

# REPORT OF THE ELEVENTH GENERAL MEETING OF THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL ASSOCIATION

JOSEPH P. O'DONNELL

The Eleventh General Meeting of the Catholic Biblical Association of America was held at St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, Yonkers, New York, from Tuesday, August 24 to Thursday, August 26, 1948. The meeting was conducted under the patronage of His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York.

The Committee of Local Arrangements were the Reverend Charles O'Connor Sloane, the Reverend Myles Bourke, and the Reverend John F. McCarthy. Due to their well-planned efforts, the members enjoyed convenient and very pleasant accommodations. The facilities of the Seminary and the hospitality extended contributed greatly to the success of the meeting and to the general spirit of friendly association among the members.

The Program presented a series of eight papers which illustrated the intimate unity of Catholic Faith and Catholic Worship. The President, Father Patrick Cummins, was credited with the idea of developing, in the subjects offered, the relationship between Sacred Scripture, Theology, and Liturgy. Sacred Scripture was discussed as the "Soul of Theology" and as a dynamic force of Catholic life in the Liturgy. The papers inspired discussions that gave information of important current developments and a feeling of the enthusiasm for things scriptural that is awake in the world.

The general meeting was formally opened on Tuesday morning, August 24, with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, offered by the Most Reverend Stephen J. Donahue, in the Seminary Chapel. The sessions were held in the large Theology classroom of the Seminary.

At 10:15 A.M., the first session was opened by the President, Father Cummins. After words of welcome and introduction, the President presented Father Robert Dyson, Professor of Old Testament Exegesis at the Pontifical Biblical Institute. Father Dyson was present as the representative of the Institute and he read the following message from Father Bea, the Rector.

(Copy)

PONTIFICIO  
ISTITUTO BIBLICO

Roma 2/4, li August 9, 1948  
Piazza Della Pilotta, 35

IL RETTORE

Reverend and dear Fr. Dyson:

I wish to thank you for the news that the meeting of the Catholic Biblical Association will begin on August 24, and I am glad that you will be able to

take part in it. In this way our Institute will be represented at the meeting not only by so many of our dear and capable alumni, but also by one of our professors. I beg you to present my most cordial greetings to all present, especially to the former students of the Institute, and I express my great hope that this meeting, too, like those in the past, will contribute in a real manner to the continued growth of biblical studies in the United States. From its very beginning, the Catholic Biblical Association has shown itself to be a source of diligent labor and fruitful enterprise, which in a few years has given to biblical studies in the United States both a gratifying development and a place of great importance. I pray God that this new meeting will further the work organically along the lines already taken, and that it will aid substantially in making Holy Scripture ever better known and loved, not only by seminarians and future priests and teachers, but also by the faithful themselves, according to the desire of our Holy Father as expressed in the encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu*.

With cordial greetings to your Reverence and to all the members of the meeting, I remain,

Devotedly in our Lord  
/s/ AUGUSTINE BEA  
Rector of the Pont. Biblical Institute.

Father Steinmueller announced the publication of the new pocket edition of the Confraternity Edition of the New Testament and copies were distributed. The Reverend James E. Coleran, S.J., read the first paper, *A Critical Appraisal of the Association's Version of Genesis*. Father Coleran pointed out some instances of departure from the MT justified by the LXX, supported by Sam. and the ancient versions. In his summation he said that the editors of the new version can defend their rendition. As they have no sweeping condemnations of their own neither are they disturbed by criticism or disagreement offered to their work. The second paper, *The Study of Patristic Interpretation of Sacred Scripture*, was presented by the Reverend Philip J. Donnelly, S.J. Father Donnelly gave a very interesting presentation on the necessity and utility of the study of the Fathers as a norm of interpretation. He made very clear the problem of distinguishing between the opinions of the Fathers as authorities and as representatives of the teaching *Magisterium* of the Church. The example of Genesis 3:15 and the definition of Pius IX in 1854 was cited. The recent discussions between Father Lennerz of the Gregorian and Father Roschini of St. Anthony's in Rome were brought to the attention of an appreciative audience.

