

REPORT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST GENERAL MEETING OF THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

The Twenty-first General Meeting of the Catholic Biblical Association of America was held under the patronage of the Most Reverend Joseph A. Burke, D.D., Bishop of Buffalo, on September 3-4, at Christ the King Seminary, Olean, New York, in conjunction with the centennial observance of St. Bonaventure University. Following the opening Mass and words of welcome by Rev. Callistus Smith, O.F.M., Vice-Rector of the Seminary, the formal meeting began at 10:00 A.M. with the address of Fr. Stephen J. Hartdegen, O.F.M., president of the CBA.

Presidential Address

The Reverend President developed the parallel between the Bible, *verbum inspiratum*, and Christ, *Verbum incarnatum*, suggested by a happy phrase of St. Bonaventure. Capital teachings of OT theology were traced to their full development and perfection in the Person and work of Christ. Such themes as God's freedom of choice, His covenants, the Chosen People, sin, punishment, repentance, redemption, and the Messianic Hope were shown to converge on Christ, the center of the Bible (cf. Col 1, 15-18).

"In the labyrinthine details of narrative, teaching, prophecy, poetry, drama and preaching found in the Bible," the speaker concluded, "the finger of God is discovered behind a network of secondary causes, pursuing a divinely conceived plan securely and infallibly despite all human vicissitudes, and the true center of the plan is Christ. The various truths revealed in the Bible are many colors which on analysis are found to be reflections of but one color, one living truth, the Word of God, begotten of God the Father from all eternity, and in time born of the Virgin Mary."

Wednesday Sessions — Papers and Discussion

Rev. Richard G. Philbin, S.J., read the first paper, entitled "Some Modern Attitudes towards Hermeneutics." The speaker presented a critique of contemporary Protestant trends in biblical interpretation centered on the question of the value of form-criticism. He mentioned in particular the work of K. Stendahl, H. G. Wood, J. Jeremias, V. Taylor and R. R. Niebuhr. In answer to questions proposed by Frs. Carroll Stuhlmueller, C.P., and Daniel J. O'Hanlon, S.J., Fr. Philbin pointed out the necessity of a clear vision of the proper roles of biblical criticism and dogmatic theology in establishing faith in the historical Christ. He likened the attitude of some present-day critics to that of the Arians in this respect. Fr. Thomas Aquinas Collins, O.P., asked whether some Protestant critics such as Bultmann, do not state that the original testimony to Christ was ordered towards the faith of the early Church, and the latter is what is transmitted. Fr. Philbin pointed out that the critics mentioned in his paper are divided precisely on that point. He also stated, in reply to the question of

Fr. Martin Schoenberg, O.S.C., that these Protestant writers have taken little or no notice of Catholic positions in hermeneutics.

The morning session was concluded with an unscheduled but most welcome and interesting report on Qumrân by Fr. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., 1957-58 Fellow of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem and member of the international Dead Sea Scrolls team. Fr. Fitzmyer gave an account of the work done on the scrolls in the past year, including his own work of preparing the concordance of the scrolls and outlining future plans of the scrolls team. He then presented and commented on a fine set of slides of Fr. de Vaux's recent archeological campaign at 'Ain Feshkha, the results of which establish further connections with Khirbet Qumrân itself.

In the afternoon session of September 3, Fr. Carroll Stuhlmueller, C.P., read a paper on the "Development of the Old Testament Theology of Creation," in which he examined the contribution of Second Isaias to this theology. The interesting discussion which followed centered upon the question of whether Second Isaias' theology of creation might have exercised influence upon the theology of the new creation in St. Paul and St. John through the Wisdom literature. Fr. Richard Kugelman, C.P., introduced the question, and Fr. David M. Stanley, S.J., suggested that there were echoes of Second Isaias in 2 Cor 5, for example, and in Ap, but that in the Johannine Prologue in particular the notion of creation was much less prominent than that of covenant. Fr. Stuhlmueller remarked that the idea of creation in the Wisdom literature was less that of a salvation-event than a reflection on the first act of creation, but he agreed with Fr. Roderick A. F. MacKenzie, S.J., that there is a connection between creation and historical salvation through Wisdom itself, which was conceived as the agent of both. In answer to further questions of Frs. Stanley and MacKenzie, the speaker gave additional precisions regarding the influence of eschatology on the creation doctrine of Second Isaias and also regarding the evolution of the meaning of *bara'* in the OT.

