

## REPORT OF THE THIRTEENTH GENERAL MEETING

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The Thirteenth General Meeting of the Catholic Biblical Association was held at Kenrick Seminary, Saint Louis, Missouri, on August 22-24, 1950. The celebration of Holy Mass by His Excellency, the Most Reverend Joseph E. Ritter, S.T.D., Archbishop of St. Louis, formally opened the meeting. At 10:00 A.M., His Excellency presided at the first of the sessions held at the Seminary. After being introduced to the members of the Association by its President, the Very Reverend Joseph P. O'Donnell, His Excellency cordially welcomed them to the Archdiocese of St. Louis. He spoke at length of the hierarchy's appreciation of the labors of the Biblical Association in bringing the Scriptures to the people both by the new translations made by the members of the Association under the auspices of the hierarchy, and by the other publications and biblical studies that have been promoted by the Association.

In his presidential address, the Very Reverend Joseph P. O'Donnell, of Mount St. Mary's Seminary, stressed the need of the integration of doctrine with life through the Scriptures. He pointed to the need in the study of Sacred Scripture both of scientific study and of a spirit of faith. Neither of these can safely be dispensed with in the Catholic exegete. Without fervor and the spirit of faith, his scientific work will soon be without true and effective motivation. But the spirit of faith must itself be developed through a deeper knowledge resulting from tireless study to keep abreast of the developments in the varied fields of scriptural knowledge. As a means of implementing this need of deeper knowledge based on, and motivated by, faith, he called for summer school sessions and discussions for professors in which the results of the vast field of scriptural investigation might be brought within the grasp of the seminary professor, too preoccupied with a multitude of duties to make these investigations independently.

In the first paper, *The Basic Aspects of Patriarchal Religion*, Fr. John J. Dougherty, Archdiocese of Newark, presented a comprehensive digest of the results of his research in the preparation of his thesis for the doctorate in Sacred Scripture which he had defended before the Pontifical Biblical Institute. Father Dougherty showed how—contrary to the contention of most non-Catholic exegetes—from the scientific principles of Old Testament exegesis the strict ethical monotheism of the patriarchs is demonstrable. At the same time, he pointed out that our source material places limitations on the idea of the deity which we can prove to have

been had by the patriarchs. The time remaining for discussion was brief, and was taken up chiefly with a discussion of the demonstrable monotheism of Melchisedec.

The second session of the meeting was opened with the customary prayers at 3:00 P.M. Father Pierre Dulau, C.M., General Secretary of the Congregation of the Mission, was to have presented his paper at this session. However, since he had not as yet arrived in the United States, his paper was presented in an English translation made by the Rev. Joseph L. Lilly, C.M. In this paper, *The Pauline Privilege in 1 Cor. 7:12-16*, Father Dulau raised the question of whether this text of First Corinthians actually refers to what we now know as the Pauline Privilege. He pointed out that the exegetical problem is quite independent of the certain authority of the Church to grant the Pauline Privilege. After showing that neither the ordinary nor the extraordinary magisterium of the Church has put an authoritative interpretation on this text, Father Dulau examined both the context and the text itself, and drew the conclusion that the only teaching necessarily to be drawn from the text is that Paul grants that a married party may live apart from the other party when that other party will not live in peace in accordance with the requirements as laid down in the text. He conceded that there could have been an authoritative interpretation of the text by St. Paul himself, extending it to the breaking of the bond, but he denied that any scriptural authority for such an extension exists. In the discussion which followed, Father Lilly explained the interpretation of Father Dulau according to his understanding of it.

The second paper was an historical study entitled, *The Cajetan Controversy*. It was presented by the Rev. Thomas Aquinas Collins, O.P. Father Collins stated at the outset that it was not his intention to settle the controversy, much less to raise one. However, he gave a clear and forceful statement of the historical position of Cardinal Cajetan both as a theologian and as an exegete. He explained the novelty of the exegetical methods of Cajetan in his day, the storm of protest which they aroused particularly in the University of Paris, and the justification of his position given by Cajetan in his own day and by the modern authorities on the great Cardinal.

At 7:30 P.M., there were meetings of the Executive Board and of the various committees of the Association.

The third session of the meeting opened Wednesday, August 23, at 9:30 A.M. His Excellency, the Most Reverend Joseph M. Marling, C.P.P.S., Auxiliary Bishop of Kansas City, attended this and the fifth session as the representative of Bishop Edwin V. O'Hara, of Kansas City, whom other business kept from attending. Father Roderick A. Mackenzie,

S.J., presented an analysis of his dissertation for the doctorate in Sacred Scripture, *The Forms of Israelite Law*. Father Mackenzie's discussion confined itself to the literary forms of the legal sections of the Old Testament without direct reference to the content of the laws themselves. He pointed out the nature of the Mosaic origin of the laws of the Old Testament, and showed that even those which represent later accretions can be properly called and understood as Mosaic Laws. He analyzed the types of laws, and surveyed briefly the legal customs and forms found in the Fertile Crescent. Against this background, he showed the existence and origin of various types of casuistic and apodictic law in the Pentateuch and their relationship to Moses as the lawgiver by excellence in Israel. The general discussion further clarified the nature of the Mosaic origin of those laws which find their prototype in the existing customs of the day or in later application of the principles of Mosaic law in the period of the kings and prophets.