The second session opened at 2:30 P. M. The Reverend Damasus Winzen, O.S.B., presented a paper entitled *Holy Scripture and the Liturgy*. The revivals noticeable in the Liturgical Apostolate and the Bible movement should be integrated since the Liturgy teaches the Bible. Father Winzen, in answer to questions, indicated how the scriptural readings of the

Sundays are meant to fit into the continuous scriptural readings that follow in the Office according to the Liturgical Season. He pointed out how the responsories to the lessons focus attention on certain essential themes current to the seasonal life and worship of the Church. Father Winzen is the author of *Pathways in Holy Scripture*, a series of short commentaries on the Holy Scripture to accompany the Scripture reading in the Breviary. The second paper was read by the Reverend William Heidt, O.S.B., entitled *The Scriptural Background of Mediator Dei*. Father Heidt made the following points: (1) that the mystical sense of the Old Testament must be given more emphasis; (2) that the Bible is a symbol of the presence of Christ, and, therefore, a sacramental outlook as well as a historical outlook toward the Bible is desired; (3) the word of God must be integrated with belief and practice in the Liturgy; (4) Christ works through the Bible as well as in the Liturgy ("The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life"). His conclusion was that the Bible was popularized too much as a book and not dynamically, as in the Liturgy.

At 6:15 P. M., the members were entertained at a dinner tendered by St. Joseph's Seminary. The Right Reverend Monsignor John M. A. Fearn, Rector of the Seminary, expressed warm words of welcome and conveyed to the Association his sentiments of respect and appreciation for its work in promoting scriptural studies and lending thereby great help to the work of the Seminary. His Excellency, the Most Reverend Stephen J. Donahue welcomed the Association to the Archdiocese in the name of His Excellency the Cardinal and added pleasant words of personal appreciation for the work of the Association.

The third session opened at 10:15 A.M., Wednesday, August 25. The first papers entitled, "Holy Scripture As a '*Locus Theologicus*,'" was delivered by the Reverend Leo G. Burke, O.M.I. Father Burke appealed for a more adequate presentation of the scriptural argument in the theology course so that we might fit men better to preach the Gospel with that divine authority of the word of God found in the Prophets of old who cried "thus saith the Lord God." The discussion which followed suggested the need and desirability of consultation and exchange between the professors of Dogmatic Theology and of Sacred Scripture. The advantage of closer union between our Association and the Association of Theologians was again expressed. The Reverend Joseph L. Lilly presented the second paper which was entitled *Holy Scripture and Apologetics*. Father Lilly very concisely reviewed the attitudes of antagonism to be answered or discounted from a practical viewpoint. He gave a brief summation of the presentation of the historical reality of Jesus and the Christian Revelation and of its identity with the Catholic Church. In the discussion Father Cotter called attention to the "*Demonstratio Catholica*" without the need of dem-

onstrating the historical beginning of Christianity. The sanctity of the Church is the witness to her divine sanction. The sentiment was expressed that the professor of Scripture can not be expected to treat of the broad field of Apologetics.

At 1:00 P. M. there was a business meeting of the Executive Board. The afternoon was open for privately-arranged visits to New York City.

The fourth session opened at 10:15 A. M. Thursday. Father Stapleton and Father Mangan were appointed auditors of the Treasurer's Statement. Father Steinmueller offered news of the *Settimana Biblica* held September 27 to October 1. The *Unione Biblica Italiana* expressed the desire for a manual of Sacred Scripture to be a norm for teaching. The first paper entitled *The Use of Sacred Scripture in Some Textbooks of Dogmatic Theology* was presented by the Reverend Edward F. Siegman, C.P.P.S. Father Siegman noted a tendency, in more recent textbooks, to curtail the use of Scripture. He suggested a readjustment of the attitude which uses Scripture for controversy and loses the idea of the living spirit of Scripture. The scholastic method might be balanced with a presentation that would begin with the scriptural data and arrive at the thesis. He illustrated by specific texts three types of faults found in some textbooks: an example of mistranslation, Job 19:23-26; an example of a text taken out of context I Cor. 3:15; and an example of reading meaning into a text, Isaia 14:3-21. The second paper, "*Is the Publication of a Dictionary of Biblical Theology by the Association Feasible?*", was presented by the Reverend Francis J. Crump, O.M.I. After reviewing various possibilities, Father Crump concluded that the need for a comprehensive work calls for an original work by the Association. His recommendation was that the Association select an editor and pay him a full-time salary. A term of two years was mentioned and the work should be launched immediately by the assignment of articles. Mother Kathryn Sullivan, R.C.S.J., gave the session a description of her project of a dictionary of the New Testament. It is a one-volume work of some 1500 entries and will be published at the end of the year or during the winter. Her experience suggested many possibilities of saving time and expense in such an undertaking. In reply to a question from the President, Father Dyson said that in the Biblical Institute Father Vaccari is doing some work in Biblical Theology, but he indicated that it was a great problem to find men to undertake such an enormous work, especially in the Old Testament. Father Plassmann stressed the great need of such a work of synthesis. Father Hartdegen announced the publication of the new translation of the Book of Genesis. He advised the members how they might obtain copies.

