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FIRST REDEMPTORIST BISHOP OF SURINAM
JAN SWINKELS, 1810-1875

Material; Family; Missions; Vice-Provincial; Provincial; DUBIA; Mission in Surinam; Vicar Apostolic; At work; Council 1867; Finances; Confusing; Sponsors; Cooperators-colleagues; Catechisms; H. Family; Visitation 1871; Follow-up; Death and Burial; Elegy-Necrology; Afterwards

In 1865 Jan Swinkels was the first Dutch Redemptorist nominated by the Holy See as Vicar Apostolic for Surinam. He served as Vicar Apostolic from 1866 till 1875, when he died in Surinam. He led the mission during the first 10 years of the Redemptorist presence in Surinam. He was not the first vicar apostolic, but he and the other Redemptorists introduced a new type of church in the Dutch colony. Before that he was Vice-Provincial in Holland and Provincial of the Dutch-English province of the Redemptorists, 1854-1865. It was an interesting decade in the growing presence of the Redemptorists in that part of Europe. It is worthwhile to remember him and to indicate his place in the history of the Surinam Catholic Church.

Material

There is a lot of material around concerning Jan Swinkels.¹ The archives of the Dutch Redemptorists in St. Agatha Cuyk have a good deal of material, especially his letters: letters to the Provincial Superior of the Dutch province (96 letters), a letter to the Catholics of Surinam (15.10.1865), a letter in the *Kerkelijke Courant* (20.4.1867), and one to the Superior General in Rome (19.1.1873). There is a collection of 26 letters both to and from his family, one from his mother to him, 2 from his father to him, 3 letters from him to his friend Cato Diddens, and a letter of

¹ See J. VERNOOIJ, *The Seven Redemptorist Bishops of Surinam*, in: SHCSR 60 (2012) 226-234.

Mgr. Henricus den Dubbelden of the vicariate of Den Bosch (1769-1851). In the general archives of the Redemptorists in Rome, there is a total of 93 letters (Jan Swinkels to the Superior General Nicolas Mauron 21; Mauron to Swinkels 20; Jan Schaap to Mauron 18; Mauron to Schaap 14; Anton Konings to Mauron 3, Piet Oomen to Mauron 6). They are written in Dutch and French, but also in Latin. We are missing the complete correspondence because many letters had been lost especially the letters in Surinam, due understandably to the tropical climate at that time. Nevertheless we can develop a picture of Swinkels and his life. The archives, also those of the diocese of Haarlem and the National Archives of North Holland (Haarlem), have good, useful material. Father Adriaan Bossers² presented us with the first, standard narrative, and we also researched the Dutch bulletin *De Godsdienstvriend* and *De Volksmissionaris*, a bulletin edited by the Dutch Redemptorists from 1879. We had to be selective, because mission literature is a special genre, with a focus on promotion and begging for money.

Family

Joannes Baptista Swinkels was born April 14 1810 at Woensel (Brabant, the South of the Netherlands). His father was J.B. Swinkels and his mother Anna Maria Leurs.³ The couple had 10 children and Joannes was the oldest of all. In the beginning the family stayed in or near the former monastery Mariënhage at Woensel, but moved to the small city of Helmond.⁴ Jan did his

² [A. BOSSER], *Beknopte geschiedenis der katholieke missie in Suriname*, Gulpen 1884.

³ J. HEEREN, *Biografisch woordenboek van Helmond*, Helmond, 1920, 210. Joannes Baptista zou geboren zijn op het oude klooster Mariënhage te Woensel. Gesteendrukt portret van hem door D. J. Sluijter, uitgegeven door B. Lening. In Aug. SASSEN, *Historische en Topografische atlas van Helmond*, Helmond 1881: *De Reijdt*, plaat 13; Lud. SCHUTJES, *Geschiedenis van het bisdom 's Hertogenbosch*, St. Michiels-Gestel 1872, II, 303; IV, 133; V, 938. Cfr. *Noord-Brabantsche Almanak*, 1890, 332.

⁴ A. WEILER & N. GEIRNAERT, *Domus beata Mariae in Domu prope Endoviam (Eindhoven-Weert, Mariënhage, Woensel)*, in: W. KOHL, E. PERSOONS & Anton G. WEILER (red.), *Monasticon Windeshemense*, 3: Niederlande (Archief en Bibliotheekwezen in België, 16/3 (Brussel, 1980), 203-240.

primary and Latin school education in Helmond. As a young boy he was a victim of tuberculosis. From 1829 on he studied philosophy and theology at the new seminary of Herlaar, St. Michiels Gestel, the diocesan seminary of the vicariate of Den Bosch (Brabant). According to the stories, he was the first student.⁵ In 1830 his tender and careful mother died and Jan, together with his father, took care of the education of the rest of the family. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1834 by Mgr. Cornelis Baron de Wijckerslooth at Warmond, the diocesan seminary of Haarlem.⁶ After a year he started to work as a lecturer at the College of Oudenbosch, a Latin (secondary) school, in the vicariate of Breda. In 1830 the College (Latijnse School) Oudenbosch was founded by a priest of the Apostolic Vicariate of 's Hertogenbosch, P. van Kessel. He was the school leader. The lecturers he recruited came from the vicariate of Den Bosch. In 1833 the number of students was 39, external and internal.⁷ Van Kessel was an opponent of the Vicar apostolic of Breda, J. van Hooydonk, who wanted to send him away as a stranger and foreigner in the Breda vicariate. He was looking for someone to replace Van Kessel, who was a wild and willful man. As headmaster of the College he wanted Zwinkels (=Swinkels), who was especially liked by the students and in a friendly relation with his superiors.⁸

In November 1838 J.B. Swinkels left Oudenbosch, to become rector and leader of the Latin School of Helmond in the region where he was born. Perhaps the closing of Oudenbosch

⁵ *De Volksmissionaris* 12 (1891) 216. Swinkels had een vrij hooge, mannelijke gestalte, 221. Cfr. 1^{ste} Redemptorist-Bisschop van Suriname, Mgr. J. Swinkels. *Petrus Donders Tijdschrift* 21/1, sept. 1940, 11-13.

⁶ *Waar eens een Franse kostschool stond. Opstellen over Warmonds studentenleven*. Jubileumboek ter gelegenheid van het honderdvijftig-jarig bestaan van het Groot-Seminarie Warmond, Warmond, 1949.

⁷ J. DE LEPPER, *De voorgeschiedenis van het seminarie Ypelaar*, Tilburg, 1950; W. BERGMANS, 40. Cf. W. KNIPPENBERG, *150 jaar klein-seminarie van het bisdom 's Hertogenbosch 1815-1965*, z.p. 1965, 16; Cf. L. HEEREN, *De Latijnse school te Helmond*, in: *Taxandria*, 27 (1920) met het eerste reglement van 18-5-1797, 224-231. Cf. J. DE LEPPER, *De voorgeschiedenis van het Seminarie Ypelaar*, Tilburg, 1950, 41-68.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 56-57.

was at hand. The Premonstratensian Herman J. Beugels founded this school in 1797.⁹ In Helmond, De Lepper called Swinkels the same *man of high caliber*, as he was during his time at Oudenbosch.¹⁰ Also working at Oudenbosch at the time was Lambert van Roosmalen, a priest who left Holland in 1842 for the Dutch Antilles, for Curaçao.¹¹

In the reports of 1836 the inspector of the Latin Schools in the Netherlands, H. Wijnbeek, wrote for the minister of Internal Affairs Zaken in regard to Helmond that the inspection took place during the time of carnival.¹² The reports of 1843 concerning Helmond say *a better name for the school should be a piggery*.¹³ Seven years previously the mayor had promised that the school would be improved. That was not realised.

The education there, by the rector Swinkels, was quite sufficient, but that of the senior co-rector Smids was insignificant. The number of students was 28. In Helmond, J. Swinkels had heard about the spiritual missions of the new religious group of the Redemptorists in Holland, in parishes in the south of Holland, for example in Den Bosch, Uden, Schijndel, Helmond. Swinkels wanted to join the new group but the ecclesiastical authorities did not agree with his idea, because they were busy building up a diocesan clergy. Swinkels could not be persuaded and retained his desire. The provincial of the Redemptorists, Frederik von Held, in Belgium, asked him to delay for some years and go to his position in the Dutch Antilles. Even the bishop of Luik, the Dutch C. van Bommel (1790-1852) was involved and asked for advice. He too supported the delay.¹⁴ Swinkels was a

⁹ Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, A-2118, Inv. 4: Archief van de Curatoren van de Latijnse School te Helmond, 1814-1878 (Inventaris is van M. van Boven (1982) van de gemeentelijke Archiefdienst Helmond). Cf. aldaar ook: Literatuur Latijnse School 1814-1878 (o.a. H. Ouwering 1909). *Schetsen uit de oude Brabantsche Schoolwereld en Helmonds Heem*.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹¹ Hij gaf uit *Roosenmor*, Den Bosch; Cf. *De Godsdienstvriend*, 49, 41-44; G.V. 55, 145; 47, 313 e.v. en 49, 300 en 50, 281.

¹² DE LEPPER, 282.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 285.

¹⁴ M. LANS, *Pater Joannes Baptista Lans (18-8-1886)*. Een stuk geschiedenis uit het kerkelijk leven der 19^e eeuw. Handschrift van M. Lans, bewerkt en

Dutch diocesan priest and it was not a welcome idea to move a priest to Belgium because Catholic Holland needed priests, just at a time when there was more freedom of religion.

Von Held was Provincial Superior of the Redemptorists in Belgium with one monastery in the Netherlands at Wittem.¹⁵ Even the internuncio of Brussels had the opinion that it was questionable that a Dutch priest should move to Belgium, especially after the separation of the Netherlands into a southern part (Belgium) and a northern part (Holland) in 1831 and 1839. Swinkels was not the first diocesan priest to join the Redemptorists or other orders and congregations. Before him, the well-known mission leader and famous preacher, and former diocesan priest of Amsterdam, Bernard Hafkenscheid, had joined the Redemptorists. In total there were 49, 21 from 1833 till 1855 and 28 from 1856 to 1954.¹⁶

The Novitiate was situated at St. Truiden, Belgium. On May 24, 1833 the Redemptorists, founded by Alphonsus de Liguori in 1732 at Naples, founded from Vienna (Austria) a monastery and Novitiate at St. Truiden.¹⁷ Father Bernard Hafkenscheid organized the missions during 1840-1844 in Northern-Brabant and Swinkels heard about the phenomenon. So Father Bernard was busy with missions. In 1842: February in Tilburg, March in Grave and Uden, November in Schijndel. In 1843: February in Tilburg, March in Megen, August in Eindhoven, November in

voltooid door J. Bogaerts C.Ss.R., Den Bosch, 1911: G. Mosmans Zoon, 1911, 216-217: gedeelte van een brief van Mgr. Van Bommel aan Pater von Held over den Eerw. Heer Swinkels, dato 19 febr. 1844. Cf. H. MOSMANS. Mgr. van Bommel en de Redemptoristen. *Monumenta Historica*, IV (1952), 129-139. Brief in het Frans van Mgr. van Bommel is in het Archief Noord-Belgische provincie van de Redemptoristen (KADOC Leuven), 6.4.3.2/5. In deze brief gebruikt Van Bommel de namen Zwinkels en Zwingels. Daar zijn ook foto's te vinden: KFA411940/KFA411961.

¹⁵ J. BECO, *Les Rédemptoristes en Belgique*. 2ème partie: *La Province belge de 1841 à 1855*, in: *SHCSR* 55 (2007) 273-345. Cf. *Les Rédemptoristes en Belgique* Fasc. 1, *Les Débuts (1831-1841)* 3-83.

¹⁶ L. DANKELMAN, *Roepingen tot de congregatie onder de seculiere priesters*, in: *Monumenta Historica* 5 (1953) 121-140.

¹⁷ L. PAQUAY. *Het klooster van St. Truiden en Mgr. Van Bommel*. Bij gelegenheid van het eeuwfeest der congregatie van den Allerheiligsten Verlosser in 't bisdom Luik 1833-1933, Lummen, 1933: Drukkerij St. Ferdinandus, 31.

Den Bosch. In 1844: January in Helmond. All were cities around Helmond and Woensel.¹⁸ Swinkels entered the novitiate in March 1844. His Novice-master was a man from Alsace, Leopold Ottmann (1805-1881), who functioned as such from 1838 till the end of 1847.

It was a practice to make a list of the possessions of the new novices. Jan Swinkels's list had the following items: 11 shirts, 9 pairs of pants, 24 handkerchiefs (12 coloured), 8 pairs of stockings, 3 trousers, 1 coat, 3 pairs of shoes, 17 towels, 2 breviaries, 14 sheets, 2 woolen blankets, 7 pillow-slips, 1 habit, 1 strap. He had given his brother 2 woolen shirts.¹⁹ It is strange that the list does not mention his books. After his profession on March 25, 1845, he was transferred to the monastery of Wittem to do Redemptorist work such as retreats, missions, and days of recollection in convents and cities.

The Swinkels family had old roots in Brabant and was big. Genealogical studies have been done.²⁰ The grandfather of Jan Swinkels was J.B. Swinkels. He was baptized 17.3.1743 at Helmond, married Elisabeth van Aerle, and died there in October 1822. He was the dean of the weaver's guild, and not at all poor. A brother of his grandfather was a diocesan priest, Leonard Swinkels; he was a parish priest of Deurne from 1780 till 1815. The overall situation of Helmond during that time was

¹⁸ M. LANS, *Het leven van pater Bernard. Priester van de Congregatie des Allerheiligsten Verlossers*, Den Bosch, 1877: W. VAN GULICK, p. 222-223. Hfst. XIII: P. Bernards apostolische arbeid in Noord-Brabant, 188-218.

¹⁹ KADOC, Archief Noord-Belgische provincie van de redemptoristen, 6,4.3.3.2 *Voorwerpen der novicen meegebracht naar het noviciaat*. Cf. Greet de Neef, Yves Segers, Ann Taverniers. m.m.n. Annelies Vanparijs 2001. *Inventaris van het Archief Noord-Belgische Provincie van de Congregatie van de Allerheiligste Verlosser (Redemptoristen) 1773-1997*, Leuven: KADOC

²⁰ Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, Serie A. 027: Maasakkers, Fr. van *Swinkels*, Soerendonk, 1983-1985, 6 delen. Deel 1 (1983), 87; Deel 5 (1984), 48-79 (over JB. Swinkels, 49-70, over Lambertus, 71-75 en over Mattheus, 76-77), 110 (Hendrik en familie), 114 (Leonard en familie). Deel II is van 1984, deel III van 1986, deel IV van 1985 en deel VI van 1985. Het betreft 25.000 personen van 6.000 huwelijken vanaf ongeveer 1550. Het woord swinkels betekent *de man van de hoek* (*Huizinga's complete lijst van namen* (eindred. D. Valk), Tirion Baarn, 1998, 245.

houses (1815)		inhabitants (1815)	
head place	170	head place	1199
hamlets and farms	<u>193</u>	hamlets and farms	<u>1293</u>
	363		2492
Profession (1815)		Religion (1822)	
renters	5	Roman Catholic	2976
farmers	81	Reformed	64
traders	6	Lutheran	5
men (1822)		women (1822)	
single	905	single	1012
married	484	married	484
widower	51	widow	109

Clearly Helmond was a farmers' village, with many single people, more women than men. The Swinkels family was part of the group of traders.²¹

The father of Jan Swinkels was born at Gemert on 2.10.1784 and died in 1863. He married Anna Maria Leurs on 11.6.1809 (born 19.5.1787 and died 9-1-1830 at Helmond) and was a manufacturer (fabrikant), as he mentioned at the city hall when registering the birth of a child. The father was also land agent of the Domains of Eindhoven and stayed in Woensel, where J. B. Swinkels was born on 14.4.1810. He was baptized on the same day. His godfather was the father himself and his godmother Catharina Leurs, an aunt.²² Afterwards were born: Henricus Etiënne (Stefanus) 14.7.1811, a manufacturer at Boxtel and royal provider of Prince Hendrik and Maria Elisabeth, born on 10.1.1813, and others. On 26.6.1846 Maria entered the religious community of the Franciscan sisters of Etten with the new name Baptista and died in 1870. Theresia Maria was born in 1814 and married A. Schutjes; Lambertus was born in 1816 and entered the Redemptorist congregation as a laybrother;

²¹ A. SASSEN, Bevolking van Helmond. *Taxandria*, III, (Bergen op Zoom, 1896, 107-110.

²² Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, Inv. Nr. 48.3, fiche 6, fols. 150-180. Cf. *Acht eeuwen Helmond, de Hlemonders en hun rijk verleden. Ach lieve tijd*, Waanders, 1990-1992 (p. 136 foto van de Latijnse School); A. SASSEN, *Historische en topografische atlas van Helmond*, Helmond, 1881: J. de Reijdt.

Gerardus was born in 1819 and died in 1827; Leonard was born in 1821 and married Joanna Smeets (who died) and later on Maria Gertruida Leontina Poosse; Wilhelmus Matheus, born in 1826, entered the Redemptorist order as a brother; Anna Catharina, born 30.3.1825, entered the congregation of the Sisters of Charity as sister Remigia (her godfather was Henricus J.D. v.d. Voort and her godmother the widow of J. van Moorsel). She died 3.1.1884 at Borgloon; and Helena Maria Antoinette who was born on 15.6.1827 (her godfather Maur. v.d. Voort and her godmother Maria Swinkels) and died in the same year.

Arnoldus M. Chr. J. Swinkels, the secular priest, working in Surinam when Jan Swinkels became Vicar apostolic there, was born at Maren on 6.1.1824. We cannot find him in the Jan Swinkels' genealogy. On the same day Arnoldus Cornelius Joannes Swinkels was born in Maren. He is part of the genealogy (part 2). Vicar Apostolic Jan Swinkels mentions Arnold in his letters but never refers to family ties with him. He was his secretary in Surinam.²³

Two brothers of Jan became Redemptorist brothers. Mathieu, born in Helmond in 1823, entered the novitiate and made his religious profession on 25.3.1847. His religious name was Matheus. Perhaps Jan made the religious life attractive for him. He proposed to the superiors, though without success, to send him to Surinam when his brother Jan was seriously ill. He was exemplary, cared for the sick and fell seriously ill himself in November 1887. On January 31, 1888 he died at Roeselaere, Belgium and was buried there. His love for the sick was significant, as was also his patience and love for his vocation. His legs gave him pain.²⁴ Brother Matheus (or Matthias) was an example of patience, as recorded in the *Memorial*.²⁵

²³ Hij komt voor in *De Godsdienstvriend*, 61, 263; 62, 105; 66, 261; 69, 234-235; 78, 41-43.

²⁴ M. DE MEULEMEESTER, *Mémorial de la Province Belge de la Congrégation du T.S. Rédempteur 1831-1931*, Louvain, 1931: Saint-Alphonse; Archief C.S.S.R. België (KADOC Leuven) *Digesta Chronica Collegiarum Congregationis S.S. Redemptoris Provinciae Belgicae VIII Rollarium* (Roeselare), p. 39.

²⁵ *Memoriaal van de Nederlandse Provincie*, Studiehuis Wittem, 1961, 10.

The younger brother Lambertus Justinus, born at Helmond on 27.11.1816, entered the Redemptorist Novitiate and made his profession on 15.4.1852 at St. Truiden. He stayed a short time in the monastery at Brussels and in 1856 at Wittem. In 1858 he stayed in the monastery at Amsterdam (with his brother Jan as provincial). He became the first Redemptorist brother for the mission in Surinam, and arrived together with his brother Jan, who was Vicar Apostolic, in Surinam on 26.3.1866. Within a couple of months he was a victim of the tropical climate, and he died at Paramaribo on 6.8.1866, and was buried in the cemetery at the Rust & Vredestraat (now the Ferd. Derbystraat).²⁶

We can make a sketch of the family with the testament Jan formulated in 1875. This testament is an addendum in the letter of 20.9.1875 written by his successor Jan Schaap, after the death of Jan, to Hendrik (Driek), the oldest brother of Jan at Boxtel. Schaap mentions the In Memoriam of Jan and includes the following from the testament.²⁷

I am asking that, after my death, our family-chalice be sent to my brother at Boxtel. He shall give the chalice to August van der Voort.²⁸

With thanks for his many services, P. Broos²⁹ shall receive all my sermons, meditations and conferences of Alphonsus³⁰, my Vademecum or prayer book.

Salva paupertate, I am asking that the following things, received in early times, be sent as souvenirs:

1. To my brothers Hendrik and Leonard my 2 walking sticks.
2. To the lay-brother Matthieu my latest snuff-box (1).
3. To my sister in law Helena [the wife of Hendrik] my small silver snuff-box.
4. To Leontine [the second wife of Leonard] the small silver pectoral cross. It was the possession of Pope Pius IX and was given to me. The internuncio Oreglia, now a cardinal, has himself put relics in the cross. I was consecrated with this cross.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 64.

²⁷ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 8605.

²⁸ Till now we cannot discover this person.

²⁹ Pater J. B. Broos, geboren 1847, kwam in 1871 in Suriname werken en keerde in 1883 ziek naar Nederland terug (was a leper).

³⁰ Broeder Alphons Koenen, geboren in 1839, kwam in 1869 in Suriname werken en overleed er in 1912.

5. To my sister Remigia, my Rosary of the 7 Sorrows.
6. To my nephew Jan, the small pectoral cross of the Congregation. Br. Lambertus used it when dying, which I hope to do (2).
7. To Janus [son of Theresia] my pocket-knife.
8. To Constant[son of Theresia] my folding rule.³¹
9. To Louis [son of Theresia] my small normal rosary.
10. To Sr. Xaveria [she is Johanna (Jeanette) daughter of his sister Theresia] the silver medal of the Immaculate Conception which I received from the pope himself and always used.

It is a pity that I have nothing more for the children of Leonard and Leontine, but father, mother and children all belong together.

Most of all I ask them to pray for me continuously.

(signed) J.B. Swinkels CSSR, Bischof ap. Vic Surin.

(1) The modest and simple man never used this silver snuff-box, as far as I know. I did not know he even had it.

(2) During the night before his death, the deceased used this small cross, kissing it a 100 times over. His nephew had to be really careful.

Jan Schaap, so he writes, shall send the things and is asking Hendrik to inform him about the number of children of Leonard and Leontine. Possibly he can look for souvenirs for them. Jan Schaap is informing the provincial superior Piet Oomen that he had sent something for the youngest son of Theresia, married Schutjes. Perhaps, the six years old nephew Jan is Joannes Bapt. Dominicus, a son of his brother Hendrik. Leonard and Leontine had 4 children, namely Maria Anna Hendrique Alphonsine (1861), Anna Maria Jeanne Pauline (1864), Jean Louis Joseph Baptist Leon (1867), a child who was born dead (1871) and Marie Josephine Joanne Anna (1874) who died in 1952 at Tongeren. Aug. van der Voort is not a member in the family line, without a place in the genealogy of the Swinkels family of F. van Maasakkers, but in the family line of his mother. A sister of hers,

³¹ Constant was geboren op 23 februari 1846 te Helden. Hij trad in 1866 bij de redemptoristen in, werd gekleed in 1867 maar werd in januari 1868 weggezonden bij gebrek aan inwendige spiritualiteit. (Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 747: *Catalogus Novitiorum Fratrum servientium, Sylvae Ducis in Hollandiae ab anno 1856* (chronologisch).

Catharina Johanna Theresia (born 6.9.1790 at Eindhoven) married Henricus Justinus Dominicus van der Voort, a manufacturer, on 14.1.1816. The couple had 11 children, of whom August was perhaps a cleric. It is possible he received the family chalice. In the diocesan archives of Den Bosch we cannot find anything about him. Perhaps he was a member of a religious congregation. The sister of Catharina Johanna Theresia, Maria Antonia, born 16.2.1792 at Eindhoven married Marinus Petrus van der Voort. This couple was without children.³²

Jan's sister Elisabeth (born 10.1.1813) entered the convent of the Sisters Penitenten Recollectinen of Etten on 10.8.1845 with the name of Sister Baptista. She made her perpetual vows on 4.10.1846. In April 1849 she became a teacher at Etten and later at Standaardbuiten, Ulvenhout, Prinsenbeek and again at Etten where she died 13.11.1870.³³ Sister Xaveria was named in the testament. She was Jeanette, the daughter of Adrianus Schutjes and Maria Theresia Swinkels, born at Meyel on 4.11.1840. She was a niece of the Monsignor. She entered the convent of her aunt, Sister Baptista, in 1861, made her perpetual vows on 5.4.1862, got her diploma as a teacher, got fluent in French and became headmistress of the school of Beek. She was a teacher and superior. In 1898 she was chosen as General Superior of the Congregation and died 11.4.1919.³⁴

Missions

After becoming a Redemptorist Swinkels worked as a priest in Wittem in 1845. He is mentioned in the list of members in 1845 and 1846, with the information that he was Sub-Minister (treasurer) and prefect of the sick.³⁵ In Wittem he was involved

³² J. HEEREN, De familie van Moorsel. *Taxandria*, 37 (Berg op Zoom, 1930), 26-94, 32

³³ Mededelingen van de archivaris zr. Monique Luykx, 28-11-2007.

³⁴ Zr ANETTE P.R. (o.l.v. Pater Gerlach, ofm. cap.), *Geschiedenis van de congregatie van de Penitenten Recollectinen van Etten*, Etten-Leur, 1951, 172-195 en *Gedenkboek bij het honderdjarig bestaan van de Congregatie Recollectinen-Penitenten Wihof Etten 1820 – 19 maart – 1920*, Etten-Leur, 1920, 30-36.

³⁵ Chronicon C.S.S.R. Coll. Witt. ad S. Alphonsum, pars III, lib. II, 1 fols. 116, 131, 147, 149, 153-154 (terugkomst uit Brugge), 160, 165 en 167 (14 april naar Amsterdam).

in the specific Redemptorist work at that time: giving missions and retreats.³⁶ In September 1846 he gave a mission together with other fathers at Echt and Gratum, in 1847 at Uden (Brigitinessen), Maastricht (Brothers) and Oudenbosch (minor-seminary)³⁷, in 1849 at Herten (February 6-16), Linne (February 17-28), Melick (March 10-20), Montfort (March 21 to April 2), Nieuw Valkenburg (April 14-22), Baexem (May 1-11), Ell (May 12-22), Hunsel (May 22-June 1), Venlo (June 4-18) and Maasbracht (October). And from the 4th to the 10th of September a Priests' Retreat at Warmond. It is a list of very intensive work, almost without a break.³⁸ In 1847 it was difficult for him to get jurisdiction in the diocese, when he planned to give a retreat to the Birginitessen Sisters of Uden, not only on account of the vicar apostolic Mgr. J. Zwijsen but also because on account of the sisters for whom it was difficult to give permission to him who was a former diocesan priest but was now a religious. Father Bernard Hafkenscheid advised him on this matter. The retreat was a great success.³⁹ In 1849 he was busy in Belgium, using Dutch and French. That was important for hearing confessions⁴⁰.

In Wittem Swinkels was Prefect of the sick.⁴¹ In 1847 that meant coping with the victims of a typhoid epidemic which was due to a considerable lack of hygiene in the monastery. The number of members in Wittem on 1.1.1847 was 108: 26 fathers, 57 students, 11 professed brothers, 7 novice-brothers, 4 candidates and 3 resident house personnel. During the typhoid in No-

³⁶ K. VAN WELY, *Gestalte en structuur van de missie bij S. Alfonsus. Een historisch-theologische studie van een pastorale praktijk*, Amsterdam, 1964: Drukkerij Koersen.

³⁷ Archief C.SS.R. Wittem, Tabula Chronologica B V, recessus spirituales extra domum.

³⁸ Archief C.SS.R. Wittem, Tabula Chronologica B 1, exhibens sanctae missiones. Een chronologische weergave.

³⁹ Archief C.SS.R. Wittem, Chronicon Pars III, Lib. II, 3. Labores Apostolici: fol. 627, 1847 Recessus Uden.

⁴⁰ Archief C.SS.R. België (KADOC, Leuven), *Degesta Chronica Collegiorum Congregationis SS. Redemptoris Provinciae Belgicae. III Trudonopolis* (St. Truiden), p. 36.

⁴¹ Archief C.SS.R. Wittem, Chronicon C.SS.R. Coll. Witt. Ad S. Alph. Pars III, liber II, 1 fol. 131; cf. fol. 147.

vember 1847 there were a number of victims in Wittem: 27 students and 8 brothers. The remaining 12 students were sent for 6 weeks to St. Truiden. Together with Fr. Jan Swinkels, Fr. L'Hoir (1822-1885) was busy as Prefect of the sick, with 7 helpers (4 brothers and 3 students). Eight died in Wittem, 5 in the first month, 2 some months later, and 1 in May 1849.⁴²

In 1848, from January 2 until December, Swinkels was Rector of the new monastery of the Redemptorists at Bruges (Belgium), a so-called Hospitium because it was a new monastery with few members. He was also rector of the convent of the Redemptoristines, founded at Bruges in 1840.⁴³ In the chronicles he was called Director, an unusual name in Redemptorist circles.⁴⁴ In that year Belgium was restless and chaotic, according to the chronicles. The sisters and fathers had to stay outside the convents.⁴⁵ The bishop of Luik, Mgr. C. van Bommel, visited the convent of the Redemptoristines that year. On December 26 1848 Swinkels departed for Wittem, and became director of the missions in Wittem. He was also a conductor of retreats in convents of men and women. He was involved in missions at Ja-beek, Beegden, Roosteren, Merkelbeek, Wessem, Buchten and Maastricht; in 1851 at Gent (St. Niclaas, Belgium), Lanswaarde, Tilburg ('t Heike) and Nijmegen. He was retreat conductor at Maastricht (Sisters of Charles Borromeo), Warmond (priests), Amsterdam (Maagdenhuis and Bernardus), and at the minor seminaries of Oudenbosch, Hageveld, and Rolduc.

In 1851 Swinkels was nominated superior of the new Redemptorist monastery in Amsterdam. He departed on April 4, 1851 from Wittem. He had worked hard.⁴⁶ In Amsterdam he was

⁴² M. MULDER, De Typhus-Epidemie te Wittem in 1847. *Monumenta Historica*, jg. III, 1951, p.12-18.

⁴³ M. DE MEULEMEESTER, *De Redemptoristinnen. Hare levenswijze, haar ontstaan en ontwikkeling, haar nut voor de kerk*, Gulpen, 1925: M. Alberts, 38. Een zus van Mgr. G. Wulfingh, Moeder Clementina, was een van de pioniers van het redemptoristinnenklooster te Sambeek

⁴⁴ KADOC. Archief Noord-Belgische provincie v.d. Redemptoristen, 4.1.3.2. (Brugge 1841-1850), *Extraits de chroniques des Rédemptoristines de Brugge 1840-1851*, fol. 20.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, fol. 24.

⁴⁶ A. DANKELMAN, *Uit de stichtingsjaren van ons klooster te Amsterdam*.

occupied with the building of the church beside the monastery.⁴⁷ Swinkels enlarged the chapel, built a temporary church, and afterwards the definitive church. He was helped by Fr. Jan van Rijckevorsel (1818-1890), who came from a rich family of the nobility, and was a member of the community. The minister of External Affairs in the Netherlands, Mr. A. van Sonsbeeck, who was head of the Department charged with the affairs of the R.C. Religion, and himself a Catholic, was a help to him. More than that the lawyer of the Department was Mr. A. Lux, who had a son, Ludovicus, a member of the Redemptorists, professed in 1842, ordained priest in 1847, and appointed to England.⁴⁸ That was fortunate for issues such as permissions from the city board of Amsterdam, which sometimes made difficulties. The *Memorial* speaks of him during the building activities in these terms:

With his prudent progress and unresistable perseverance. With his natural sensitive and quick-tempered character.⁴⁹

He followed the Holy Rule seriously during this period of giving missions and retreats in 1852 at Lobith, at Goor, Soesterberg, Velp near Arnhem October 1851, for example to the Sisters of Charity at Tilburg in Amsterdam, the Maagdenhuis, the Pius-house, the Bernardushouse and the minor-seminary at Voorhout.⁵⁰

Monumenta Historica, III (1951), 20-32 met 2 brieven van Swinkels aan Waarde Broeder en Zuster van 29 sept. 1851 en 12 febr. 1852; L. DANKELMAN, Amsteloamensia: I. Klooster en Kerk te Amsterdam. *Monumenta Historica*, II (1950), afl. 1 en 3 [history of the convent].