In the second paper of the afternoon, Fr. John J. McGovern, M.M., spoke on "The Old Testament Concept of Death," suggesting a revision of the traditionally imagined Hebrew cosmography and a new understanding of the phrase "the waters of death." Fr. Louis F. Hartman, C.Ss.R., opened the discussion with a commendation of the speaker's proposal that "waters under the earth" might often better be rendered "waters below (the level of) the earth," but objected that since the Hebrew picture of the world was based on appearances, the Hebrews really believed that the existence of springs indicated the presence of water under the earth. Both Fr. Hartman and Fr. McGovern agreed that there was evidence for either interpretation. Fr. John J. O'Rourke suggested that "surging waters of death" might be a better rendering than "breakers of death," because of the English connotation of the sea in the latter expression. Fr. Stuhlmueller felt that the evidence of Ps 22 was neutral; he agreed with Fr. Hartman that clashing ideas among the Hebrews were not uncommon. Fr. McGovern reiterated his position with the added evidence of the phrase "escaping up from Sheol" in the Pss, which refers most plausibly to being

saved from the perils of this world. Fr. Marcian Strange, O.S.B., raised the question of whether the idea of death offered would influence the interpretation of later resurrection miracles; Fr. McGovern stated that he believed the idea of death to have been fully developed in these later accounts.

In the final paper of the afternoon, "Relation between the Extermination Wars of the Old Testament and the Will of Yahweh," Fr. Marcian Strange, O.S.B., limited his topic to the cases of *herem* in Josue and proposed a solution of the problem through consideration of the permissive will of God for His own purposes, expressed in the literary form of a divine command. In the lively discussion which followed, Fr. Mark Kennedy, O.F.M., though admitting that the Hebrew writers often neglected secondary causality in their accounts, objected that the explanation presented tended to make Josue responsible for the slaughters, whereas Josue acted only by divine command. The speaker replied that the nature of this command demanded further investigation. Fr. Brendan McGrath, O.S.B., asked whether Sir 46, with its encomium of Josue's military prowess, did not present a formidable difficulty to the theory. Fr. Strange answered that he did not think one need extend Ben Sira's commendation to everything that Josue did in the course of his campaigns. Fr. J. E. Lussier, S.S.S., suggested that God may have commanded Josue to conquer according to the accustomed practice of conquest, which included the *herem*. The speaker objected to this view that it would involve a fluctuating standard of morality. The Wednesday sessions closed with a prayer, and the evening was given over to committee meetings and an enjoyable social program.

Thursday Sessions — Business Meeting and Papers

On Sept. 4 a Mass for the deceased members of the CBA was celebrated by the President of the Association, Fr. Stephen J. Hartdegen, O.F.M. The morning session was then devoted to a business meeting and the paper by Fr. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J. on "The Aramaic Suzerainty Treaty from Sefirē in the Museum of Beirut."

The report of the treasurer, Fr. Francis J. Crump, O.M.I. was read and accepted. A grant of \$200.00 was approved for the International Meeting of OT scholars, subject to certain conditions which the secretary would investigate. Msgr. John E. Steinmueller gave the report of the trustees on the disposition of funds, and the report was approved and accepted. In the absence of the retiring editor, Fr. Edward F. Siegman, C.P.P.S., his written report was accepted, and details concerning the future of the *CBQ* were left to the incoming editor and the editorial board.

Fr. Gilmore H. Guyot, C.M., who was unable to be present, had written a letter suggesting that a committee be formed to prepare well in advance the program for the annual meeting. Suggestions of Fr. R. Kugelman, C.P., Fr. T. A. Collins, O.P., and Fr. J. T. Curran, S.J., led to the approval of a resolution that the incoming President should appoint a temporary committee to arrange the program for the next meeting and appoint a permanent committee, with representatives from various parts of the country, to make plans for future

meetings. The permanent committee, meeting at the time of the convention, would draw up the program for the following convention.

Mother Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J., gave the report for the committee on visual aids. She stated that the widow of the photographer Rad of Jerusalem informed her that she had 1287 negatives available which could be bought for ten dollars a piece. At present Mother did not think it advisable to continue negotiations. Her report was approved and accepted.

Fr. James A. Fischer, C.M., chairman of the Committee on Pamphlets, reported that during the past year he had received a completed manuscript for the prophet Amos. There are now five pamphlets ready for publication, and there is hope that one of them will appear soon.

In the promotion of Biblical Week Fr. T. A. Collins, O.P., reported that he had obtained good cooperation from the members of the association, and thanked them particularly for the sermons which they had sent him. Last year 21,000 kits were distributed at a cost of \$2,457.16, an expense defrayed by contributions from several publishers and by the CBA.