The fifth session at 1:15 P. M. was devoted to the business meeting. The report of the Committee on Nominations was presented by the Rev-

erend Patrick Skehan. The Committee recommended the following officers for 1948-49:

- President: The Reverend Edward A. Cerny, S.S.
- Vice-President: The Reverend Charles O'Connor Sloane
- General Secretary: The Reverend Louis Hartman, C.S.S.R.
- Assistant General Secretary: The Reverend Francis J. Crump, O.M.I.
- Treasurer: The Reverend John E. Steinmueller
- Recording Secretary: The Reverend Roland E. Murphy, O.Carm.
- Committee on Nominations for two-year term (1948-1950):
  - The Reverend Patrick Cummins, O.S.B.
  - The Reverend James E. Coleran, S.J.

It was regularly moved, seconded, and adopted that the Secretary cast a unanimous ballot for these candidates.

The Reverend Stephen Hartdegen, O.F.M., secretary of the Editorial Board of Old Testament Translators, made the following report on the progress of the translation. The Book of Genesis was published on August 25, 1948, by the St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J. 39 of the 46 Books have been translated; i.e., all but Judges, Ruth, 3 Kings, Job, Esdras, Nehemias, and Ezechiel. The Psalter with the Canticles of the Breviary is to be published by next spring. Twenty-five other books have been edited in part. The Reverend Louis Hartman, C.S.S.R., will begin service as a full-time editor and member of the Editorial Board.

The Reverend Michael J. Guenthaner, editor-in-chief of the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, reported on the progress of the journal. He indicated the continuing growth of its success and influence by the citation of appreciative letters from non-Catholics as well as Catholic readers throughout the world.

The Report of the Summer Bible Institute Committee, established in New York in 1945, was made by the Reverend Matthew P. Stapleton. The Institute for Professors at Niagara University, New York, in 1946, was an intellectual and financial success. The Institute for Professors at St. Thomas Seminary, Denver, in 1947, was an intellectual success, but financially a failure. The Institute for Sisters of the Archdiocese of New York, in 1947, was an intellectual and financial success. In 1948, Institutes for Sisters at New York, for Sisters and Brothers at Philadelphia, and at Brooklyn enjoyed large attendances. 700 Sisters attended at New York and 900 Sisters at Philadelphia. The Brooklyn Institute is scheduled for September. Attempts to hold Institutes in Chicago, St. Louis, and Newark were unsuccessful. The overall picture of the Bible Institute is of tremendous intellectual success and of moderate financial success. The results of the Essay Contest of 1947 are reported in the recent July number of the *Quarterly*. Lecturers for the Institutes are to be obtained in the future

by means of a questionnaire. Tendering its resignation, the Committee recommends that the Institute be continued and expresses thanks both to the diocesan authorities and to members of the Association who have supported and encouraged the undertaking.

The Financial Report was read by the Reverend John E. Steinmueller, treasurer of the Association. The Reverend Patrick Skehan made a report on the disposal of funds for German relief. Three packages of food or clothing have been sent to each of the 35 persons on the list sent by Father Pohl.

The Reverend Joseph J. Lilly, General Secretary of the Association, presented the final report of the session.

*On the Promotion of Biblical Sunday:* Father Lilly reported that, according to the recommendations of Bishop Edwin V. O'Hara, letters were sent to all the members of the Hierarchy over the signature of our President, the Very Reverend Patrick Cummins, O.S.B. Along with the letter went a suggested sermon outline, a double list of daily Lenten readings from the New Testament, and a page of excerpts from Papal Encyclicals relative to reading the Bible. Responses were received from the following Archdioceses and Dioceses which celebrated Biblical Sunday: Boston, San Francisco, Covington, Cleveland, Winona, Marquette, Amarillo, and Nashville.

*On the Circulation of the Quarterly:* There was an increase of 22 subscribers. The total a year ago was 891. It is now 913. A statement on the circulation by states and countries was made available to the members present. Father Lilly recommended that our members make an effort to receive subscriptions among their acquaintance, priests, and laymen. Since some of our most appreciative subscribers are Protestant theological schools, the members were requested to send the names of any Protestant theological seminaries in their district to the Secretary's office, that he might write them and send a sample copy.

*On the Catholic Scriptural Library:* The Canticle of Canticles, the first and only volume published, up to August 1, had sold 870 copies. Other volumes ready to go to press or in press are Ricciotti's *Storia d'Israele, Vol. I*; Heinisch's *Genesis and Theology of the Old Testament*; Chaine's *Introduction to the Reading of the Prophets* (Reader's Guide to the Prophets).