⁴⁷ *Gedenkboek bij het 75-jarig jubelfeest van de vestiging der Eerwaarde Paters Redemptoristen te Amsterdam. 1850 - 13 november - 1925*, Amsterdam 1925, p. 23-24. Cf. J. Vis, *Liefde het fundanment. 400 jaar Roomsche Catholiek Oude Armen Kantoer in Amsterdam*, Amsterdam, 2004: Boom, waarin de redemptoristen enkele keren worden genoemd. [memorial books]

⁴⁸ *Monumenta Historica*, I (1949) 58-59.

⁴⁹ *Gedenkboek bij het 75-jarig jubelfeest van de vestiging der eerwaarde parers Redemptoristen te Amsterdam 1850-1925*, s.n. 1925, 37 en 51-57. [memorial book].

⁵⁰ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, Huisarchief Amsterdam. Kronieken van de Congregatie des Allh. Verlossers 1850-73. Kronieken van het hospitaal te Amsterdam, fols. 14-39. L. DANKELMAN, Amsteloamensia I: Klooster en Kerk te Amsterdam. *Monumenta Historica*, II (1950) 1-22; Amsteloamensia

The Protestant and Catholic (and not just the diocesan) clergy were troublemakers, expecting to lose terrain and money on account of the new building and foundation. On November 19, 1854 he blessed the new church. In 1865 he consecrated the church as bishop.

Swinkels interfered in one matter with a lot of energy. It concerned the question of Vriezeveen, now part of the conglomerate town of Twenterand, in 1852. In January 1852 the Redemptorists of Amsterdam gave a mission at Vriezeveen. A Catholic man, married to a Dutch Reformed wife, presented his child for baptism into the Catholic church, but later on the child was educated as Reformed. The father got a fresh insight during the mission and decided to educate his child as a Catholic. His wife did not agree with this move and she fled with the child. The Protestants at Vriezeveen were very angry, threw stones at the church where the mission was going on, and during the sermon people knocked on the windows of the church and the parish house. Protestants shouted at the fathers of the mission, as the newspapers frequently reported. Swinkels wrote and defended the fathers in *De Tijd* of February 2, 1852. He referred to the case in a letter to his brother on February 12, 1852.⁵¹

In a short, unsigned article in *De Tijd*, Swinkels, taking responsibility for the fathers of Amsterdam, refers to an article in *Het Handelsblad* from the day before and pinpoints the inaccuracies. The affair of the Catholic father and the Dutch Reformed wife was a story that went on for a long time. The parish priest was involved, but the fathers on the mission had nothing to do with it. The child, a girl, was already 11 years old. Swinkels ends his clarification as follows:

The whole history of this horrible question is once again a demonstration of how many Protestants are really tolerant, but how some of them are stimulated to bad behavior by a small

II: B. VAN DER EERENBEEMT, De eerste tijd in Amsterdam. *Ter Informatie*, nr. 67 (nov. 1996) p. 33-36. Inleiding bij gelegenheid van 125 jaar bestaan in 1975. [history of the convent of Amsterdam].

⁵¹ L. DANKELMAN, Uit de stichtingsjaren van ons klooster te Amsterdam. *Monumenta Historica*, III (1951) 32. [history].

group of them, who bring shame to the agents and make them unfortunate, even to the extent of their being jailed.⁵²

The monastery of Amsterdam was in the beginning a guest house until 1854. After the phase of a difficult beginning, it became formally a Collegium with a good number of members.

The community of the monastery of Amsterdam registered the following status of their activities.

	Missions	Communions	Renewals	Retreats,	Novenas	Communions in their church
1852	16	14.157	2	5	2	22.200
1862	10	14.060	1	35		69.000
1870	28	53.775	2	2	5	74.400. ⁵³

During almost two decades the numbers increased, partly because more and more priests joined the community. The memory of 25 years presence of the Redemptorists in Amsterdam in 1891 was not a reason for a great festival in the convent and church.⁵⁴ We have to remark that the confreres in Suriname sent Surinamese wood for a new floor in church and sacristy.⁵⁵

Vice-Provincial

On July 2, 1841 Pope Gregory XVI issued a decree in *Praesbyterorum saecularium* for a new composition of the growing congregation of the Redemptorists in 6 provinces: Rome, Naples, Sicily, Switzerland, Austria and Belgium. The last 3 were under the guidance of a Vicar-General, who was at that time Joseph Constant Passerat (1772-1858, at Tournai). He was followed by Fr. R. Smetana as Vicar-General from 1850 till 1855. Till that time the Province of Naples was autonomous. At the General Chapter of 1855 Fr. Nicolas Mauron was nominated as first Superior General or Rector Major, with Rome as his permanent dwelling-place (1855-1893).

⁵² *De Tijd*, 2 februari 1852, nr. 1454, 2.

⁵³ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 74: *Accepta et Expensa domuum Provinciae Hollandicae et Labores Apostolicorum extra ecclesiam*.

⁵⁴ Archief C.S.S.R. Kronijken Amsterdam II, fol. 206.

⁵⁵ Archief C.S.S.R. Kronijken Amsterdam IA, fol. 79.

But then a problem or conflict arose. The congregation was growing widely in Western and Northern Europe. For the chapter in 1855 representatives of the Congregation had to be chosen. The Province of Belgium numbered a lot of members from Belgium, North America, England, the Netherlands and Ireland. Now the distribution code for representatives of the provinces was unfavourable for the Belgian province, which had so many members in comparison with the other provinces. The government of the Congregation was looking for a new distribution code. The solution was to split the Belgian Province. In May 1854 the split was effective: a Belgian Province and a provisional Dutch-English Vice-province, the *Provincia Hollandica-Anglica*.⁵⁶ Surprisingly on July 19, 1854 J. Swinkels was nominated as Vice-Provincial, subordinate to the Belgian Provincial. That was a quick promotion inside the Dutch region. He was Rector of the monastery in Amsterdam.⁵⁷ He was a real newcomer in the Congregation apart from his training in Wittem. His firm and determined approach during the building of the monastery and church in Amsterdam had brought him respect in the other houses, except in Rome. In England and Ireland monasteries were founded at Falmouth (1843), Hanley Castle (1844), Great Marlow, Lanhern, Clapham (1848), Bishop Eton (1851), Limerick (1853). His nomination is somewhat puzzling. Perhaps his neutral position as a newcomer was attractive.

On November 13, 1854 the Vice-Provincial Chapter had a meeting at Wittem as a preparation for the General Chapter in Rome in 1855. Swinkels was the chairman. The task for the Vice-Provincial Chapter was the election of representatives for the General Chapter. Participants in the Wittem meeting were the Rectors of the houses in England (Paul Reyners of Clapham, J. Lans of Bishop-Eton, Limerick). Frs. Bernard Hafkenscheid and A. Konings were elected from Holland.⁵⁸ In 1855 Swinkels,

⁵⁶ Gerardusbode, aug. 1941, 197 en 226-230.

⁵⁷ G. RONDELEZ, België en Nederland. Vreedzame en vruchtbare samenwerking tussen Noord en Zuid ten voordele van de ganse C.Ss.R. (1831-1855), *Monumenta Historica* 7 (1955), 65-94 [history].

⁵⁸ *Ter Informatie*, no. 27 (mei 1988), p. 33-34. Het verslag heeft 't over een provinciaal kapittel. Mosmans, p. 91.

A. Konings and Bernard Hafkenscheid participated in the General Chapter of 1855.⁵⁹ Shortly after the General Chapter, on November 21, the provisional Dutch-English Vice-Province was ended and received the status of a Province.⁶⁰ On May 24, 1865 it was followed by a split in the Dutch and the English province.⁶¹

Provincial

Jan Swinkels was now Provincial at Amsterdam. In 1859 the Congregation on this side of the Alps, the transalpine area, numbered 520 priests (in 1852, 343), in 1862, 576, and in 1867 and 664.⁶² The date of May 24, 1865 was the end of the Provincialate of Jan Swinkels, who had been nominated three times (each time for a triennium).

During his Provincialate he sometimes had great worries about the studentate at Wittem with its students of different language traditions, students from Germany and England, who sometimes did not get on together. Swinkels wrote at the end of 1855: *'In Wittem nationalism is the big evil'*. He sometimes had problems with the Rector, the professors and lecturers. In those cases he visited Wittem and could ward off the biggest problems in special meetings and private conversations.⁶³

As Provincial Swinkels bought a piece of ground in Den Bosch for the foundation of a new monastery. On February 18, 1854 the Vicar-general R. Smetana agreed with an act of the notary under the name of J. Swinkels. The new foundation came

⁵⁹ *Capitulum Generale anno 1855 Romae celebratum. Acta Capituli Generalis 1855*, Romae: Cuggiani, p. 299-634, *Acta*, 487 e.v.; 489 verslag van het vice-provintieaal kapittel van 13 nov. 1854 te Wittem.

⁶⁰ B. VAN DER EERENBEEMT, Het ontstaan der Nederlandse provincie. *Monumenta Historica*, jg. 1, afl. 2 (maart-april 1949) 33-41.

⁶¹ EERENBEEMT, B. v.d., Het ontstaan der Nederlandse provincie. *Monumenta Historica*, I (maart-april 1949) 33-41. Cf. L. DANKELMAN, Praenotanda bij de Geschiedenis van onze Nederlandse Provincie. *Monumenta Historica*, I (maart-april 1949) 22-27.

⁶² M. DE MEULEMEESTER, *Histoire Sommaire de la Congrégation du T.S. Rédempteur*, Louvain: Imprimerie St. Alphonse, 1958, 170.

⁶³ Th. DE CALIWE, *Emmaus aan de Geul. Het verhaal van een grootseminarie. Wittem 1836-1968*, (Wittem) 2007, 34 en 37.

under de guidance of Fr. J. Koemans as Rector with the Consultants L. Hochtin and J. te Vaarwerk.⁶⁴ That was strange because Jan Swinkels was not in charge as Vice-Provincial in Amsterdam, where he was Rector. It would perhaps be logical that Swinkels should be the most prominent member in Holland at that moment. Within a short time, the need was growing for a church in Den Bosch. On March 19, 1858 the laying of the first foundation-stone took place silently, and on December 4, 1859 this church dedicated to St. Joseph was blessed.⁶⁵ There was competition between the Archbishop J. Zwijsen and the Rector J. Koemans.⁶⁶ That was the reason why in October 1865 Mgr. J. Swinkels himself could consecrate the church.

As Vice-Provincial he opened in Den Bosch in March 28, 1856 the Novitiate for candidates for the priesthood (frater clericus). Up to that time they had to go to St. Truiden, like Swinkels himself.⁶⁷ On December 27, 1855 the Superior General agreed with the planning. On Sunday March 31, 1856 the monastery was solemnly opened.⁶⁸

Swinkels was the initiator of the monastery in the South of the Netherlands, at Roermond, Kapel 't Zand (1863). The rector of Wittem, Fr. Anton Konings, contacted him before the building of the Catholic church of Roermond. On October 19, 1862 the act of handing over of church and parish house took place and

⁶⁴ B. VAN DER EERENBEEMT, Den Bosch en de Redemptoristen. *De Boschboom. Bladeren*, 10, april 1972, 2-23, 6-7. Cf. M. MULDER, De vestiging van de redemptoristen in Den Bosch. *Monumenta Historica*, 6 (1954) 37-72; 7 (1955) 119-128 en 8 (1956) 27-39 (met als slot: wordt vervolgd. Dat is niet gebeurd). Mulders noemt Swinkels al vice-provinciaal (48) maar dat wordt hij pas later in het jaar.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, *Monumenta Historica*, 6 (1954), 64.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, *Monumenta Historica*, 6 (1954) 51-63: Het conflict tussen Mgr. Zwijsen en Pater Koemans. Cf. L. DANKELMAN, Uit het leven van de Eerw. Pater Joannes Hubertus Koemans. *Monumenta Historica*, 5 (1953) 65-104.

⁶⁷ Cf. M. MULDER, De vestiging van de redemptoristen in Den Bosch. *Monumenta Historica*, 6 (1954) 16-17.

⁶⁸ P. VAN ASSCHE, *Inventaris van het generalaatsarchief van de Broeders Xaverianen 1840-1996*, Leuven, 1999: KADOC; Prudent JANSSENS, *L'influence des Rédemptoristes sur la fondation des Frères Xavériens*, in *SHCSR* 10 (1962) 395-423.

Swinkels as Provincial gave his signature on December 13, 1863.⁶⁹ Swinkels together with 2 fathers and 2 brothers settled there in June 14, 1863, and on June 21, he took over the whole complex of buildings at Roermond. The bishop attended the ceremony. Swinkels noted that the fathers would take over the priestly services only when they had been invited to that service. During visits the fathers should not take drinks or smoke cigars. Swinkels was Rector provisionally at the request of the Superior General (from June 14). Before that he had to settle the question with the verger. He himself wanted a brother Redemptorist as verger of the church but in that case he had to discharge the old verger. It was a hell of a job to discharge that man because, according to the chronicler or Swinkels, *self-interest was the main reason for such behavior*.⁷⁰ On July 1, 1862 the old verger was discharged with a fee of 60 francs per year. He was allowed to sit down in the choir on a special seat, and he could serve sometimes. It was not necessary for him to wash the church vestments. On July 27, 1862 Swinkels returned to Amsterdam, because on July 14 the new Rector J. Koemans had arrived at Roermond.

Swinkels had to accept some mistakes like the foundation at Frenswegen (1858), the negotiations about the adoption of the new mission of the Dutch Antilles (1862-1863), Rijsenburg (1864) where the Redemptorists lived during 1848-1850, and Hoge Zwaluwe (1864).⁷¹ During his term as Provincial foundations started in England and Ireland. We have some letters of his to the communities during this period.

We cannot find serious comments on his policy and strategy. The letters to the members of the communities show us a strict leader with occasionally an emphasis on small points of the Rule, like smoking, correspondence, going out, the organiza-

⁶⁹ Archief Redemptoristen Roermond, Codex Chronicorum C.S.S.R., Collegii Ruremunda. Tomus Primus 1863-1878, fols. 1-3. Cf. J. DANKELMAN, *Niet op zand gebouwd. De redemptoristen 125 jaar aan de kapel in 't Zand te Roermond 1863-1988*, Roermond, 1988, 14.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, fol. 5.

⁷¹ L. DANKELMAN, Niet geslaagde stichtingspogingen. *Monumenta Historica*, jg. 1, afl. 1 (jan.-febr. 1949), en jg. 1 afl. 4 (juli-aug. 1949) 97-99.

tion and behavior on missions.⁷² The Holy Rule and the Constitutions contained for him sufficient material about spirituality, but that was not an issue for him anyhow. He did the prescribed visitations in the monasteries and travelled once a year to England and Ireland. Father Jan Lans was the Vice-Provincial and in 1862 Fr. Robert Coffin.⁷³ We can assume that Swinkels did not know the English language, but had a good facility with French. The archives recesses (in French) have been preserved in the houses, giving us a good insight into the manner of living in a monastery.⁷⁴

The Dutch province of the Redemptorists was flourishing, with a lot of former secular priests. Fr. Bernard Hafkenscheid made a powerful impression as a preacher of missions and retreats with his loud and theatrical voice. He was a promoter of the Redemptorist life and functioned as a spiritual guide.⁷⁵

In the meantime Swinkels continued giving missions and retreats, for example to the Sisters of Tilburg in Amsterdam (Maagdenhuis, Piushuis and Bernardusgesticht), like in 1857, but also at Zwolle, Zutphen, Tilburg.⁷⁶ In 1859 he was on a mission at Groningen in the North but also on retreats at Amsterdam and Tilburg. He was doing that when he was Provincial.⁷⁷

Swinkels studied the manner of giving missions, the outlines, timetables and the contacts with the secular priests in the parish houses, especially on the basis of his own experience. On April 26, 1863 he sent to the monasteries a *Circulaire* with 27

⁷² Zie Archief C.S.S.R. Wittem 30, fols. 15-21.