On the translation of the OT Fr. Hartdegen reported that the text of the Prophets has been sent to the publishers and volume 4 of the OT should appear next year.

Fr. Gerald T. Kennedy, O.M.I., presented the following names which were approved by the Committee on Credentials, and the association voted to accept them for membership: Rev. Fathers Anthony Bua, P.S.S.C., Staten Island, N.Y.; Thomas W. Buckley, Boston, Mass.; Charles Clement, Ottawa, Canada; Paul Couture, S.S.E., Burlington, Vt.; Alexander A. DiLella, O.F.M., Washington, D.C.; Sister M. Rose Eileen, C.S.C., Washington, D.C.; Rev. Fathers Clement Englert, C.Ss.R., New York City; Charles Homer Giblin, S.J., West Baden Springs, Ind.; Alfred Lacomara, C.P., Washington, D.C.; Ignatius Hunt, O.S.B., Conception, Mo.; Brother C. Luke, F.S.C., New York City; Rev. Fathers Daniel Lupton, Chicago, Ill.; M. Dominique Mailhoit, O.P., Ottawa, Canada; Sylvester Makarewicz, O.F.M., Chicago, Ill.; Matthew Miceli, C.S.C., Notre Dame, Ind.; Herman Mueller, S.V.D., Bay St. Louis, Miss.; Francis X. Murphy, C.Ss.R., Brooklyn, N.Y.; Claude Peifer, O.S.B., Peru, Ill.; Richard G. Philbin, S.J., Weston, Mass.; Jerome Rausch, O.S.C., Fort Wayne, Ind.; Placidus Riley, O.S.B., Manchester, N.H.; Ernest Schneider, Salt Lake City, Utah; Francis Seper, M.S.C., Shelby, Ohio; James C. Turro, Darlington, N.J.; and James Visker, O.P., Catano, Puerto Rico.

The following officers presented by Msgr. Matthew P. Stapleton, chairman of the Nominating Committee, were elected unanimously by the members.

Pres., Rev. Brendan McGrath, O.S.B.; *Vice-Pres.*, Mother Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J.; *Exec. Sec.*, Rev. Louis F. Hartman, C.Ss.R.; *Treas.*, Very Rev. Francis J. Crump, O.M.I.; *Editor-in-chief CBQ*, Rev. Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm.; *Book Review Editor*, Rev. F. Bruce Vawter, C.M.; *Publishing Editor*, Very Rev. Msgr. Francis S. Rossiter; *New Associate Editors*, Rev. Thomas Barrosse, C.S.C., Rev. Robert T. Siebeneck, C.P.P.S., and Rev. Christian P. Ceroke, O. Carm.; *Chairman of Board of Trustees*, Msgr. John E. Steinmueller; *Con-*

sultor, Rev. Edward A. Cerny, S.S.; *Member of Committee on Credentials*, Rev. Daniel F. Ford, O.F.M.; *Member of Committee on Nominations*, Rev. John J. Mahoney, O.P.; *Committee on Visual Aids*, Mother Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J.; *Committee on Pamphlets*, Rev. James A. Fischer, C.M.; *Committee on Catholic Bible Week*, Rev. Joseph E. Fallon, O.P.

Under the heading of new business, at the suggestion of Fr. Brendan McGrath, it was agreed that the association should defray expenses of mailing notices, etc., which might be entailed in arranging regional meetings. Much interest was shown in the promotion of such meetings, and Fr. Stephen Hart-*degen* suggested that a constitution be drawn up for these local groups. After some discussion a motion was made and approved that a committee prepare an amendment to the by-laws which would allow the drawing up of constitutions for the regional groups.

Msgr. M. P. Stapleton moved that the Executive Secretary be empowered to write to the proper authority in Washington in the name of the association concerning the suggestion made by Fr. Robert North, S.J., in *CBQ* 20 ('58) 358-359. The motion was approved. The following resolutions were also unanimously approved: condolence to the community of the Trinitarian Fathers on the loss of their (and our) beloved Fr. Alphonsus Benson, M.S.Ss.T.; congratulations to Mother Kathryn Sullivan upon the honor recently conferred upon her by the Biblical Commission; thanks to Fr. Siegman for his years of devoted and distinguished service as editor of *CBQ*; heartfelt thanks to the Rector and Faculty of St. Bonaventure's University and Christ the King Seminary, and particularly to Fr. Thomas B. Plassmann, O.F.M., seminary Rector, for the excellent hospitality shown to all the members of the CBA.

