of two significant Jubilee commemorations. First we in the Arnoldus Family are celebrating the centennial year of the death of St. Joseph Freinademetz who died in China in 28 January 1908, and of St. Arnold Janssen who died in January 15, 1909. It is just fitting to open our Renewal Journey around the Sarcophagus of St. Arnold, our Father, Leader and founder. He was a Diocesan priest who started a world wide missionary movement of men and women. We will also visit the significant places of the life of Joseph Freinademetz in South Tirol.

The motif of the centennial commemoration is, *“Precious is the Life given for mission”*. And this is too our motif of our Renewal Program. The Lord has opted for and has chosen each one of you. He made your life precious because of his unconditional love for you and his call to share in His dream for all people, the Kingdom.

The second jubilee commemoration celebrated by the Universal Church is the bimillennial or the two thousand years anniversary of the birth of St. Paul of Tarsus. Pope Benedict XVI has solemnly declared a Pauline Year from 29 June 2008 to 28 June 2009. As a great missionary to Gentiles, the Pope said, *“He is, also for us our Teacher, Apostle and Herald of Jesus Christ.”* St. Paul’s own words serve as renewal inspiration, *“For me to live is Christ.” Phil 2, 24.*

We come together for the renewal journey as chosen and loved disciples of Jesus. Our name SVD bears it explicitly –

Socii Verbi Divini, Companions of the Divine Word. We are all companion disciples of the Lord gathered as a community of renewal re-kindling our passion for the Lord and for His mission.

Fr. Tony Bon Pates SVD

In the name of the Nemi Staff

STEYL, an inheritance that can never perish (1Pet, 1:4);

We began our whole renewal journey first by sharing our own stories. Our own stories enabled us to come closer to begin our renewal journey as a group coming from various cultures and backgrounds. Then we began to reflect on the story of our Arnoldus Family focusing on the life of the Founding Generation of the Arnoldus Family. We could compare the first part of our renewal journey and experience at Steyl with the experience of Adam when he was created just as a body out of clay without having any life in him. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (Gen. 2:7). Similarly, We too have been members of the great Arnoldus Family not being touched or affected by its rich legacy, humble yet inspiring origins of our Society and our other two sister congregations. Our short stay of few weeks at our Mother House in Steyl, St. Michael Mission House, has drawn our attention and focus towards our Arnoldus Family and our Founder, St. Arnold.

We could almost breathe and smell the spirit of our Founder. It has revived our drooping spirits. Now, we can appreciate and honor our Founder and love our congregation more deeply with a sense of sacred than before. We could admire the life and vision of our Founder and the other great pillars of the Founding Generation, Bl. Helena Maria Virgo, Bl. Josepha and Mother Michaela. We admire our Founder's stamina, will and

hard work to plan with minute details as he gave shape to the founding of Society, the construction of the houses at Steyl and the plans for the expansion of the Society at different corners of the world. We can say that St. Arnold was a person who could fully depend upon God's guidance and providence and go ahead to found three major religious congregations without any financial resources. His spirituality and devotion to the Sacred Heart, Holy Trinity and the Holy Spirit, has definitely touched and inspired us.

Yes, the AJSC team, especially Fr. Peter McHugh, Sr. Emmy, Sr. Franziska Carolina and Fr. Juergen Ommerborn from the AJ Secretariat, did a wonderful job to share with us history and significant details of the origins of the Arnoldus Family. They as well as all the members of the Steyl Community practice the values they inherited from our Founder. Their hospitality and warmth towards us was great.

Our stay at our Mother House, Steyl has made a deep spiritual impact on all of us and it will remain part of life long journey as Divine Word Missionaries and as diocesan priests.

FRS. TOPPO AJIT KUMAR SVD AND FR. AMALDOSS RETHINASAMY SVD

PILGRIMAGE TO ISSUM, KEVELEAR AND GOCH

The first week of our Tertiate Renewal Program ended with a pilgrimage to three places that are historical markers on the road to knowing better our founding generation. Saturday, August 23rd, after an early breakfast we set out by bus from Steyl on the road to Issum. We had a beautiful setting with the passing countryside to pray our morning prayer.

Soon we arrived in Issum and found the parish church of St. Nicholas. This is where Hendrina Stenmanns, Blessed Josepha,

was baptized and grew up in her faith and her vocation. The young Hendrina attended Mass as often as she could and was active in visiting sick and elderly members of the parish. She is remembered as a cheerful person who made others happy.

We travelled the next few kilometers by bus to the house where Hendrina was born in the year 1852. She was the eldest of 7 children. We were greeted and welcomed into the small and cozy house by a grand niece and her son. They told stories of how Hendrina left school early to help support the family by weaving silk at a loom there in the house. After viewing many photos we sang a song of appreciation for their sharing and hospitality. Then we continued our pilgrimage to Kevelaer.