⁷³ Michel LANS, *Pater Joannes Baptista Lans (1808-1886). Een stuk geschiedenis uit het kerkelijk leven der 19^e eeuw*. Bewerkt en voltooid door pater J. Bogaerts C.S.S.R., Den Bosch 1911: G. Mosmans Zoon.

⁷⁴ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 489: Visitaciones Canonicae 1. Wittemii 1837-1867 (pag. 1-44) 2. Amstelodami 1853-1867 (pag. 45-54) 3. Buscoduci [Den Bosch] 1856-1867 (pag. 55-68) 4. Ruraemundae 1866-1867 (pag. 69-71).

⁷⁵ M. LANS, *Het leven van Pater Bernard*, Maastricht, 1886: St. Paulus-Vereniging. P. 311-319 hebben een lijst van de missies, retraites en andere godsdienstige oefeningen gegeven door pater Bernard in Nederland en België.

⁷⁶ Archief C.S.S.R., Kronieken Amsterdam I (1850-1873) fols. 173, 179, 185-186.

⁷⁷ Fols. 197-198. In 1860 zie fols. 213-214; 1861 fols. 223-224; 1862 fol. 232; 1863 fols. 239-240, 249-250; 1865 fols. 253, 257.

questions for discussion during the Academy of Missions. We can mention a number of issues: the mission plan, the ceremonies, the confessions, the dedication to the Virgin Mary, the placing of the Mission Cross, the general communion, the papal blessing and the renewal of the baptismal vows. The latest question concerned the behavior of the fathers on mission *a. when there are abuses in the parish; b. when there are problems between the parish priest and the parish council, c. or between the parish priest, the chaplains and the members of the parish*. He was emphasizing these issues because the fathers on the missions met all kinds of situations in the parishes.⁷⁸

On June 2, 1865 the general board of the Congregation in Rome announced that Fr. Anton Konings was nominated as provincial of the Dutch province. He was thus the successor of Jan Swinkels with his 3 terms of office (maximum of 3x triennium). Swinkels had been installed on June 13 as the interim superior of Wittem (till August 18), because Wittem had to wait for the arrival of the newly nominated rector G. Dielemana, who was living in Annapolis (Md) Amerika, and on May 25 was nominated for that office.⁷⁹ He arrived at Wittem on August 18, 1865. It was the end of the official religious functions of Jan Swinkels.

He went on with the question regarding the acceptance of the mission of Surinam by the Dutch Redemptorists. Maybe he saw himself as a good candidate to go there, even perhaps as Vicar Apostolic, the high point of his functions in the church and Congregation.

We can give a brief insight into the financial situation of the Dutch-English province, from 1855 till 1865.

In 1855 the Redemptorists of the Dutch province were in the monasteries of Wittem, Amsterdam and Den Bosch in the Netherlands, and Clapham, Bishop-Eton (England) and Limerick (Ireland).

⁷⁸ M. MULDER, De vestiging van de Redemptoristen in Den Bosch. *Monumenta Historica*, 7 (1955) 126-127. Cf. Archief Redemptoristen Wittem, 32, s. 6-8. [history of the convent of Den Bosch].

⁷⁹ H. MOSMANS, *Het Redemptoristenklooster Wittem. Een bijdrage tot onze vaderlandsche kerkgeschiedenis 1836-1936*, Roermond/Maaseik: J. J. Roman en Zonen, 1936, 106.

	1855	1865
Income of missions, stipendia, donations, foundations	122.130.12	7823.11½
Expenses (convents, churches saldo	117.130.12 5. 000.0	7269.20½ 553.91. ⁸⁰

We see great differences during these years. The province was in a process of growth, with a phase of extension (Den Bosch 1856 and Roermond 1863) and with a greater number of fathers and brothers. A moment of consolidation was necessary, but they also needed to find their relevance in the midst of many new congregations. The Province even had the money for extension (Roosendaal and Rotterdam).

DUBIA

As Vice-Provincial, and from 1855 as Provincial, Swinkels had as one of his duties the passing on of the letters and decrees of the Superior General Nicolas Mauron in Rome. These *Communicanda* concerned a lot of questions regarding observance of the H. Rule, the reporting, registration, the Novitiate, publications, the decrees of the Pope or of the different dicasteries and Vatican congregations in 1865 about the founding of the Dutch province, and the separation of the English province.⁸¹ We can give an impression of what was going on in religious congregations and monasteries during those days and years.

In 1861 the Provincial Superior J. Swinkels wrote to the Superior General about 18 dubious issues, *dubia*, questions of religious life. He refers to the text of the Constitutions of that time. The Superior General sent an answer.⁸² We want to give brief attention to the correspondence, which gives us an insight into the lifestyle and religious influence.

⁸⁰ Archief Generaal Redemptoristen Rome, 900 Prov. Holl. V. C. Status Realis 1863-1865.

⁸¹ *Litterae circulares reverendissimi patris Nicolai Mauron, superioris generalis et rectoris majoris Congregationis SS. Redemptoris*. Ad alumnos ejusdem Congregationis, Romae 1896: Ph. Cuggiani, p. 1-111 en p. 149-179.

⁸² Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 455: Decreta Generalium Collegiorum Congr. SSmi Redemptoris 1850-1952, fols. 19-26.

A prescript for the mission fathers was that, according to the tradition of the Redemptorists, they had to present a special prayer formula at the end of the mission. In the Netherlands people were educated and the formula caused the people to laugh. Swinkels suggested to the Superior General the idea of distributing the prayer at the end of the mission. The Superior General agreed with Swinkels and saw it as a practical and wise correction.

According to Swinkels it was sometimes impossible on missions to present a second *catechism* instruction, as was prescribed. Praying a decade of the rosary would be a good substitute, or an instruction of a quarter of an hour about an aspect of the Ten Commandments or about the point of confession. The Superior General insisted that the prescriptions be abided by. It was clear that it was an inconvenience to organize a general communion as the purpose of the mission because people had to go to confession, which was already prescribed for the end of the mission. On a mission there was hardly time for a second confession. In the Netherlands it had become the custom to have a general communion only on the occasion of a retreat or a recollection. According to the Superior General a general communion was not an obligation, but was always held at the end of a mission.

During the mission it was customary to light candles on the altar and before the statue of the Virgin Mary. Some of the parish priests did not like that custom. Swinkels now asked permission to examine every case in turn. The Superior General acknowledged the special circumstances and the confreres were to act in accordance with these circumstances.

Swinkels had a problem about the drinking of beer. The rule was to have a litre of beer at dinner and supper. In the Netherlands people did not like beer that much. Swinkels now asked for permission for half a litre, perhaps a full litre, for 2 persons (it is impossible to preserve the rest of the beer for the next meal). The Superior General agreed.

There were problems in regard to post and stamps. Some monasteries had the same name and the same stamps. What should be done in these confusing circumstances? For the Superior General everyone with a right mind would know what to do. Another question was the number of members in a monas-

tery who were obliged to take part in the common exercises. What does that mean: is it confreres who are official members of the monastery, or those confreres who at the moment are living there? In which circumstances were they obliged to organize the common exercises? Were they always obliged to take part in them? The answer was: It always needs 6 confreres, exclusive of the Rector and the minister. So, 8 confreres had to pray the Divine Office, according to the Superior General.

Since one of the most important Redemptorists outside Italy, P. Passerat (1772-1858) was Rector of Wittem, it was a custom in Wittem and the monasteries in Belgium, to walk in the garden after dinner, and after that to pray the breviary. One is free, according the Superior General, to use the garden without the permission of the superior or Rector.

When does the Great Silence really begin? Immediately after night prayers or after the Angelus? The reason for the question is that the confrere who has to ring the bell is often being sought for confession in the church? According to the Superior General, everybody is obliged to keep the regulations.

Can the rector give permission to the brothers who are busy with their work not to be present at the midday meditation, but to be present only for the spiritual reading? According to the Superior General, the Rector himself can make the decision. The rector however had to be careful that the brothers were doing their spiritual reading.

Can the Rector of Wittem nominate a priest as confessor for the Sisters, as Mgr. J. Zwijsen is demanding? That is good, according to the Superior General.

A question in the big monastery of Wittem is: Has the rectorian to put a litre of beer or half a litre on the table? The Superior General had no comment (in the French publication).

Is it allowed on Tuesday and Thursday afternoon to go for a walk like they do in Amsterdam, Den Bosch and Wittem? In Wittem there was very little entertainment. The Superior General did not give a general permission, but allowed it if health was in question or if it were prescribed by a doctor.

Are the lecturers in Wittem allowed to read forbidden books, if they have the bishop's permission, or is the permission

of the General necessary? According to the General, his written permission was necessary. Everybody needs an individual permission.

The students in Wittem, because of the heat, usually took a walk in the afternoon from Easter on, until the end of the long holidays. Normally they came back before the evening meditation. The General did not agree with this use. From time to time it may be permitted, especially during the holidays. But the Rector had to give individual permission for that.

Had the Rector of Wittem to distribute the portions of fruit at table because so many members were living there? That is possible without the permission of the Superior General, according to himself. And finally, can the fathers of Amsterdam take evening recreation during the supper on Saturday and on the eve of feasts, because they have to hear confessions from 4 till 8.30? The Superior General did not agree with that proposal. Exceptions, of course, were possible.

We see that the superior had to work very carefully and in detail, in accordance with the Holy Rule and the Constitutions.

Mission in Surinam

During his term of leadership as Provincial the negotiations concerning the mission in Surinam were carried on between the Superior General, the Provincial, the Internuncio at The Hague and the Congregation of Propaganda Fide. According to the newspapers, in 1860 the Redemptorists, the Liguorians, were asked to take over the mission in the Dutch Antilles, a colony of the Netherlands. Swinkels had heard about this mission-field from his former colleague L. van Roosmalen. The question ended because the Redemptorists objected, because of the small number of their members in the Netherlands.

In Surinam, a colony of The Netherlands, the Vicar Apostolic Gerard Schepers died in 1863 and the secular priest Stefan Meurkens, the assistant vicar, informed the Nuncio at The Hague and Propaganda Fide. From now on the official institutions focused on the Dutch province of the Redemptorists.

In 1846-1847 they offered the Redemptorists a mission in Java, a Dutch colony, but it was cancelled too, because the

number of members was too small. In 1844 Belgium had started a mission in the United States of America. At that time Belgium and the Netherlands were one in the Redemptorist Congregation.

Now in 1865 Swinkels as Provincial was not totally opposed to the idea of the mission in Surinam. It was an unusual idea for the Redemptorists to have an outside mission field. The Redemptorists did not have any relation to a mission outside Europe. It was not an issue in the Rule and Constitutions. Both of the mission fields were well known from the articles in *De Godsdienstvriend*. We could not discover if Swinkels had personal interests. He was at the end of his third triennium as Provincial, without a chance of being nominated again. He would be a confrere without any official job. Perhaps therefore he saw a future in the mission. In a letter he suggests that he could be a pioneer and forerunner, making place for another confrere. He was already old for the job and not the most healthy due to blood-spitting. Negotiations about the split of the province into 2 parts, the Dutch and the English, were on the agenda. After the founding of the 2 provinces Swinkels was no longer in an official position. Perhaps he was hoping for a new job, as a highpoint of his career as a priest and a religious. It is not clear how the list of 3 candidates came about and by whom it was made. Needless to say, he did his jobs well and prudently.⁸³ He took part in the negotiations and visited Rome, and was perhaps not without success in this question.

The number of Dutch Redemptorists at that time was:⁸⁴

	fathers	students	brothers	total
1867	47	5	37	89
1876	59	23	43	125

⁸³ A. SAMPERS, De zorg voor de Surinaamse missie in 1865 opgedragen aan de paters Redemptoristen. *Honderd jaar woord en daad. Gedenkboek bij het eeuwfeest der Redemptoristen in Suriname 1866 – 26 maart – 1966*, Paramaribo 1966, 5-24. Cf. A. SAMPERS, The transfer of the Catholic Mission in Surinam to the Dutch Redemptorists, 1864-1865. *Studia Dondersiana. Beato Petro Donders CSSR leprosororum apostolo*, Romae, 1982: Collegium S. Alfonsi de Urbe, Bibliotheca Historica Congregationis SSmi Redemptoris Vol. XI, 104-128.

⁸⁴ L. DANKELMAN, Groei van de Nederlandse provincie in ledental. *Monumenta Historica*, II (1950) 190-191.

We can speak about an increase of the members but we have to mention the number of the deceased:

1851-1855	10
1856-1865	10
1866-1875	14

We can speak about a healthy growth. The number will grow in Surinam too. At the beginning of the mission in Surinam non-ordained members were sometimes sent there, even a novice brother.

Swinkels became a religious after years of priesthood. As a diocesan priest he had more freedom and independence, and could use his own money. He learnt in the monastery another way of life. As Rector and (Vice)provincial Superior he had to care for community life and communication between the members. That is why he travelled to Rome to discuss with the Superior General, in view of the possible acceptance of the mission in Surinam. His nomination meant that he was to be a Church Leader, Leader of the Redemptorists as Vice-Provincial, and leader of the first monastery, and even church Prefect.

Vicar Apostolic

In a decree of August 13, 1865 the pope committed the mission of the Dutch colony to the Dutch province of the Redemptorists. On September 12, 1865, Jan Swinkels was nominated Vicar Apostolic, the first Dutch Redemptorist in this kind of office. It is remarkable that the Provicar in Surinam was Arnold Swinkels, the successor of S. Meurkens, after his departure to the Netherlands and no relation of Jan Swinkels. S. Meurkens departed to the Netherlands to organize a new Vicar Apostolic for the mission. His health was not excellent. In Holland he had talks with the internuncio in The Hague. Meurkens suggested that a religious congregation or order be contacted, with an option for continuation of personnel. Via the internuncio, the Congregation of Propaganda Fide contacted the Superior General of the Redemptorists in Rome, and through him, the provincial in Holland (Jan Swinkels). It is clear that Meurkens found himself able to do the job, and made himself important by his bad stories about the priests in Surinam. During the negotiations Meur-

kens disappeared into the shadows and in 1866 he was appointed parish priest at Apeldoorn.⁸⁵

Before his consecration Swinkels participated in the provincial council of the Dutch Church Province in September 1865.⁸⁶ The arrival of the Nuncio Luigi Oreglia di S. Stefano in 1863 created a new atmosphere and the Church Province could plan a local council. Present at the Council was also the Vicar Apostolic of the Dutch Antilles J. Kistemaker (since 1860 Vicar Apostolic and then ill for two years in Holland) and the Vicar Apostolic of Batavia since 1847, P. Vrancken.⁸⁷

Jan Swinkels was consecrated bishop on October 15, 1865 at Den Bosch in the new church of the Redemptorists, the St. Jozefkerk, which had been established under his guidance. On October 19 he himself solemnly consecrated the church. The man who consecrated him was the archbishop of Utrecht, Jan Swijsen. The bishop of Breda, J. van Genk was a concelebrant, as was the bishop of Den Bosch, J. Deppen. The former assistant vicar S. Meurkens of the mission in Surinam was present, and was nominated Secret Chamberlain to the Holy See during the reception in the Redemptorist monastery in Den Bosch. The nomination was announced by the internuncio Mgr. Oreglia di Santo Stefano.

The same day Mgr. Swinkels wrote a pastoral letter to the Catholics of Surinam. Not long after, Swinkels stayed at Wittem from the 21st to the 23rd October 1865, ordaining priests, deacons and subdeacons. Now he was busy preparing for the departure to Surinam.⁸⁸ The text on the episcopal cloak of Swinkels was *funda nos in pace*, settle us in peace.