In his paper, *Transitions in the Canticle of Canticles*, Father Patrick W. Skehan of the Catholic University presented to the members a tentative final draft of the new translation of the Canticle of Canticles. He discussed the problem of the determination of the speakers, and the reasons for the choice made in the new translation. The supposition of a playful tone and mood in several verses, he indicated, brings greater unity to the whole composition. In several of the more difficult passages, he explained the critical work that is presupposed in the present translation.

The fourth session was open to the public. It was held in the auditorium of Saint Louis University at 2:00 P.M. His Excellency, Archbishop Ritter, presided. In addition to the members of the Association, a great number of religious and laity attended this session. In the opening, paper, *The Sacred Scriptures and the Spiritual Life*, the Very Reverend Gilmore H. Guyot, C.M., showed with numerous illustrations from persons of both the Old and the New Testaments the manner in which a serious reading of the Scriptures will form a true Christian life in the soul of the sincere follower of Christ. The Reverend Conrad Louis, O.S.B., took up more specifically the use of the Gospels in the spiritual life; his paper was entitled, *The Gospels and the Spiritual Life*. Fr. Louis devoted his discussion chiefly to the use of the Gospels in the Mass and the manner in which each of them will make the Sacrifice of the Mass more fruitful of a Catholic life.

Wednesday evening was reserved for relaxation. Most of the members of the Association took the opportunity to attend a performance of the St. Louis Municipal Opera.

The fifth session opened at 9:30 A.M., August 24, at Kenrick Seminary.

The first paper was presented by the Rev. Wm. T. Barry, C.S.S.R. The title was *The "Spirit of God" in Gen. 1:2*. Actually, however, as Fr. Barry pointed out, the scope of his discussion necessarily included the whole of the verse. Fr. Barry reviewed and criticized the translations of "the Spirit of God" as "a mighty wind," or as referring to the omnipotent and creative power of God. He advanced the interpretation of the phrase as meaning "the breath of God," the divine creative word or command, referring therefore to the whole of the description of the work of the hexaemeron to follow. He discussed the meaning of the root *r h ph* and concluded both from the ancient versions and from cognate Semitic languages that it should be so translated as to convey the idea of "going forth now in one direction, now in another." Finally, he cited numerous passages from later books of the Old Testament which clearly refer to this verse of Genesis and in which the authors parallel the expression of Genesis with expressions conveying the idea of the creative word or command.

The second paper of this session, *David, Author or Object of Ps. 110 (Dixit Dominus)?*, was presented by Father André Legault, C.S.C. Father Legault reviewed the status of the interpretation of this Psalm among Catholics and the binding force of the decree of the Biblical Commission regarding its Davidic authorship. He then discussed the historic reasons for seeing David, the type of the Messiah, as the object of this Psalm in its original form with a later edition in the light of further pre-Christian Messianic revelation as personally and directly Messianic.

The final session, called to order at 1:30 P.M., was devoted to the business of the Association. The Treasurer, the Very Rev. John E. Steinmueller, Diocese of Brooklyn, presented a detailed report of the financial condition of the Association; his report was approved and adopted by a unanimous vote.

Father Louis E. Hartman, C.S.S.R., reported on the Association's efforts to promote a general interest in the reading and study of the Scriptures. Biblical Sunday of 1950, sponsored by the Association in conjunction with the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, was observed in six archdioceses and seventeen dioceses, Father Hartman reported. The Association furnished material for a sermon on the Bible, a copy of suggested readings from the New Testament for the Lenten season, and a pamphlet written by the General Secretary. More than 9,000 copies of these three items were distributed. In addition to the observance of Biblical Sunday on Septuagesima Sunday, the Association through its members was actively carrying on series of lectures for the laity in several cities, notably in Boston, Mass., and Xavier, Kansas.

Reporting on membership in the Association and subscriptions to the QUARTERLY, Father Hartman pointed to a constant growth in the number of subscribers to the QUARTERLY, and to a sustained number of Active and Associate Members of the Association. There was, however, a notable and encouraging increase in membership among the hierarchy; during the year of 1950, two Archbishops and fourteen Bishops joined the Association as Associate Members.

As chairman of the Committee on Credentials, Father Hartman then explained the qualifications of the following candidates for Active Membership, and proposed their election to Active Membership by the Association:

The Rev. Roderick A. F. Mackenzie, S.J.  
The Rev. Edward M. Gallagher, Archdiocese of Santa Fe  
The Rev. Philip G. Roets, C.S.S.R.  
The Rev. James J. Griffin, S.J.  
The Rev. J. F. McDonnell, O.P.  
The Rev. Paul O'Connell, Archdiocese of Chicago.