Kevelaer is a Marian shrine that began in the 17th century to bring peace to the local people. An image of Mary as “Consoler of the Afflicted” was placed in a small wayside shrine. The devotion grew and during Arnold Janssen’s lifetime was a popular place of pilgrimage. Members of the Steyl Mission House would travel by foot to this shrine, praying for the many intentions of the young missionary congregation.

We went as a group to the shrine and held a brief prayer service. Afterwards, we split into 2 groups on a tour of the Basilica and the church of the candles. This is where many people light candles and leave them near the church to pray for their intentions. We saw many groups of pilgrims visiting the shrine and some of the parishes who had come in procession to celebrate Mass and leave a candle.

By then it was midday so we took some time to sit on the benches and eat our packed lunches which we had brought from Steyl. After this time to rest and pray, we made our way back to the bus and were on our way to Goch.

The weather turned a little cloudy with a threat of rain as we arrived in front of St. Magdalena church, which was Arnold Janssen’s home parish church. Waiting for us was Fr. Hans Peters, an SVD confrere who is a member of the pastoral team of the three local parish churches. He explained how the original bell tower of the church had collapsed probably caused by the vibrations of the ringing bells when a previous Tertiate Renewal group was visiting. Now it is a beautifully rebuilt bell tower. And Fr. Peters gave us a wonderful tour of the church with many historical explanations.

One detail that he pointed out was an image of the Blessed Trinity in the form of three persons. In other words, this is a rare image of the Holy Spirit portrayed as a person. This must have left a lasting impression on the young Arnold Janssen. Someone noticed a staff in the sanctuary with a shovel-like point at the end. Fr. Peters explained how when at one point in history it was prohibited to have a bishop, the local pastors carried this kind of staff to remind the people that they were not without a shepherd. And the shovel-like end on the staff was to say that the pastor walks behind the sheep to clean up after them.

We left the church and walked a few hundred meters to the house where Arnold Janssen was born and grew up. We spent some time in the front room and with the help of Fr. Peters we could appreciate the significance of this place. Then we went to the upper room and held a short prayer service where the Prologue of John’s Gospel was recited. We left with many good memories and deeper insights into our founder’s life.

Our last stop on the pilgrimage was the church of St. Arnold Janssen which is located on the outskirts of Goch. In the beautiful modern architecture of this church we could

appreciate how the people of this area find meaning in the life and mission of Arnold Janssen. At the back of the church is the original baptismal font where Arnold was baptized. We stood in silence for a moment and remembered our own baptism. Then we could take and bless ourselves with some of the water from the font.

Then we celebrated with many members of the parish the Saturday afternoon Eucharist. This was followed by a supper in the parish hall prepared and served by the Community Mission Animation Group. Two distant relatives of St. Arnold participated, one of whom has the name “Arnold Janssen.” We exchanged introductions after the meal, presented the Mission Group with a gift from Australia then sang a song in Bahasa Cinta (Indonesian language). We were so happy to be received by this parish community and we felt as though we were at home.

We felt so blessed to have had these experiences and hope that they will help us to deepen our roots in the founding generation and to inspire us today in our own missionary vocation.

FR. NADOLNY PAUL SVD

PILGRIMAGE TO OJES

“*We have entered into this sacred space*”, announced Fr. Juergen Ommerborn, SVD, “*St. Joseph Freinademetz prayed in this room with his family, in front of the image of the Blessed Mother. He was born in the adjoining room*”.

The participants of the 77th International Tertiate Renewal had come on pilgrimage to Abtei-Badia, Ojes. On Saturday, September 6th 2008, Fr. Pietro Irsara, SVD, welcomed us to the parental house at Ojes. Many of our twenty-five participants had waited years for this opportunity to embrace the view of

the Dolomite Mountains and to visit the places that were special to our beloved St. Joseph Freinademetz.

A few hours later, Fr. Peter Than, SVD one of our participants, was heard making the following remark as we arrived at the church of St. Martin at Badia – Thurn, “*this picture is everywhere!*”, apparently referring to the picture of Joseph Freinademetz with the children.

Indeed we had seen many images of our missionary saint from China. The previous day we had visited the parish of St. Joseph Freinademetz in Milland, Brixen. Following our visit to the parental home in Ojes, we prayed at the church of San Leonardo. Welcoming us at the Brixen Major Seminary front entrance, where Joseph Freinademetz, himself did his Philosophy and Theology years ago, was a large painting of Joseph Freinademetz.

We concluded our visit to South Tyrol by visiting the parental home of Sr. Theresia Messner, S.Sp.S. the first Superior General after the death of the Co-Foundresses. Her grand-niece welcomed us to Antholz-Mittertal and led us on a tour to the parish church and to the birth-place of Sr. Theresia. We have been the first group of tertiate members of the Arnoldus Family to visit the site.

May the sacred and significant memories of our visit to South Tyrol last throughout our life-time.

FR. HAIER JAMES SVD

EDITORIAL TEAM

AMALADOSS RETHINASAMY SVD, AROCKIAM
SINGARAYAR SVD AND PAULUS SARI SVD