At his audience on October 1, 1865 the future Vicar Apostolic had asked the internuncio for indulgences and faculties for the priests, nuns and brothers in Surinam and he got 28, concerning, for example, who was allowed to hear the confessions of the

⁸⁵ *De Godsdienstvriend*, 96 (1866) 254.

⁸⁶ J. PEIJNENDURG, *Joannes Swijsen, bisschop*, Tilburg, 1996: Stichting Zuidelijk Historisch Contact. Het Provinciaal Concilie van 1865, 231-236.

⁸⁷ J. VAN LAARHOVEN, *Een kerkprovincie in concilie*, Nijmegen, 1965: Dekker en van de Vegt.

⁸⁸ Archief Redemptoristen Wittem, Chronicon C.S.S.R. Wittem, Pars III, Lib. II, I, fols. 270-273.

Sisters, how to pray the rosary, hearing confessions from the moment of the embarkation, the blessing of the chalices, the installation of the Way of the Cross, blessing the holy Oil, the maintaining of the regulations of fasting, the faculty of dispensing in marriage questions.⁸⁹ On the occasion of the audience with Pope Pius IX he got 12 more indulgences. They were not for himself but for the mission and the priests.⁹⁰

The question arose: how to address the new vicar apostolic? The Superior General in Rome was asked for advice. His advice was to use the official term, *His Excellency Serene Highness*. In the refectory the first place was for him, and for the rest he had to be regarded as a Rector. One ought not to genuflect before him, and one had to give him the holy-water sprinkler for the blessing of the community. Such were the directions of the Superior General on September 27, 1865. On November 7 Swinkels, together with Mgr. G. Wilmer, visited the bishop of Haarlem, the editor Judocus Smits, and the internuncio Mgr. Oreglia.⁹¹

On June 27, 1867 internuncio Cattani wrote to the Provincial Chapter of the Dominicans of the Netherlands, who replied negatively when he asked them to undertake the mission of the Dutch Antilles on May 1867. He told them that the Redemptorists in the beginning had refused to accept Surinam, and that it was now going well there *et ils font dans cette Mission un bien immense*.⁹²

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, fols. 339-342.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, fol. 343.

⁹¹ Swinkels in *SHCSR* 5 (1957) 208 (naamlijst); 10 (1962) 404 (artikel van Janssens: p. 395-423); 21 (1973) 171, 332 (naamlijst). In *Petrus Donders Tijdschrift*, 21 (1940-1941) p. 11-13; 32; 52; 76.

Otto WEISS, *Rudolf Ritter von Smetana. Der dritte Generalvicar der Transalpinen Redemptoristen (1802-1871)*, in *SHCSR* 54 (2006) 37-150. Het *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biographisch Woordenboek*, Leiden 1924. Deel VI zegt van Swinkels: 1271-1272: "rusteloze werkzaamheid en groote bestuurdersgaven", 1272 "voorbeeldig kloosterling, ijverig missionaris, groot kerkvoogd, "leeft hij voort in de nagedachtenis van het katholiek Nederland". M. DE MEULEMEESTER. *Les Évêques de la congrégation du T.S. Rédempteur*, Louvain: Imprimerie Saint Alphonse, 1939, 12; 28, nr. 15. *De Volksmissionaris* 12 (1891) Vijf en twintig jaren in Suriname. 26 maart 1866-26 maart 1891, I, 162-174; II, Mgr. J. B. Swinkels, 215-225, III, Mgr. J. B. Swinkels, 266-272.

⁹² *Gouden Jubileum der Dominicaner Missie op Curaçao W.I. 1870-1920*.

In 1865 another Dutchman, Fr. Ferdinand Hamer (1840-1900) of Nijmegen, departed for his mission field in China and Mongolia, on the other side of the world.

On Wednesday December 13, 1865 his companions departed from Amsterdam by ship to Nieuw Diep, the most northern harbour of the Netherlands, as the first phase of the trip to Surinam. The group was composed of Fr. Jan van der Aa (born 1822), Fr. Jan van Rooij (1830) and the brother of the monsignor, brother Lambertus (1816). Shortly after them the Monsignor departed together with Mgr. Smits, head editor of the Catholic *De Tijd*. It was a strategy, because he was sorry to have to say farewell to so many people in Amsterdam, the city where he lived for 14 years. The wind was not favorable and suddenly dropped. It was impossible to leave the harbour. The group had to wait in parish houses in the neighborhood, for example at Schagen, where the dean van Lith invited them. The four of them had to wait till February 20, 1866.⁹³ They were allowed, all four, to stay on board. The priests could say Mass in the church of Nieuw Diep and had breakfast with the clergy. At the end of the year the internuncio Mgr. Oreglia (1863-1866) visited them together with Mgr. Smits. So did the Provincial Anton Konings and the Rector of Amsterdam and Fr. Gerard Baptist, a candidate for the next journey to Surinam. Mgr. Smits was the last visitor on board on February 20, 1866. On that day the flag waved at the top of the church and the wind was good. A letter of the Superior General of October 20, 1865 mentioned that Swinkels planned to invite the Brothers of the Christian Schools to teach in the schools. For the time being, the Superior General suggested, the Redemptorists could do that work. The confreres were allowed to wear thin cassocks due to the hot climate. The General was of the opinion that the Vicar Apostolic should wear his normal Redemptorist habit, with his pectoral cross and his episcopal ring. On Sundays and feast days and on special occasions he was allowed to wear his violet cassock, as their founder St. Alphonsus did.

Ter dankbare herinnering door eenige missionarissen bewerkt, Nijmegen: N.V. Centrale Drukkerij, 16.

⁹³ Regionaal Archief Alkmaar, Inv. Nr. 4.

Brother Lambertus wrote a report of the sea journey.⁹⁴ It was a successful journey, according to his report. In the Isle of Wight in southern England the wind dropped for the second time, for 5 days this time. Jan v.d. Aa and Jan van Rooij were sea-sick. The welcome at Paramaribo on March 26, 1866 was wonderful. *The whole population was present on the quay.*⁹⁵

The priests working in Surinam together with the sisters of Roosendaal and others organised the welcome. Provicar Arnold Swinkels came on board. On the waterfront at Paramaribo the priests Theo Kempkes and Jan Romme were waiting. Fr. Peter Donders stayed at the leper colony far away on the Coppename river. The church bells had been ringing. In front of the church door a lot of orphan girls were standing, dressed in special clothes. The organist played the *Te Deum* and the new Vicar Apostolic delivered his first sermon and blessed the people.

The following day he visited the governor (R. F. van Lansberge) and the Sisters. In the afternoon a reception was organized for him, and many of the most important people in the colony were present, Catholics and non-Catholics. On Maundy Thursday the Vicar Apostolic celebrated a solemn Mass for the first time. On the second Easter day Fr. J.v.d. Aa preached in Sranantongo, which he had learnt on board. After Easter a welcoming feast was celebrated in the convents and churches.

The newcomers wanted to work as quickly as possible with the priests who were already there and who had to introduce them to the work in the city, the administration of the sacraments, the catechetical methods, the local language and help them to learn the local way of life. They entered on a new kind of pastoral life, visiting the plantations, the poor people and the lepers. The plantations to be visited were Killenstein, Goudmijn, Brunswijk, Ellen, Pieterszorg, Resolutie, Boxtel, Dijkveld, Esthersrust. Also the military post Fort Nieuw-Amsterdam. At the end of June 1866 the Vicar Apostolic got fever, something like yellow fever. He recovered slowly and was ready to work again on July 10th. One point the Redemptorists learnt was a good

⁹⁴ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 8708.

⁹⁵ *Kerkelijke Courant*, 32, nr. 488, 5 mei 1866, 3.

and helpful administration of baptism, communions, confessions and funerals.⁹⁶

At work

Once he was in Surinam he had to deal with the Provincial of the Redemptorists in the Netherlands and with the Redemptorist General in Rome, in regard to their spiritual and material responsibilities. But he remained continually in contact with the Congregation of Propaganda Fide in Rome and the internuncio in The Hague. He had to be careful in using the different communication channels from such a great distance. He continued to depend on them and wrote about a lot of questions to these ecclesiastical institutions which were more important than himself. Fortunately we have good material on these questions. For us today they were rather trivial issues which he himself could solve. For example he had a problem with the bed-clothes. The Redemptorist Constitutions prescribed the use of straw. In Surinam there was no straw. Swinkels asked advice from Rome. The General advised him to follow the practice of the Sisters in Surinam, namely *le cadre de toile* (canvas, or duck in Surinam), as *le matelas* (mattress). Further the Superior General, at his request, allowed the use of silver and iron spoons, knives and forks. The General emphasised that the Vicar Apostolic, as superior of a monastery, had more power than any superior at all. He emphasised also the good management of the mission.

He has to have serious regard for the Congregation, so that it does not get more problems.⁹⁷

There were constant problems for himself and others in Swinkels' life in Suriname, due to his personal make-up and his different jobs, even after these different jobs were removed. He was placed in a serious jam.

On May 5, 1867 the Superior General informed him about the wearing of white stockings, like the Sisters. As well as that,

⁹⁶ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 4433: Kronijken der P.P. Redemptoristen aanvangende in December 1865 tot 13 October 1866.

⁹⁷ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 462: Beslissingen en verklaringen getrokken uit de brieven van Rector Major betreffende Suriname, 1.

the paintings, prescribed by the Constitutions in every monastery and room needed frames because of the cockroaches.⁹⁸ The new missionaries could live together with the secular priests, and permission was given that these secular priests could participate in the common exercises and other monastic events. The Superior General informed the members in Surinam that it would be better (and cheaper!) to travel by freight ships, as the cruise ships were to be avoided because of possible immoral circumstances.

There was a mutual correspondence concerning the Nominations policy. The Vice- Provincial could nominate at local level. Other nominations should be made by the Superior General and his assistants (General Consultors), rather than dealing through Rome with Amsterdam in regard to the office of Vice-Provincial or the Rector of the first house in Surinam. One issue in this regard was the amount of money the Vice-Provincial could use without permission of the Superior General. It was about f. 1.000. According to the General the relationship between the Vicar Apostolic and the Redemptorists was just like the relationship between the various members of the (vice) province. Issues concerning the vow of poverty were frequent, in spite of the best intentions. One question was: is the Holy Rule of the Redemptorists the standard for the Vicar Apostolic? Or has he the right to make his own decisions? It was a constant problem for the different functionaries. The principle in religious congregations (the Holy Rule) was: the Vicar Apostolic has a relative freedom on condition that he lives as a Redemptorist. In practice the Roman Catholic church made the distinction between *potestas* i.e. the power and faculty of a local church leader, the *ordinarius localis* (like Swinkels) and *potestas regularis*, the powers of religious superiors.⁹⁹ The best thing was to act wisely in special circumstances, for example in regard to the Sisters, who in 1866 were not yet ready to formulate their own H. Rule.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 462, fol. 329 (Beslissingen en verklaringen getrokken uit de brieven van rector Major betreffende Suriname).

⁹⁹ Fols. 344-347. Cf. een schrijven van de generale overste, Rome 2 juni 1871 aan Mgr. Swinkels; Archief CSsR Nederland, 4074.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, fol. 344.

Council 1867

In the 19th century the Apostolic Vicariate of Surinam became part of the Archdiocese of Port of Spain, together with the English colonies and the Dutch Antilles. Port of Spain had to organize a Provincial Council and invited Mgr. Swinkels. Poirier, the bishop of Roseau (Dominica) published in the *Annalen van het Genootschap tot Voorplanting des Geloofs* in 1865 an account of his mission in the Caribbean. Gonin, the bishop of Port of Spain, did the same in 1868. Already in 1854 a Provincial Council was organized, and Surinam was invited. The new Vicar Apostolic Gerard Schepers was in Holland for his consecration and Peter Donders was Provicar. But he did not speak the English language and preferred the mission work in Surinam.

In preparation for the First Vatican Council of 1870 every church province had to prepare and discuss the issues. Swinkels, not knowing the English language, did not receive the papers and the documents for work (lineamenta). A very small group of church leaders participated with Swinkels. The *Decreta* were almost the same as those of 1854. The main goal was to streamline the pastoral work in the different colonies with their different languages and cultures. The issues were: the administration of the sacraments, the behavior of priests and their parishioners, the union with Rome. Ecumenism was not an item, and neither was dialogue between religions. The *Decreta* of the synod of 1854 and of 1867 had been published and have an historical value for the Vicariates and dioceses at that time and also for the Church today.¹⁰¹

Finances

Over the years a special arrangement was made in regard to a journey to Surinam. The government introduced a colonial pass (accessible to everyone), given by the Minister of Justice of the Netherlands. A certificate of the birth registry was necessary. It was prudent not to mention that one was a father or brother

¹⁰¹ *Acta et Decreta sacrorum conciliorum recentiorum*. Collectio Lacensis. Tomus Tertius, Fribourg, 1875, 1089-1104.

of a Redemptorist. The nunciature was paying for every journey f. 200., also for brothers or sisters. It was noted particularly that, for a brother or sister, the bed clothes and the Mass wine would be paid by the mission of Surinam. It was possible to travel via Southampton (England) or St. Nazaire (Paris), without however being paid by the Surinam mission. Via Southampton one had to pass Demarara (the former British-Guyana) and travel the rest of the way in the Dutch steamboat to Surinam. The journey via St. Nazaire was preferable, because that way you were going straight on without having to use the English language, which at that time was not as common in Europe as French.

Each year the Vicariate got f. 1.400. from the St. Willibrordusfonds, founded by Mgr. C. van Wijkerslooth. The Vicariate owned a fund of 6 certificates of Russia, to the value of f. 5.895 and a collection to the value of nearly f. 8.000. The most important source of money was the Brotherhood of the H. Spirit, together with the Society of Paris (Propagation de la Foi). The Vicar Apostolic had each year to make a budget, of which he had to send a copy to the internuncio and to Paris (and to Propaganda Fide and the Superior General of the Redemptorists). These institutions were able to give money via bills for exchange by the internuncio. Dean Quant of Leiden was an intermediary. Meurkens projected the following budget for 1866:

Subsidy for the Sisters' house f. 1.400.-; subsidy for the orphanages f. 1.100.-; for the oarsmen and canoes f. 1.000.-; yearly repairs of churches at Batavia, Coronie, the Sisters' house and the orphanages f. 4.300.¹⁰²

On April 4, 1867 Fr. J. Koemans (1811-1875), Rector of the Redemptorist monastery beside the Internuncio, knew nothing about the Willibrordusfonds (yearly about f. 1.400.-). Six priests made a deposit, to be given after their death, to the West-Indian missions, parallel to the Willibrordusfonds. This manner of financing was hidden from the internuncio Belgrado, in case he made financial errors in its regard. It was an act of goodwill.¹⁰³

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, fols. 330-331.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, fols. 331-332.

Swinkels sent his budget in 1867 to the Society for the Propagation of Faith (Paris). According to the report, the Vicariate received f. 23.490 from the government, to pay the Vicar Apostolic and 5 priests, and f. 6.650 for the school children; in total f. 31.180. The collections from among the faithful came to f. 1.040.

The expenses in 1867 were: for each of the 9 priests f. 3.200, in total f. 28.800. For each of the 3 lay brothers f. 3.000, in total f. 9.000; travelling money for 3 priests and 2 brothers from the Netherlands f. 2.350; travelling inside Suriname f. 3.000.00; contributions for the Sisters f. 5.650; maintenance of the buildings f. 3.200; material for 2 students f. 1.000; in total f. 53.000.

Swinkels made a budget for extraordinary expenses. In 1867 for a new school for poor children f. 425; necessary repairs on the church of Coronie f. 1.058; the same for the church of Batavia f. 3.000; expenses for 8 new Sisters from the Netherlands f. 6.000; and the return of a Sister to Holland f. 470, in total f. 8.553.¹⁰⁴ Swinkels made a note that one of the secular priests (A. Swinkels) gave a donation of thousands of guildens from his own capital and that the Redemptorist fathers had nothing to give. Swinkels wanted to buy a small steamship of f. 6.000. The Vicariate was without debts with f. 9.863.36 in the funds. In short: *the financial situation does not give any reason for depression.*¹⁰⁵

We can give more insights into the budgets of the Swinkels' years. The value of money changed enormously. We have a view of the relations and changes.