Final Papers and Discussion

In the afternoon session Fr. Roger J. Mercurio, C.P., gave an interesting paper on "A Baptismal Motif in the Gospel Narratives of the Burial of Jesus." Fr. Roger Balducelli, O.S.F.S., in the question period asked what was the basic reason for connecting baptism with the burial before St. Paul's time. The speaker conceded that authors dispute whether St. Paul first united the two concepts or whether the ideas were previously connected. At any rate St. Luke and St. Mark could have been familiar with the Pauline teaching and have been influenced by it. Fr. J. T. Curran, S.J., observed that in a recent article J. Kürzinger regarded *typos didachēs* of Rom 6 as a reference to the credal formula of the early Church, and that 1 Cor 15 reflected that formula. Then Fr. Curran asked why John did not give an explicit reference to baptism, seeing that express references to the sacrament were then current, as is clear from Paul. Fr. Mercurio's reply was that other references in John are sacramental, and the mention of Nicodemus at the burial recalls the teaching on baptism given to him. The reference, however, is admittedly only indirect and by allusion. As an additional point Fr. D. M. Stanley, S.J., mentioned that an allusion to incorruption (baptism giving eternal life) could be found in the body wrapped in spices, a Jewish method of avoiding corruption, and in the

new tomb. Furthermore in the burial there could be a reference to the Jonas theme, for the prophet not only was a sign of the resurrection, but he gave a sign, i.e., *metanoia*, which is also a baptismal theme in 1 Pt.

In the second paper of the afternoon session Fr. John J. O'Rourke summarized the theories concerning the *sensus plenior*. He held that one cannot solve the problem merely by the concept of the human writer as an instrument, and he insisted that the words could not contain two formally diverse concepts. In the discussion Fr. Schoenberg, O.S.C., asked the speaker for a definition of the *sensus plenior*, which then was given as *a deeper understanding on our part than the original writer had of the terms he used*. To Fr. Balducelli's objection that if the meaning is not understood by the human author, then one has a double literal sense, the speaker answered that even in secular writings, e.g., Shakespeare, we today can see meanings in his words which he did not then recognize but which he would have admitted were in his writings. To this explanation Fr. Balducelli objected that then one has two disparate concepts, that the later development of thought is due to a second or third author, but Fr. O'Rourke maintained that the clarification could be of what is implicit in the original and therefore formally contained in the sense of the original writer.

Fr. Roderick A. F. MacKenzie's paper on "The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Patriarchs" formed a fitting close for the convention program. In answer to a question from Fr. Stuhlmueller, C.P., the speaker stated that the LXX author in his list had reduced the ages for the successive patriarchs, thus indicating that life declines when man departs from God. On the other hand, the LXX writer sometimes added hundreds to the ages of persons as an apologetic against the Egyptian priests who boasted of the great ages of their kings. Attention was called to the significance of the number 365—the solar year—the age of Henoch, signifying perfection. Also one may observe that 365 years elapse from Arphachsad [Gen 11,12] to Abraham [Gen 12,4], which indicates that with Abraham a new age begins. Fr. Neil McEleney, C.S.P., asked whether there was any connection between the number 365 and Qumrân's calendar of 364 days, and the answer was that none was apparent. In conclusion Fr. Hartman, C.Ss.R., called attention to the pioneer work done by the late G. E. Closen, S.J., in the study of biblical number symbolism.

Centenary Dinner

As a fitting climax to their deliberations, members of the CBA participated in a Centenary Dinner and saw Very Rev. Brian Lhota, O.F.M., president of St. Bonaventure University, award citations "in recognition of outstanding contributions to Catholic biblical scholarship" to the following: Rt. Rev. Matthew P. Stapleton, Vice-Rector (and since then, Rector), St. John's Seminary, Brighton; Very Rev. Patrick W. Skehan, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. (*in absentia*: Msgr. Skehan is presently in Jerusalem editing the Dead Sea Scrolls); Rev. Michael J. Gruenthaner, S.J., St. Mary's College, Kansas (*in absentia*); Rev. Louis F. Hartman, C.Ss.R., Executive Secretary,

CBA, Catholic University, Washington, D.C.; Rev. Stephen J. Hartdegen, O.F.M., retiring President, CBA, Holy Name College, Washington, D.C.; Rev. Edward F. Siegman, C.P.P.S., retiring Editor, *CBQ*, Catholic University, Washington, D.C. (*in absentia*); and Very Rev. Thomas B. Plassmann, O.F.M., Rector, Christ the King Seminary, Olean, N.Y. "Father Tom" Plassmann, second oldest active member and former President (1941-42) of the CBA, delighted all by his wit and reminiscences, and edified all by his courage and indomitable spirit. The Latin verses on the printed menu were penned by him from his hospital bed, and the conclusion of his commentary read: *Tandem si quidquid deficit, In mensa vel in sala, Supplebit "sensus plenior," Qui cuncta sanat mala.*