By unanimous vote, these candidates were elected to Active Membership.

Father Michael J. Gruenthaner, S.J., reported on the BIBLICAL QUARTERLY as its editor-in-chief. He thanked the members for their valued co-operation, and encouraged them to continue and expand their literary efforts.

Father George Denzer, Diocese of Brooklyn, reported on the Summer Biblical Institutes sponsored by the Association. He detailed the preparations made for these Institutes, explained what successes had been achieved in previous years, and noted the co-operation that had been given on the part of the chanceries contacted. Only one Institute had been arranged for the present summer of 1950, to be held in St. Louis during the week following the General Meeting. The lecturers were to be: Father Siegman, C.P.P.S., Father McKenzie, S.J., and Father Lilly, C.M.

Father Stephen Hartdegen, O.F.M., though unable to attend the Meeting, was able to send a report on the translation of the Old Testament. The report was read by Father Hartman. Father Hartdegen noted the publication of the Book of Genesis in August, 1948, and of the Book of Psalms with the canticles of the Roman Breviary on July 26, 1950. He reported the Book of Exodus to be in the hands of the publisher, with the Book of Leviticus ready for publication. Numbers and Deuteronomy would be ready by the end of the current calendar year. All the didactic books, save Ecclesiasticus, have been edited, though not yet in their final form. So too, Josue and the Books of Kings.

Mother Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J., of Manhattanville College of the

Sacred Heart, reported in absentia as the Chairman of the Visual Aid Committee. Slides have been provided for six lectures during the past year, with an estimated audience of two hundred and fifty persons. Plans are being made for the purchase of additional slides on archeological matters, and of colored films of Palestine for which the Association would provide a suitable sound track.

Under the heading of new business, Fr. Matthew Stapleton, of the Archdiocese of Boston, relayed an invitation extended to the members of the Association by Professor Bruce Metzger of Princeton Theological Seminary. Professor Metzger would welcome the participation of members of the Association in the preparation of a new critical edition of the text of the New Testament being made by the Library of Congress under the direction of the University of Chicago. Father Paul O'Connell, of the Archdiocese of Chicago, explained his work in preparing a new family Bible. At the suggestion of Bishop O'Hara of Kansas City, the Association decided to hold its fourteenth general meeting in Chicago in conjunction with the National Congress of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine to be held there from Nov. 7 to 11, 1951.

The following new officers, nominated by the Committee on Nominations, were elected unanimously:

*President:* the Very Rev. G. H. Guyot, C.M.

*Vice-president:* the Rev. Joseph S. Considine, O.P.

*General Secretary:* the Rev. Louis Hartman, C.S.S.R.

*Asst. Gen. Secy.:* the Rev. Francis J. Crump, O.M.I.

*Recording Secretary:* the Rev. C. P. Zens, Archdiocese of Milwaukee

*Treasurer:* the Very Rev. J. E. Steinmueller, Diocese of Brooklyn

*Committee on Nominations:* the Very Rev. J. P. O'Donnell, Mount St. Mary's Seminary; the Rev. Edward A. Cerny, S.S.

The Active Members in attendance at the sessions of the thirteenth general meeting were:

Ahern, C.P., Barnabas  
 Barry, C.S.S.R., Wm.  
 Bushinski, C.P.P.S., L. A.  
 Cerny, S.S., Edward  
 Collins, O.P., Thomas  
 Considine, O.P., Joseph  
 Crump, O.M.I., Francis  
 Cummins, O.S.B., Patrick  
 Denzer, George  
 Dirksen, C.P.P.S., Aloys

Dobell, Richard  
 Dougherty, John  
 Gallagher, Edward  
 Griffith, C. F.  
 Gruenthaner, S.J., Michael  
 Guyot, C.M., Gilmore  
 Halas, O.F.M., Roman  
 Hartman, C.S.S.R., Louis  
 Heidt, O.S.B., William  
 Heupler, O.F.M.Cap., Charles

Kenneally, C.M., William	O'Connell, Paul
Legault, C.S.C., André	O'Donnell, Joseph
Lilly, C.M., Joseph	Olinger, O.S.B., Eberhard
Louis, O.S.B., Conrad	Pickar, O.S.A., Charles
Mackenzie, S.J., Roderick	Poirier, O.F.M., Leander
Mallon, M.M., Vincent	Resch, S.M., Peter
Martin, C.M., Daniel	Rooney, C.P., Gerard
Mercurio, C.P., Roger	Rouck, M. J.
Murray, C.M., John	Skehan, Patrick
McConnell, M.M., John	Smith, O.P., Alan
McEvoy, S.J., John	Stapleton, Matthew
McGough, O.C.D., Columban	Stawinski, B.
McGrath, O.S.B., Brendan	Steinmueller, John
McKenzie, S.J., John	Unger, O.F.M.Cap., Dominic
McNelis, Frank	Wieschemeyer, S.M., A.
O'Brien, Marcus	Zens, Claude