	1866	1867	1868	1869	1871
Income	11.038.64	52.047.68	29.364.03	26.012.23	57.683.86
Expenses	10.800.04	46.513.44	23.695.94	25.462.92	55.710.81
	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876
Income	65.100.38	66.708.57	76.486.88	39.232.69	39.377.61
Expenses	59.246.43	66.454.09	57.898.02	28.813.59	34.540.36 ¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 332.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, fol. 333.

¹⁰⁶ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, Bestuur, 74: Accepta et Expensa

Confusing

Beginning in 1870, Fr. Jan van Mens (who arrived in Surinam in 1869) was nominated by Rome as superior of the first numerically very small monastery and community. Mgr. JB. Swinkels did this job since his arrival in Surinam. He was nominated only for the community of Paramaribo. The Vicar Apostolic was also Vice-Provincial, with a superior status above the priests of the mission stations Coronie and Batavia, and with the faculty of nominating priests for this job. In a letter of 5.5.1870, at the request of Swinkels, the Superior General replied that he had the faculties of a superior without consultors and that he could spend without permission f. 250. The parish priest who was superior of Coronie and Batavia, was totally dependent on the superior in the city of Paramaribo, as he lived in so-called filial houses. The superior of Paramaribo was also the Procurator under the supervision of the Vice-Provincial and each month had to provide for the needs of the members of Batavia and Coronie. That was somewhat confusing.

During the 10 years of Swinkels leadership of the mission, 19 fathers and 9 brothers, including the Vicar Apostolic and the 2 secular priests Petrus Donders and Jan Romme (professed as Redemptorists in 1867), worked in Surinam. In 1866, 2 members died: his brother Lambertus in August and Fr. Gerard Baptist in November. During the 10 years 2 other fathers died: Jan van Rooij (1871) and Jan v.d. Aa (1872) and also brother Michael Louwy (1872). 2 fathers, both of them former secular priests before becoming Redemptorists, left the mission and the Redemptorist congregation and became secular priests again: Anton van Koolwijk (1871) and Jan van Mens (1874).

Swinkels made a schedule of new regulations for the church council, for the council for the poor, and for the funerals. They had a strong clerical character. On July 2, 1868 he published regulations (in Latin) promoting the uniformity of pastoral administration and service. It was for a handful of priests. He was concerned about the practice of baptism (children as early as

domuum Provinciae Hollandicae et Labores Apostolicorum extra ecclesiam.

possible; converts to Catholicism (protestants) only after a long catechesis; the registration in case of illegitimacy (for a quick insight into the family circumstances); marriage (like the decision of the Provincial Council of Trinidad); rules about fasting and abstinence (dispensations for the military, for people staying on the plantations or in the Interior) and finally the registration of the deceased.¹⁰⁷ In the beginning he acted in conformity with his predecessors, but developed his own parish system, without any real experience in the Netherlands in that regard.

Experience with secular priests was not easy, especially in regard to the feeling for religious community life. In the beginning it was clear that they had expected that one of them would be the new Vicar Apostolic. The relationship of secular/diocesan priests and the religious priests was not always agreeable, and was sometimes filled with tension. The accumulation of jobs of the Monsignor led to conflicts of interest with the colleagues, because he did or wished to do a great deal of things by himself. Having a common Purse with the Sisters was not successful. It was a crime for the administration. His brother died early and he himself developed problems with his health. He felt himself to be too old for the job. In 1871 he returned to Holland in order to recover.

He was rather severe with his confreres. He was fortunate to welcome the secular priests Peter Donders and Jan Romme into the Congregation. He decentralized the pastoral work for the natives, and some of the plantations. Donders and Romme took the first steps from 1868 and followed up very well. Batavia was an important station for contacting the natives. Peter Donders was a pioneer in this field. In his first year and the year after his death the religious situation was according to the *Koloniale Verslagen*, as follows:

Inhabitants 1866

	Reformed	Ev. Lutheran	R.C.	EBG	hindu	muslim	Jew
50.097	7000	3300	12.200	23.396			

Inhabitants 1867

	Reformed	Ev. Lutheran	R.C.	EBG	hindu	muslim	Jew
51.255 (Nickerie 1500)			13.000	22.383			1.306

¹⁰⁷ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 3519.

The Maroons and the native people of the Interior were excluded, due to the difficulties of registration. It was the period after the abolition of slavery (1.7.1863) and during a period of 10 years of apprenticeship by the colonial State. The indentured labourers from Asia were coming.

Sponsors

The vicariate was orientated internationally, regarding donations and gifts. For example from the Society for the Propagation of Faith, compared with the neighbor vicariate.

	Surinam	Dutch Antilles	Native Mission in French Guyana
37/1865 (192)	9.500	29.500	
38/1866 (195)	9.000	22.000	
39/1867 (191)	9.000	22.000	
40/1868 (214)	14.000	27.000	5.000
41/1869 (187)	9.050	5.000	
42/1870 (195)	12.000	22.000	5.000
43/1871 (399)	8.000	15.000	3.000
44/1872 (319)	12.000	22.000	4.000
45/1873 (320)	14.000	24.000	
46/1874 (328)	14.000	22.000	
47/1875 (320)	12.000	24.000	
48/1876 (312)	15.000	22.000	

The *Annals* of the Society of the H. Childhood for the baptism and abolition of non-christian children in China and other superstitious countries (included Surinam) collected money from 1843 onwards. The contributions of the Dutch people were

16/1866 (72)	50.141.36 in 1865
17/1867 (77)	48.263.39 in 1866
18/1868 (39)	51.486.93 in 1867
19/1869 (75)	53.934.92 in 1868
20/1870 (45)	50.678.86 in 1869
21/1871 (111)	62.662.10 in 1870
22/1872 (39)	62.810.73 in 1871
23/1873 (39)	66.668.12 in 1872
24/1874 (99)	75.149.51 in 1873
25/1875 (69)	74.564.96 in 1874
26/1876 (67)	66.257.62 in 1875

The money for the mission in Surinam was more than welcome, as it was always in trouble because of shortage of money.

Cooperators-colleagues

Sometimes Swinkels was not gentle with his co-workers. In letters to the Provincial in Holland he wrote freely and sometimes with a *solli* (i.e not for another public). After some months, on 16.5.1866, he wrote:

It has been decided that the priests A. Swinkels and P. Masker shall depart during the month of July. I want that, as it will be the end of their stupid and intolerant conversations.

In a letter of June 18, 1866 he wrote about Jan van de Aa:

He is healthy now ... but was so excited, that I thought he was losing his head. I have calmed him down totally.

And about Fr. Jan van Rooij:

He is doing well but is lacking in knowledge of people and is not very obedient.¹⁰⁸

On July 1, 1867 Swinkels wrote to the Provincial mentioning that all the fathers and brothers were getting on well, *healthy, good and cheerful*. In a letter of June 4, 1868 to Amsterdam he wrote about his journey to Batavia:

I am taking Fr. Bossers with me and am leaving him there, because we can do without him here. He is unable to please our people here.

Sometimes Swinkels is really not very nuanced. In the letter of March 5, 1868 about the Negroes, he states, *you cannot trust them, never*. In the letter of October 31, 1868 he wrote:

Talents are necessary here (in truth I have been accused on this point in regard to all our fathers (father v.d. Aa is an exception). Here one can meet on the plantations men and women who are very well educated and well-read, but nevertheless rather self-conceited.

¹⁰⁸ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 4075. Citaten uit de brieven van 4075.

In the same letter Fr. Jan Romme is the victim:

I am begging Your Reverence once again, not to think of nominating Fr. Romme as my successor. He knows his theology very well, but he is far from being a good religious, in fact the least good of all. He is a gentle confrere. He wants to continue the life of the past missionaries. So he is hindering the other fathers, by not joining in their methods of pastoral work. He cannot refuse anything for the people and is too tolerant and indulgent. He suffers when I am very severe towards him, or when I am grumbling at home or in the church. He wants to deal with the slave population by love. He stutters vehemently, talks frequently without using verbs, and is very often unintelligible. He cannot deal with adults and is without power. In one word, he is not able for the job. I have nominated father Bossers provisionally, without consulting the others. He is the least unsuitable.

He also wrote:

The last time I had problems with the brothers. Under Fr. Bossers they were very inclined to independence. The Holy Rule and prayers had suffered a lot. I held the reins tight, even used the whip. Now all is going well.

The Sisters were also an issue. In a letter of April 27, 1867:

Till now 2 Sisters showed great attachment to Fr. Sw [A. Swinkels]. I have put an end to that, though not in a friendly fashion. They are 2 spoiled, emotional women, though they do a good job in the school.

We believe that the conditions of life in such a small and new society as Surinam were confusing for the missionaries from the Netherlands and that a period of home-formation in Surinam was necessary for the transition to a new kind of behavior with the sense of being at home.

Sometimes Swinkels changes his feelings and behavior. In a letter of 1.8.1868 he wrote:

It is a delight for me to see how uniformly and enjoyably the members are living; how zealous and univocal is their effect on the people, and the result of this can be seen in the Church. The good God will help us to continue like that.

At the end of 1868 he is quite content and wrote to the Provincial that the fathers and brothers are living very well: *they care well and are working amazingly*. He is not flattering about the superior:

Who can take my place for a short time? P. Bossers is not capable in any way and is incapable of caring for the spiritual affairs and, even worse, incapable of handling the frequent and critical contacts with the high political leaders of this colony. It is with anxiety that I nominate him, and I'm even afraid of him as a temporary substitute after my death.

In a letter of January 2, 1869 he mentions that Bossers has changed very *unfavorably* and that the Provincial would not recognize him. Nevertheless he is *the least unable of all the fathers*. At the end of that year, December 20, Swinkels wrote to the Provincial:

In spite of the fact that Fr. P. Luijben and Fr. v.d. Aa are two best friends, they are not in good relationship with their superiors.

In a letter of November 17, 1869 he wrote to the Provincial:

When Fr. v.d. Aa is leaving here (nearly the total community and parish shall agree with the decision).

and

Much more than in the Netherlands it is necessary that the fathers and brothers are at least more than mediocre subjects and that they are not deaf.

He liked to make his own comments for the provincial, they were to be trusted. He got satisfaction, which was, of course, impossible in the circle of Paramaribo. So, he wrote on January 3, 1870:

I am quite content with P. van Mens. I like to see him as the leader of the church and the house. He is a little too much the parish priest and somewhat too extravagant with tobacco, wine etc. He can change this behavior. He is well known both inside

and outside the house. When P. v.d. Aa is on route to Batavia, then it will be good for the house and the parish. Everything else is going very well.

In a letter of November 20, 1870 to Amsterdam he is very sharp about some confreres:

I sent Br. Edmond to Coronie, which is a more healthy place for him. Here he was not sick, but depressive, thoughtless, rather doting and totally unable to manage the naughty boys of the school.

Br. Frans, our architect and builder, is giving me a lot of problems. He is persistent. He keeps buying and pays constantly many thousands per year, here in the city. Everybody finds his work so wonderful that no other carpenter boss could be as good as he. In view of this heavy attitude of enchantment, I'm afraid he has not enough strength. He had to/should pray more and more and should/had to be ready when people asked him for other work. Luckily, he has a pleasant character, but more fortunately, since we should have a less good carpenter, who could take his place and he should cease to be *persona necessaria* [to be dependent].

At least, as a summary in this letter:

I have been assured that in the Dutch province the confreres are imagining that only narrow-minded persons would be sent here. They are calling them 'lubbers', because they are alright for here. In spite of the fact that I know that they are using the word humorously, I believe that many are just that, 'lubbers'. I must protest against this language, as it is not the truth and is disadvantageous for the mission.

Swinkels proposes that Redemptorist students who are not yet ordained to the priesthood be sent. In Surinam they can receive further training. He sums up 3 points essential for missionaries:

1. virtue,
2. savoir faire,
3. really clever and rather well-read.

These points were the points he complained about. In a letter of July 2, 1873 he puts forward another example:

As to bringing as far as possible P. van Vlokhoven into a structured community, we have decided to let him come here.

Swinkels was not enthusiastic about the religious life of this father. This stigma of having second-rate personnel in Surinam lasted a long time. Fr. A. Verheggen had also in 1946 the same kind of problem.¹⁰⁹

It is not clear what criteria the superiors were using in sending missionaries to Surinam. We can suppose that Swinkels himself, after his experience in Surinam, had other criteria and that he was sometimes disappointed. Tensions brought about an imbalance. And Swinkels was not a very balanced person. In a letter of July 1, 1871 he wrote:

I cannot live at a distance from my confreres, or to put it better, my superiors are living at a distance from me or opposing me. I have to confess that your previous letters frightened me, and that you do not like that. I am hoping that all will be okay within a short time. Until then, I am ready for everything.

Swinkels was living with relationship tensions, and he himself was sometimes the cause of the tensions, in spite of himself. Community life was missing the help of a change of confreres, we can say now. It is remarkable that Peter Donders was seldom involved. Swinkels had no problems with him, as he was living far away and dedicated to his work.

Catechisms

The priests in Surinam were using the Dutch catechism. In 1822 the priest Paul Wennekers published in Sranantongo the *Roomsch-Catholijke Catechismus of Kort begrip der Christelijke leering in de Neger-Engelsche taal voor de Colonie Suriname* (Amsterdam: Wed. van Tetroode). He himself was the editor. In that time very few people (enslaved) could read or write. It is remark-

¹⁰⁹ A. VERHEGGEN. *Herinneringen*, Rotterdam, 1946.

able that Wennekers opened, as a preamble, with the emergency baptism with prayers, litanies and songs. The catechism contained 20 pages with 18 lessons. Mgr. Jacob Grooff re-edited this catechism in 1847. In 1863 the Vicar Apostolic Gerard Schepers published his *Beknopte Katechismus* and a translation in Sranan: *Pikien Katechismus*.¹¹⁰ This small catechism begins with 10 Bible texts, which clarify the practice and morals of daily life. This catechism contains also 28 lessons, with 8-10 question-answer models (the 12 articles of Faith, the 10 commandments, the 7 sacraments, the faith) and prayers and songs. The priests Masker and Meurkens were the translators. They published a booklet for the Way of the Cross (*Som Begi na Kroisipassi*, 1863) and a prayer book *Gado Rosoe* (1865) in succession to their *Joe nem moesoe de Santa* of 1857.

Mgr. Swinkels composed his own catechism in Sranan *Pikien Katechismus foe den Katholiki Pikien foe Sranam* (Den Bosch: Lutkie en Cranenburg).¹¹¹ It was intended for school children. This catechism is composed in traditional form: Our Father, Hail Mary, the 12 articles of Faith, the 10 commandments, the 5 precepts of the Church, the acts of faith, hope and charity, Repentance, morning- and evening prayers, and at the end the 15 mysteries of the Rosary. The Sranan translation has a lot of Dutch words, like biecht, vormsel, sacramenti, kerki zielie, pausoe. Swinkels gives special attention to sin, to the unity of the Catholic church and to monogamous marriage.

H. Family

Mgr. J. Swinkels published in Sranantongo for the members of the Archconfraternity of the H. Family the small *Boekoe*

¹¹⁰ *Beknopte Katechismus voor de katholieke jeugd van Suriname*, Paramaribo 1862: J. Morpurgo en *Pikien Katechismus foe den Katholiki Pikien foe Sranam*, Paramaribo 1863: J. Morpurgo.

¹¹¹ *Pikien Katechismus foe den katholiki pikien foe Sranam*, Den Bosch 1873: Lutkie en Cranenburg. Dit boekje heeft 46 bladzijden. A. Schalken (*Lectuurrepertorium van de R.K. gemeente in Suriname 1811-1989*, Paramaribo, 1989, 24 nr. 207 en 206) vermeldt van JB. Swinkels ook nog *Eerste onderricht in de christelijke leer ten dienste der R.K. Jeugd in Suriname* (herdruk van de catechismus van A. Swinkels van 1855: *Hollandse catechismus*), Den Bosch, 1873: Lutkie en Cranenburg. Die hebben we nog niet gevonden.