*On Father Vosté's Lecture Tour:* As reported last year the Association sustained a loss of \$1000 in financing the transatlantic expenses incurred. No financial aid was received from Canada.

*On the Scholarship to the Biblical Institute:* Father Robert North, S.J., winner of the biblical scholarship, has completed two years with great distinction and will continue on, working for the doctorate. A transcript of his marks was received and also a letter from his Provincial, Father

Zuercher, S.J. In the examinations for the Bachelor and Licentiate Degrees, he attained an average of 9.75.

*On the Translation of the New Testament:* Father Kleist has completed the Gospels, Father Lilly and Father Unger the rest of the New Testament. Theological censors have approved the translation, but the Episcopal Committee has hesitated to give its ultimate approval.

*Applications for Active Membership:* Father Lilly presented the report of the Committee on Credentials which recommended the following Candidates:

The Reverend Alfred Gendreau, S.S., S.T.D.

The Reverend Michael Collins, O.S.B.

The Reverend Rosaire Bellemare, O.M.I.

The Reverend John P. Murray, C.M.

It was regularly moved, seconded, and adopted that these recommendations of the Committee on Credentials be accepted.

*Confraternity Pilgrimage to Rome:* Father Lilly reported that Bishop O'Hara invited the Association to send a representative with the Confraternity. Father Edward H. Peters, Superior of the Paulists in Rome, is to be our representative and, at the behest of Bishop O'Hara, he will present to the Holy Father, on behalf of the Association, all our publications properly bound. Father Lilly closed his report with a mention of his retirement from office and an expression of his sincere appreciation for the generous cooperation of the members of the Association. Father Hartdegen moved that the Association should make an expression of our profound and sincere thanks to Father Lilly for his generous and magnificent work in the interest of the Association. The motion was approved by the acclaim of all the members.

It was moved, seconded, and approved that a committee be appointed to study the feasibility of undertaking the publication of a Biblical Dictionary. A motion made by Father Patrick Temple was seconded and approved that the Association express its thanks to the President, Father Patrick Cummins, and to the Officers who assisted him in the past year and for the success of the Eleventh General Meeting.

The designation of the place for next year's meeting was left to a Committee to be appointed by the new President, Father Cerny.

The Presidential Address, entitled *Semantic Terminology*, was delivered by the Very Reverend Patrick Cummins, O.S.B. Father Cummins pointed out the confusion which results from the loose terminology in reference to the senses of Sacred Scripture. He cited fifteen terms which are used without a uniform and fixed acceptation: viz., obvious; primaefacial; historical; prophetic; theological; consequent; figurative; typical; messianic; allegori-

cal; spiritual; mystic; liturgical; compenetrative; plenior. He concluded that agreement in terminology is the indispensable condition of free and unhampered progress by discussion.

The Eleventh General Meeting closed with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament in the Seminary Chapel.

The following active members were present at the Eleventh General Meeting:

Bellemare, Rosaire	LeHoullier, Alban
Benson, Alphonsus	Lilly, Joseph L.
Botz, Pascal	Louis, Conrad
Bourke, Myles	Magee, Joseph N.
Braun, Wendelin M.	Mallon, Vincent
Burnet, Achille	Mangan, Edward
Cerny, Edward A.	McCool, Francis J.
Coleman, J. E.	McEvoy, John A.
Coleran, James	McGlinchey, J. M.
Collins, John J.	McGlynn, F. H.
Cormier, Henri	Murphy, Roland
Cotter, A. C.	Murray, C. M.
Crump, F. J.	Murray, John J.
Cummins, Patrick	O'Donnell, Joseph P.
De Guglielmo, Antonine	Olinger, Eberhard
Denzer, George	Ouellette, P. L.
DeVine, C. F.	Pickar, Charles
Dobell, Richard J.	Piassmann, Norbert
Donnelly, P.	Polette, Ernest
Donovan, Victor J.	Rowan, John F.
Dyson, R. A.	Siegman, Edward F.
Fournelle, Geron	Skehan, Patrick
Gaspar, Joseph W.	Sloane, Charles O'Conor
Gruenthaner, Michael J.	Stapleton, M. P.
Hartdegen, Stephen	Steinmueller, John E.
Hartman, Louis	Sullivan, Mother Kathryn
Heidt, William	Temple, Patrick
Heupler, Charles	Unger, Dominic J.
Jensen, John A.	Weisengoff, John
Kiellner, Justin	Winzen, Damasus
Kronlage, Camillus	Zens, Claude P.
Lambert, James	