Those who were in attendance were as follows:

Balducelli, Roger, O.S.F.S.	Heupler, Charles G., O.F.M.Cap.
Barrosse, Thomas, C.S.C.	Huesman, John E., S.J.
Blatz, P., O.M.I.	Hunt, Ignatius, O.S.B.
Brennan, Joseph P.	Kennedy, Gerald T., O.M.I.
Bryant, Thomas J., S.J.	Kennedy, Mark, O.F.M.
Bua, Anthony	King, Philip J.
Buckley, Thomas W.	Kirk, Cassian, O.F.M.
Bukovsky, John, S.V.D.	Kugelman, Richard, C.P.
Bushinski, Leonard A., C.S.Sp.	Lacamara, Alfred, C.P.
Cerny, Edward A., S.S.	Leen, Arthur E.
Ceroke, Christian P., O.Carm.	Leonard, Raymond S.
Collins, John J., S.J.	Loveley, Edward M., S.J.
Collins, Thomas Aquinas, O.P.	Ludwig, James
Considine, Joseph S., O.P.	Lussier, Joseph E., S.S.S.
Crowley, Edward J., C.Ss.R.	MacKenzie, Roderick A. F., S.J.
Crump, Very Rev. Francis J., O.M.I.	MacRae, Rev. Mr. George W., S.J.
Curran, John T., S.J.	Mahoney, John J., O.P.
Dannemiller, Joseph L., S.S.	Mallon, Vincent, M.M.
Davis, James J., O.P.	Mattingly, John F., S.S.
Denzer, George A.	McCloskey, Kevin, C.P.
De Pinto, Basil, O.S.B.	McDonnell, Kilian, O.S.B.
Donovan, Victor J., C.P.	McEleney, Neil J., C.S.P.
Dumm, Demetrius R., O.S.B.	McGovern, John J., M.M.
Ellis, Peter, C.Ss.R.	McGrath, Brendan, O.S.B.
Englert, Clement, C.Ss.R.	McKenzie, John L., S.J.
Fallon, Joseph E., O.P.	Mercurio, Roger J., C.P.
Fitzmyer, Joseph A., S.J.	Morgan, Mother Josephine, R.S.C.J.
Ford, Daniel J., O.F.M.	Moriarty, Frederick L., S.J.
Forestell, James T., C.S.B.	Mueller, Herman, S.V.D.
Fournelle, Geron G., O.F.M.	O'Brien, Marcus
Grispino, Joseph A., S.M.	O'Hanlon, Daniel J., S.J.
Hartdegen, Stephen J., O.F.M.	O'Keefe, Vincent, S.J.
Hartman, Louis F., C.Ss.R.	Olinger, Eberhard, O.S.B.
Heidt, William G., O.S.B.	Orlett, Raymond

O'Rourke, John J.	Seper, Francis, M.S.C.
Ouellete, Lucien, C.S.B.	Siebeneck, Robert T., C.P.P.S.
Petru, Francis A., S.J.	Sloyan, Gerard S.
Philbin, Richard G., S.J.	Sorensen, Howard J., O.M.I.
Pierce, Justin A., S.D.S.	Stanley, David M., S.J.
Plassmann, Very Rev. Thomas B., O.F.M.	Stapleton, Rt. Rev. Matthew P.
Rausch, Jerome, O.S.C.	Steinmueller, Rt. Rev. John E.
Riley, Placidus, O.S.B.	Strange, Marcian, O.S.B.
Rossiter, Very Rev. Francis S.	StuhlmueLLer, Carroll, C.P.
Rowe, Stephen, O.F.M.Cap.	Sullivan, Mother Kathryn, R.S.C.J.
Rybinski, Joseph F.	Tkacik, Arnold, O.S.B.
Schroeder, Francis J., S.S.J.	Winzen, Damasus, O.S.B.
Schoenberg, Martin W., O.S.C.	

The Committee on Local Arrangements consisted of Rev. Malachy Wall, O.F.M., general chairman of the St. Bonaventure University Centenary, Rev. Daniel F. Ford, O.F.M., and Rev. Bede Houston, O.F.M.

JOHN J. COLLINS, S.J.

GEORGE W. MACRAE, S.J.

Recording Secretaries