*foe da Kongregasi foe da S. Famili.*¹¹² The secular priests had introduced the system of confraternities, such as for the Rosary and the Sacred Heart, but Swinkels introduced the Holy Family Confraternity for men and women, even in Dutch and in Sranan.

In Paramaribo he founded on January 19, 1868 the Holy Family Confraternity, such as it was in Holland and Belgium. In 1875 he approved of the construction of a building, intended specially for the members, and for the men the *Familiekring*. Shortly after the foundation the number of members was 500, men and women.¹¹³

The booklet of 1870 had 85 pages, with an outline of the history, the regulations, plus an explanation of the indulgences, the good works and the spiritual communion, the hymns, both Christmas hymns, hymns in veneration of Mary, Joseph and Jesus, in Latin and Sranan. Swinkels and his co-workers appreciated the value of the confraternities, which brought the members together, in the face of the influence of the Protestant colony, and shaped a *societas perfecta*, a society with only Catholics.¹¹⁴

Visitation 1871

From January 26 till March 1, 1871 the provincial Jan Schaap (1823-1889) made an official visit to the mission at Surinam, at the request of the Superior General, stimulated perhaps by the many letters of Swinkels. Swinkels had known him in Holland, as an intelligent man, introvert but knowing well his own capacities. He was Provincial for a second time. The visitation was intended to evaluate the first years of the mission.

¹¹² *Boekoe foe da Kongregasi foe da S. Famili*, Roosendaal, 1870: J. van Poll-Suykerbuyk). Een tweede druk is *Begi en Boekoe gi den Lidmati foe da S. Famili*, Amsterdam 1909: Bern. Bunders.

¹¹³ (Bossers, A.): *Beknopte geschiedenis der katholieke missie in Suriname*, Gulpen 1884, 302-304.

¹¹⁴ Enkele paters die in Suriname kwamen werken waren directeur van de Brioederschap van de H. Familie in Wittem geweest, zoals G. Baptist (1856-1860), W. Wulfingh (1874-1877), E. Eykemans (1944-1945) en E. Baneke (1945-1947). Dankelman, L., Bij het eeuwfeest van de H. Familie (afd. mannen) in onze kerk van Wittem. *Monumenta Historica*, 8 (1956) 1-15.

Schaap made, as usual, a report for the Superior General.¹¹⁵ The report is the first analysis and review.

Beginning the report, Schaap underlines the observance of the Rule and Constitutions. He put an end to the administrative unity of Swinkels and the Sisters of Roosendaal. It meant the end of a lot of problems.

He proposed to make the monastery of Paramaribo and the mission stations of Coronie and Batavia into a unity on the material side. The superior of the monastery of Paramaribo, as well as the Procurator in the mission and the Vice-Provincial, had to take care of Coronie and Batavia. The orders of both of the mission stations were headaches to the superior of Paramaribo. The superiors of both of the mission stations (filial houses) had to make a monthly financial report. He added:

At least I combine this with a serious warning to all without exception, superiors and subordinates, fathers and brothers, that they always continue to deal with much delicacy of conscience the question of poverty and never use false principles in forming their conscience. Few issues are so dangerous!

The nomination of the consultors of the Vice-Provincial, the superior of the house of Paramaribo and his consultors, had to be the duty of the Superior General of Rome. So he had proposed. Because the stations of Batavia and Coronie were dependent as filial houses of Paramaribo, the Vice-Provincial (also Vicar Apostolic) should have the duty of nominating the superiors of Batavia and Coronies, while of course informing the Provincial Superior in the Netherlands. The members of Coronie and Batavia had the right to spend some days once a year in Paramaribo.

In the report Schaap continued with the issue of asking the superior of the Monastery's permission for all kind of things:

¹¹⁵ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 4141: Recessus van het huis der E.E. Paters van de Congregatie der Allerheiligste Verlossers te Paramaribo en van de filiaalhuizen Coronie en Batavia bij gelegenheid van de Visitatio Canonica op die verschillende plaatsen gehouden van den 26en Januari tot den 1sten Maart 1871. En ook: Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 4141: Rapport fait au Rme Père Supérieur Général sur la visite canonique faite à Surinam du 26 Janvier au 1er Mars 1871.

A Provincial or Vice-Provincial who is normally busy with a thousand things, likes to work without being involved in the internal affairs of a monastery. In some cases the subordinates on their side have to avoid knocking on his door for permissions, because the local superior can give them. For us it is, of course, difficult and unpleasant to refuse.

Schaap is very detailed in his report. So he decided that before the morning meditation the Hail Mary had to be prayed together by all the members and not only by a hebdomadary. He wanted to introduce another regulation i.e. that for the brother door-keeper or some one else temporarily charged, it is totally forbidden:

To give somebody, whether father or brother, letters addressed to them, or to accept letters from them for the post office. But on the other hand they are strictly forbidden to show to lower superiors letters addressed to the Superior General and the Provincial or his Consultors by the members, and letters from the latter to the members.

We emphasise that the brothers are not to lose reverence for the superiors; but perhaps they can have an advantage in this regard; they can protest quite easily and must not kneel immediately when they are rebuked; they must not stand up immediately when the superior is standing up...

He focuses also on a continuous problem in the communities: the use of alcoholic drinks. Schaap can understand the use of drink and writes:

You know that the use of liquors and alcoholic drinks is not usual in the Province, as far as I know. But I am far from forbidding these because here in the tropics the needs are other than elsewhere. Apart from this, if a medical doctor prescribes the use of liquors, then it is a necessity, obliged by the H. Rule. In all of this, every superior but especially a higher superior has the duty to prevent all misuses.

And for the safeguarding of my conscience and the conscience of the Vice-Provincial and the local superior I decide now

a) that all kind of liquors and alcoholic drinks, prescribed by the medical doctor for a member of the community, shall be willingly offered by the superior with affection.

b) that all liquors and so-called strong drinks have to be preserved under lock; the key can be found in the room of the minister.

c) that only the local Superior or, in his absence, the minister has the competence to permit the subjects the use of alcoholics ad actum for a strictly defined time (and not more).

Schaap goes so far as to make remarks about the clothes (wearing a single jockey in a closed habit; wearing linen trousers or linen pantaloons *-on the foreside closed*). It is interesting for us that he continued the statements of Mgr. Swinkels in his Lenten letter of 3.2.1871:

We are asking you not to speak for the future in a negative way about Surinam, but simply to admonish each other. No. Do not speak about the people entrusted to you! Such a thing cannot bring about anything good. On the contrary, if it becomes common, it can lead in some cases to an indirect material violation of the seal. And furthermore, is it at all appropriate to lose reverence and respect for immortal souls?

It is not in place here to mention the number of issues of Schaap (e.g., about religious life or ascetical life and his pastoral directions). We finish with his own closing remarks:

We are begging and praying you to create in your heart a holy indifference, disdain and abstinence in relation to the opinions and taunts of the world! Let us continue with a gentle, devote, zealous, pure and careful life according to the H. Spirit; do not worry any more! Let them talk and write from here to Holland and from Holland to here. Let them continue to torment you, even to slander you, but don't worry! The good witness of your conscience is enough for you! In this and in a fraternally developing society you can find abundant strength to overcome all that. And God lives; he lives also for you! He will deal with all sin in such a way that the malice of the people shall promote his glory and your glory and the salvation of souls.

The rather hidden agenda of Schaap was to relax the mutual relationship between the members, living so close and so

poor in a very small environment. Sometimes the report was shocking for Swinkels. The suggestions of Schaap were to correct religious life according to the H. Rule and Constitutions, but he could understand the special impact of the circumstances. He was indeed a forerunner of the theory of adaptation and accommodation, a religious life which would be different in the Netherlands and in Surinam. It was a recognition of another mode of life, to be understood in its context.

Swinkels slowly became unable to do his job and wrote on 4.1.1871:

Je n'aime plus jamais, jamais, de ma vie de mettre le pied sur le sol de l'Europe, les jours de mon exil ne seront plus nombreux.

Schaap was successful in stimulating him to travel to Europe in 1871. On March 6, 1871 in Paramaribo, Swinkels wrote to the Superior General that he wanted to visit the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide, to explain his position after Schaaps report. He was afraid because Schaap had decided some measures «nuisibles au bien du Vicariat et contraires au droits et devoirs que j'ai comme vicaire apostolique».

In fact Jan Schaap advised Swinkels to travel with him to Holland to recover his health. Swinkels later thought it was a trick of Schaap to bring him back permanently to Holland and to finish his mission. On March 7, they departed for Holland, but Swinkels returned in good condition on September 28, 1871.

He was always busy with the parishes in Paramaribo, Batavia (on the Coppename river) and Coronie (at the seacoast), busy with expensive travelling via canoe, rowed by Surinamese. To Coronie via the sea. Nowadays we would say it was a tourist attraction. The whole Catholic presence and image was not so imposing as the Moravians in Surinam. The status of the R.C. church between the term of Jan Swinkels:

	baptism	adults	confirmation	1st communion	communions	marriages
1866	433	95	258	188	10.000	20
1867	553	158	290	250	12.150	35
1868	725	228	200	265	13.600	54

1869	859	239	354	361	18.295	49
1870	755	149	135	190	16.500	57
1871	684	222	174	340	17.690	63
1872	677	228	286	234	16.636	83
1873	741	293	85	314	18.085	83
1874	604	234	223	243	17.810	29
1875	692	200	6	196	20.148	56. ¹¹⁶

The report of 1872 shows us the details. In Paramaribo the number of baptisms was: 42 legitimate and 149 illegitimate children; in Coronie 14 legitimate and 40 illegitimate; on the plantations 8 legitimate and 112 illegitimate; at Batavia 3 legitimate and 4 illegitimate; in the whole country 677 children had been baptized, of whom 73 were legitimate and 316 illegitimate. 160 adults had been baptized as well, 60 children of the natives and 68 adults of the natives. In total the schools numbered 1.158 children in the schools of the Sisters and the brothers (70 of whom were poor and 24 able to pay). At Batavia there were 23 children and at Coronie 139.¹¹⁷

The highest expenses concerned food, travel clothes, (mixta) and unforeseen things, but also the expenses for visits, gardens, library, alms, church and furniture. The church got its income through the Mass stipends, the pensions and subsidy of the government, unforeseen letters, apostolic labours, immobile goods. It was far from a grease-pot, but it got room for extension of the church through church buildings and schools as self-presentation in the Surinamese society, positioning itself in the midst of the protestant churches.

It is remarkable that Jan Schaap wanted to return to Surinam with Jan Swinkels after his recovery. It was impossible at that moment. In 1874 he returned (till his death in 1889).

At the end of 1875 Provicar Schaap, Swinkels successor, reported in French to the Nuncio in The Hague,¹¹⁸ about the Surinam mission.¹¹⁹ According to him, the number of Catholics was

¹¹⁶ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 118 fol. 33.

¹¹⁷ Archief Redemptoristen Rome, Prov. Hollandicae, 30090001, Labores

¹¹⁸ R. RITZLER & P. SEFRIN, *Hierarchia Catholica medii et recentioris aevi*, Vol. VIII 1846-1903, Patavii 1978: Il Messaggero di S. Antonio.

¹¹⁹ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 3440.

about 7.000 in Paramaribo and its environment; 1.164 at Coronie, 169 at the leper colony of Batavia and about 4.000 at the plantations in the districts. In that year 692 people had been baptized (195 adults, 497 children, of whom 371 were illegitimate). Only 6 persons received the sacrament of Confirmation, due to the illness and death of the Vicar Apostolic. First Communion was for 196 Catholics. All together there were 20,148 communions, 2,572 more than in 1874. In Paramaribo itself 14,700, 1,474 more than in 1874. In Coronie the number of communions was 3,250, 350 more than in 1874; at Batavia 1,450, 1,220 more than in 1874. 56 ecclesiastical marriages took place and at least 96 children and 263 adults were buried. In his report Schaap did not forget to mention the devotional practices. The number of members of the Archconfraternity of the H. Family in Paramaribo was 296 men and 623 women with a Dutch section in the cathedral and a Sranan section in the Rosa church; in Coronie 126 men and 194 women members, at Batavia 32 men and 38 women. There was an Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and a growing number of youth groups. Concerning the schools, the Sisters' schools with 1.085 children (680 poor and 195 non-Catholic), the schools of the Redemptorist brothers (107 boys); in Coronie 112 boys and girls. In the orphanages were a lot of children, of whom the mother was the only parent. The government was a very bad subsidiser. In 1875 the sugar plantation Livorno was bought for f. 5,500 gld. with the goal of making an orphanage there, teaching the pupils to find a job in agriculture. At the end of 1875 12 boys stayed there. A word now about the financial situation: 2 years previously the debts were f. 60,000. In the meantime a new monastery was built (for 15 men), in Coronie a new church (with a parish house and school) for f. 12,000 gld. With donations from the Netherlands, the debts in 1875 were around f. 12,000. Now the plantation needed around f. 5,000 gld., where the reconstruction cost f. 10,000 gld. More money was needed.

It is remarkable that Schaap was more interested than Swinkels in the apostolic work of Peter Donders and Jan Romme. He asked them for reports and plans and suggested bringing to the native villages teachers and catechists (1 gulden per day,

teaching about 30 children and some adults). That would be a new branch in pastoral work for the Redemptorists.

Follow-up

In 1865 Swinkels started his new mission project, but he had overtasked himself, and had handicaps owing to his age and the tropical climate. He was too old for physical and psychological adaptation. The Dutch Redemptorists were not amused. He saw himself as a transitional figure, a forerunner, preparing the way for those who followed. His position was really complex: the accumulation of jobs and responsibilities in a new series of roles, as Vicar Apostolic, Vice-Provincial and religious superior. On 23.4.1871 he wrote to the Provincial in Holland: «Des dévoirs de ces trois qualités ils sont trop souvent en collision».

And in a letter of December 1, 1873: «I am sitting in my room as an old man from morning till evening».

From the moment of his return to Holland in March 1871 he wanted to resign as Vicar Apostolic, suspecting that the policy of Schaap was an option for re-emigration as a punishment for himself. He acknowledged his tensions: from September 1870 till the end of January 1871, he was very upset (*emporté*) only 3 times: once against a negro servant; once against a big schoolboy and once against a father, challenging and abusing him for his gentleness. He was searching for a quiet conscience, and again the question: how far does he have to be obedient to the H. Rule as Vicar Apostolic (*son dévoirs et pouvoirs*)? The Superior General had been involved in the question and was persuading him to be a Redemptorist in the first place, and in the second place Vicar Apostolic, and the General informed him: «c'est la Congregation, et non pas le Vic. apostolique qui gouvernerait la mission».

In that context Schaap reported to the Superior General that it was difficult to work with Swinkels. He could not rely on Swinkels himself, who was so often changing his mind. He asked the General not to listen to his stories and not to yield even to his tears:

Je prie instamment Votre Paternité de ne se pas fier un seul moment aux promesses, aux protestations, aux larmes mêmes de Mgr. C'est bien l'homme le plus politique et le plus double que l'on puisse rencontrer.

That is a sign of mistrust and a significantly undermining strategy. Swinkels gave the assurance to the General that he was in the first place a Redemptorist. Swinkels did not trust the internuncio (*qui n'a nullement ma confiance*), according to a letter of 13.6.1871 to the Superior General.

The different actors had an hidden agenda in the new, strange situation. It is important to note that the Superior General wrote clearly and strictly that the Congregation was the leader of the mission. That was not an appropriate remark for Mgr. Swinkels.

After his return to Surinam, the situation did not change: his feeble health was a continuous issue in his letters, over and over again.

