### Events

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“We wanted also to come to Rome,” Mother Mary Michael told the distinguished visitor, who came to Steyl on August 4, 1930 and had his privileged tour around the house and garden. The eminent guest was no other than Fr. Superior General Wilhelm Gier, SVD, who clapped his hands in joy, upon hearing M. M. Michael’s earnest remark.¹

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### The Triple Alliance

Fr. Friedrich, however, was unrelenting. He found a suitable piece of land, relatively cheap and near the Collegio. The Sisters considered the matter and saw the advantages of moving the generalate to Rome sooner or later “so that the three congregations would live side by side on the same grounds just like in Steyl.” They consulted the SVD superior general and the director general and then commissioned Fr. Friedrich to buy the plot. But this time the deal was not concluded.

On January 13, 1928 another offer was made. Mother M. Michael, however, hesitated. She wrote in February 1928: “We are absolutely in agreement not to

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¹ Cf. Chronik, Mutterhaus, 1930
² H. Fischer, Mutter Maria Michael, (Steyl 1938/August 2013), p. 130
³ Contemplation and Mission, Karl Müller, SVD, 1998, p. 186
⁴ Ibid., p. 186
buy at this time a plot in Rome, however noble this seems to be. Up to now, we haven’t given thought to establishing a foundation there. Our Congregation is not yet developed enough, and above all, we lack the necessary financial means.” She further added, “Since we have again contracted large debts on account of our Soesterberg foundation, we will not attempt to proceed with this, but let go of this matter.” But when the SVD general councilor, Fr. Josef Grendel, returned from Rome and strongly recommended making the purchase, they agreed and gave Fr. Friedrich the green light for further negotiations. Fr. Friedrich was delighted and looked upon this decision as a “great step forward and a blessing.” The procurator succeeded in keeping the price as low as possible, but the seller insisted on being paid almost immediately. The Sisters could not do this and wanted to give up the project altogether. At this stage, just by chance, they came in contact with the SVD procurator general and through him the SVD general council. The council offered to advance the money. On February 11, Fr. Director General Auf der Heide, still in Rome, sent a one-word telegram to Stey: “Bought.” In an accompanying letter he wrote: “Now we must thank God that everything has proceeded so well and the deal has been concluded—without mortgage and bill of exchange. Fr. Friedrich is very happy and sends his greetings. Now our three congregations are represented in Rome, at least through their property. I hope God will now bring the Sisters to Rome—when, of course, only God knows that. But it is a lovely thought that our ‘Triple Alliance’ has communities in Rome, the capital of Christendom, and indeed side by side, so that they can be of mutual help and support. I am sure our blessed Founder is also happy about this and is blessing the project.” Mother M. Michael, who had hesitantly and fearfully followed the various steps in the negotiations, wrote: “At last the matter in Rome has been settled. It gives us great joy, and we wish to thank God for this token of his grace and goodness. Of course, there is no question of building in Rome just yet. First the Congregation has to expand somewhat more.”

Truly, the foundation in Rome did not come about. The hand of God directed its course according to his all-seeing and all-knowing providence. The acquired property was later sold, and the generalate remained in Stey. It was moved to Bad Driburg in 1974, few years after Vatican II, where it is still today.

**Foundations - a Revisit**

After the death of St. Arnold in 1909, M. M. Michael spared no effort to work on both the internal and external development of the Congregation. The building of the Motherhouse was one important step towards this external development. It paved the way for further expansion. The Motherhouse signified autonomy by which the young community could move forward and live their particular spirituality and charm as intended by the Founder.

New foundations were at the heart of M. M. Michael’s program of external development. “She was happy as a queen whenever she could open a new convent of adoration, for it meant that in another place our Savior would always be adored. For in each convent, there is another throne of exposition for our dear Savior. The thought of all the glory and love that would daily be offered unceasingly to him in the Most Blessed Sacrament overwhelmed her, especially the realization that in this or that place, where formerly our Savior had not been adored, he would now always be loved and honored in the sacred Host.” That is why she worked with great zeal to find new communities wherever and whenever possible, as God’s will and providence directed her, for she was convinced that “it is better to have many convents with a smaller number of Sisters than few convents with many Sisters.” One cannot imagine the burden and cares she bore during these years up until her death.

A quick glance at her plans and the foundations she established, together with the personnel resources available, gives us a glimpse of her remarkable zeal for the glory of our Eucharistic Lord, her faith in God’s will and guidance, her trust in divine generosity and providence in the face of difficulties and meager means, her supernatural foresight and her prophetic boldness to venture into the unknown.

**Legend:** Pos - Postulants / Nov - Novices / Prof - Professed Sisters / Con – Convents

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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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3. Ibid., p. 187
4. Cf. ibid., p. 187 (footnote)
5. A-thought-a-day Guide in striving for religious perfection, July 8
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**At the Heart of the Church**

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