On November 30, 1872 Swinkels wrote to the Superior General that the Sisters intended to leave Surinam due to the quarrels with the fathers. He mentioned that the regulation of Schaap concerning the separation of the finances did not work: the Sisters were washing and repairing the clothes for the Redemptorists: how much should he charge now? In a letter of 20.11.1872 to the Superior General (*en toute confiance*) he wrote that he could not put this question to the Provincial superior, because he was reflecting too much in favour of the Sisters *just when I am searching always for justice*. The question was that the Vicar Apostolic received the money for the salaries of the Sisters, paid and subsidized by the government, and Swinkels was using a lot of that money to build schools. Swinkels had put the question to his confessor, but the latter would not give absolution. So what was he to do? It was in reality a hard and unique matter because each one was confessor of the others in the very small community. An open communication was impossible.

In a letter of 5.2.1874 Swinkels wrote to the General asking for only one thing: before he leaves this earth, to forgive him for all he had done against the Congregation of the Redemptorists. It was a heavy load for him, and he mentions also that everything was going well since Fr. Rector Jan van Mens had left. He himself had given the suggestion for the nomination. Schaap wrote in 1874 to the Superior General that Swinkels himself made the proposal to nominate Jan van Mens as superior of the

monastery of Paramaribo. According to Swinkels Van Mens was not a good religious and had a lot of trouble with the sisters. According to Schaap in the same letter one cannot trust Swinkels: Swinkels is a man of the moment:

c'est l'homme du moment; agissant selon l'impression du moment. A mon avis, les choses n'iront jamais bien, aussi longtemps que J.B.S se trouvera a la tête.

According to Schaap it will never go smoothly, as long as Swinkels is the head of the mission, in spite of the fact that Jan van Mens had left.

The situation around Swinkels was going up and down. He wanted, according to letters of May 5 and 20, 1874, to return to Holland. Afterwards he wanted to resign as Vicar Apostolic. The Superior General wrote him that he could travel to Rome for a meeting, in case he would resign, but suggested that he hold, after resigning, the title of Vicar Apostolic but without a Provicar.

In 1874 the nominations of superiors were coming. After 2 triennia as Provincial Schaap wanted to resign. Swinkels asked him to search for a place for him in Holland, but outside the Congregation. Schaap had been nominated superior of Paramaribo, especially as a help to Swinkels, according the letter of the Superior General of 15.6.1874, who asked him to respect Swinkels also in financial affairs: *toujours été une pierre d'achoppement*. In a letter of 20.11.1874 of Schaap to the Superior General he informed him that Swinkels had told him he was never so happy as now.

In a letter of 1.9.1874 Swinkels informed the Superior General that he agreed with the nomination and that he was waiting for better times. Schaap promised to consult Swinkels concerning important issues *je ne crains plus l'avenir*. The new superior, Schaap, wrote in his first letter 1.9.1874 to the Superior General that Swinkels' health was okay and that the Redemptorists in Surinam were living in a good harmony, and in good religious obedience.

The Provincial Piet Oomen informed Swinkels in a letter of 15.12.1874 that his job as Vice-Provincial was ended and that

Schaap would be superior of the superiors of Coronie and Batavia. Piet Oomen declared himself to be very happy about the good relationship between Schaap and Swinkels.

In the meantime, Swinkels' health became more and more feeble. He wanted to finish the job. Swinkels wrote Oomen a confidential letter 18.5.1875 (and Oomen translated a piece and sent it to the Superior General): Swinkels wants to leave Surinam, his health is ruined, he could not celebrate Mass and is making the suggestion that Schaap be nominated as his successor, because he achieved in 3 months more than he himself did in the last 3 years. Furthermore, Piet Oomen wrote on 20.8. 1875 to the General about the sick Swinkels. But he remarked that Schaap had good talents for the Congregation and Surinam, but he is anxious that he might overrule his superiors. He had, according to Oomen, a dominating and independent character and, during his preparation to travel to Surinam, *on dirait qu'il a de loin préparé son avenir*. According to Oomen he lived above his level during the farewell tour in Holland, in a fashion that conflicted totally with the vow of poverty. After his arrival in Surinam he annulled all the suggestions he made before, according to the letter. Altogether, Oomen was of the opinion that Schaap was just not capable for the job of Vicar Apostolic.

Death and Burial

Shortly after his arrival in Surinam Swinkels was complaining about his health. In a letter of June 1866 he wrote:

I am feeling very good, but the climate is diminishing my powers. My health is exhausting me but is not depressing me. The miasmas of our swamps make for fever, if one is not very careful.

and in a letter of March 22, 1867: «No, no, one has to leave me here quietly, till my death».

On December 2, 1867 he wrote to his superior in Amsterdam:

Very Rev. Is it possible to have finished my vocation as a forerunner? I arranged it so, for I am hoping out of my love for God to lay down my life, if it only means losing my head, because one tells the truth freely to sinners, and great men especially do so.

His attitude to the idea of death was free and not at all anxious. He sometimes used the idea as a threat. Life was difficult for him personally, as he was an old and feeble man. In the Netherlands his life was fine and successful. The situation in Surinam was different and difficult. Having to maneuver between missionaries was not his specialty. His relationship with the Provincial in Holland and the Superior General was not ideal. His way out was to write to them, over and over again, in a dubious and insecure manner. He was sometimes heavy-hearted, sometimes depressive, complaining about his health and threatening to give up the job. Schaap gave him a helping hand.

Swinkels died at 8.30 a.m. on the morning of September 11, 1875 at Paramaribo in the arms of Fr. Schaap, who had been sent to Surinam to help him in the administration and as his successor. On September 20 Schaap sent a report to the Provincial.¹²⁰

From the beginning of September Mgr. Swinkels, according to Schaap, had attacks of 5 to 10 minutes of continuous pressure and breathlessness. The medical doctor and the medicines prescribed were quite helpful. But on the evening of September 10th he asked the father, who awoke at the same time as he did, for Fr. Schaap. During his last days that was his custom, because, according to Schaap, Monsignor had to live with a hypersensitive conscience. At that moment the attack was more powerful and dangerous than before. Swinkels had a talk with Schaap about the current issues of the Vicariate. Swinkels informed him that in the morning he had had a dream in which a Redemptorist of 30 years ago appeared to him, and assured him that his death was near at hand. Swinkels said to Schaap that he was telling only him. He also told Schaap that he loved everybody and put Schaap's hands on his heart.

¹²⁰ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, Chronica Amsterdam I A, fols. 57-62.

After this he fell into his last agony. For the last time he made his confession. The lack of air was terrible. Schaap called the community to pray. He lit 3 candles, recalling the three terrible hours of Jesus on the cross. The agony was intense because Swinkels' physical strength had been great. Afterwards Schaap sent the members to bed. Only his confessor, Fr. A. Bossers was with him now, together with the 2 brothers he appreciated, Frans and Fidelis. After midnight he was crying out: *I cannot last any more*. But he listened to the little prayers, the comforting sermons and kind words of the bystanders. At 2.30 in the morning Jan Schaap started to celebrate Mass, in the house chapel just near the dying man's room. Afterwards Fr. Bossers celebrated the Mass. Monsignor did not lose consciousness. His agony ended at 8.30 in the morning. Schaap had asked him about 7.00 a.m. if he wanted absolution, but he did not agree to that. Schaap's finding was: «As only a good, zealous religious can be willing to die, so Mgr. Swinkels C.SsR. died quietly ...».¹²¹

J. Swinkels had prepared very well for his death. His testament was made and his funeral was scheduled by himself. Schaap reported about Swinkels:

My burial

I, Episcoporum sub omni respectu minimus, I am asking that my body be clothed as the Ceremoniale Episcoporum (Lib. Cc. Cap. XXVIII, No. 8.10) regulates, but however like an ordinary father, with the Violette Solidé, the normal pectoral cross with chain round my neck, the ring on my finger, the small wooden cross in my hands. Exposing my corpse then, one has to place the mitra simplex at the head of my bed and the felt hat at the end of the bed outside the coffin; the staff cross above the coffin with the scroll on the left. Before the coffin is finally closed, please take away the small wooden cross and the large rosary, as they are the ones I used to use, and replace them by other rather small ones. Please take away the cross, the chain and the ring from my corpse. And do not replace them. Finally, I would like the men of the H. Family and the H. Covenant [burial fund] to carry me.

Requiescam in pace!

+ J.B. S C.SsR.

Ep. Am. Vic. Ap.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 58.

So it was. According to Schaap the funeral was magnificent. All high authorities had been invited to the funeral. They came themselves or sent a representative. Schaap estimated the number of the crowd as 12,000. The whole cemetery was full of people. It was really packed. It was difficult for Schaap to bring silence: he intended to preach about the resurrection of the flesh for the people (most of all non-believers). Before his death Monsignor had asked Schaap repeatedly to greet all the confreres in the Netherlands, asking them for forgiveness and recommending his poor soul to the merciful Heart of Jesus.

On October 22, 1875 a mourning ceremony took place in the church of the Redemptorists in Amsterdam. The papal Nuncio Capri was present, and also Mgr. J. Peppen of Den Bosch, the Provincial superior of the Netherlands, the Rector of the Redemptorist monastery. Many people attended the mourning ceremony. The altar was decorated with black robes. On the altar were placed the best silver candlesticks.

Elegy – Necrology

In Amsterdam an elegy for Mgr. Jan Swinkels was published. He had lived so long in Amsterdam and many people remembered him. The homage in the elegy has an extremely transcendent quality, with a vivid mixture of word and deed, reality and metaphor.¹²²

In a necrology Swinkels was characterized as zealous and caring, a gentle bishop and missionary. His name was glorious, because he never flew from dangers during his apostolic life.¹²³ Furthermore the statement made was that neither the Netherlands nor the Dutch West Indies can ever forget this wise counsellor, *gentle father and trustful carer of so many thousands of Catholics*.¹²⁴

The chronicles of the Redemptorist monastery in Amsterdam has a necrology of Mgr. Jan Swinkels, something excep-

¹²² By J.J. van Tooren In 1866 uitgegeven bij den boekhandelaar Huver. (Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, 2526). Cf. *Pius IX. Katholiek Zondagsblad*, 24 October 1875.

¹²³ *De Katholieke Missiën*, 2 (1876), nr. 1, 8.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

tional, seeing that he died in Paramaribo. He was the founder of the church and monastery of the Redemptorists in Amsterdam. And he worked in the neighborhood. He was according to witnesses a man with religious ideals, like St. Alphonsus, a man of inspiration, who gave life and brought about fruits in perfection.¹²⁵

He and his confreres had to face new challenges, more difficult than in the Netherlands. Things were not really perfect, and he recognized that. However in Surinam he developed a church with religious men and women, who grew in number and were full of service, for example in the schools.

Afterwards

After the death of Swinkels on the 15.9.1875 the Superior General wrote to Oomen on 24.9. On the basis of what Oomen told him about Schaap, he did not think it necessary to nominate a new Vicar Apostolic. It wasn't necessary for the pastoral service of a Vicar Apostolic or for the missionaries either, or for the ministry to the faithful and unfaithful. He communicated the issues to Propaganda Fide, according to a letter of Oomen 22.11.1875, advising them not to nominate a new vicar apostolic for Surinam.

In a letter of 22.11.1875 to the prefect of Propaganda Fide he told about the death of Swinkels, praising him for progress in the number of baptisms, and for building churches and an orphanage. According to him Swinkels did a great deal for the improvement of the life of the Catholics. Then he mentioned the bad climate. And he added that Swinkels was nominated as bishop with the intention simply of giving the church more status. All that is now over, he wrote, and Surinam did not need a bishop:

1. Priests can do all that is necessary for the ministry; the task of mission-leader did not require episcopal dignity (except for administering the sacrament of Confirmation); the Vicar Apostolic and the priests can speak Dutch and the government sub-

¹²⁵ Archief Redemptoristen Nederland, Chronica Amsterdam IA, fols. 263-289. Bossers (*Beknopte Geschiedenis*, 1884), 363-294.

sidizes them as Dutch citizens; the Dutch Province of the Redemptorists is lacking in members; as a result the choice limited.

2. The country is not a healthy place. Old people cannot be sent to Surinam. Many of the priests died within 10 years.; missionaries have to be very healthy; a bishop must be there a long time, but he will die quickly; the Dutch province has very few candidates.

3. Episcopal dignity is not necessary; the priests are members of the same Congregation and in the Congregation it is unusual to be nominated as bishop (except when the pope makes a strict demand). The missionaries did not need a bishop; there are a lot of possibilities for consultation. It would be better not to make missionaries dependent on a prelate (superior).

According to Mauron the members of the Dutch province did not want a head of the mission with episcopal dignity. We believe that Mauron wrote that for his own sake, without checking it out. He proposed to nominate an apostolic prefect, such as there was in the mission of the neighbouring country French Guyana.

Propaganda Fide followed the same idea as in the letter of the Superior General. According to him, it would be the solution of all the problems Swinkels had. Schaap received the title of Monsignor. He did not agree with this proposal for the sake of the Surinam mission (and for his own sake). He wrote and wrote, and travelled to Rome to plea for his views.

He was successful at Propaganda Fide and was nominated as bishop in 1880. On 10.10.1880 his consecration took place in Wittem and he chose as text for his episcopal cloak the Redemptorist slogan '*copiosa apud eum redemptio*, i.e with Him is fullness of redemption. He arrived on 6.1.1881 in Paramaribo and died there on 19.3.1889.

The name of Swinkels, the first Redemptorist to be Vicar Apostolic of Surinam, is still used in Surinam today in the Mgr. Swinkels Foundation, the fund of the Redemptorists, begun after the Second World War as a self-generating fund for Redemptorist projects, and making them more independent of the Vicariate. It was a project with Redemptorists on the board. But times changed. The Dutch Redemptorists left Surinam and now lay-

people run the board with a full safe, and are responsible and accountable. In the Netherlands the Swinkels family is involved in the breweries of *Bavaria*, well known all over the country and beyond the borders as far as Surinam.

SUMMARY

This article gives an account of the life of Fr. Jan Swinkels (1810-1875), first Redemptorist Bishop of Surinam. He was one of ten children in a rather wealthy area in Holland that contributed many members to the Redemptorists and other orders. Ordained a diocesan priest in 1834 he worked successfully in education and became rector of the Latin School of Helmont. Becoming a Redemptorist in 1845 he labored on missions and retreats in Holland and Belgium. He was the first superior of the Amsterdam community, Vice-Provincial in Holland and Provincial of the Dutch-English Province 1854-1865. Fr. Jan Swinkels is important because he led the first Redemptorist venture on the foreign missions. As Vicar Apostolic in Surinam 1866-1875 he marked a turning-point in Redemptorist history. The article recounts how this came about, the new type of apostolate there, the tensions between being bishop and religious superior, the influence of Father General in Rome and his meticulous attention to the Rule. With a delicate conscience he felt tensions deeply. The missionaries to their credit were well aware they were but beginning a long process of inculturation.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article a pour but de décrire la vie du Père Jan Swinkels (1810-1875), premier évêque Rédemptoriste du Surinam. Issu d'une famille assez aisée de dix enfants en Hollande, pays qui a donné beaucoup de vocations aux Rédemptoristes ainsi qu'à d'autres Congrégations. Ordonné prêtre diocésain en 1834, il travailla avec succès dans le domaine de l'éducation et devint recteur du Collège Latin à Helmont. Devenu Rédemptoriste en 1845, il donna des missions paroissiales en Hollande et en Belgique. Premier Supérieur de la maison d'Amsterdam, Vice-Provincial de Hollande, puis Provincial de la Pro-

vince Hollando-Anglaise de 1854 à 1865. Son rôle fut important car il dirigea les premiers Rédemptoristes en terre de missions étrangères. En tant que Vicaire Apostolique au Surinam de 1866 à 1875, il marque un tournant dans l'histoire rédemptoriste. Cet article en raconte les origines, ce nouveau genre d'apostolat, les tensions entre le fait d'être évêque et Supérieur religieux, également l'influence du Supérieur Général à Rome et l'observance méticuleuse de la Règle. D'une conscience délicate, Swinkels ressentit profondément ces tensions. Les missionnaires eux-mêmes étaient bien conscients de n'être qu'au début d'un long processus d'inculturation.