

REPORT OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH GENERAL MEETING OF THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Cathedral College of the Immaculate Conception, Douglaston, N.Y., hosted the 36th General Meeting of the CBA, in session from Monday, August 20, through Thursday, August 23. Rev. Thomas J. Gradilone, President of Cathedral College, opened the convention with warm words of welcome. Richard Kugelman, C.P., of St. John's University, delivered the Presidential Address, "Son of Man Theology: Some Questions." Father Kugelman's summary of his address is given herewith, along with the summaries of the responses by Walter Wifall, and James Reese, O.S.F.S. of St. John's University.

Address

Did Jesus identify himself with the Son of Man? and how? An examination of American scholarship is that of H. E. Tödt, *The Son of Man in the Synopsensus* in answering this question. But it is my impression that the in-position of American scholarship is that of H.E. Tödt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition*. Tödt agrees with Bultmann and with his own master G. Bornkamm that Jesus never identified himself with the Son of Man, but that he did appeal to the apocalyptic Son of Man as the guarantor of his mission. The texts considered conclusive proof for this position are Lk 12:8f. and Mk 8:38. For Tödt the identification of Jesus with the Son of Man is due exclusively to the early Palestinian church. Consequently Tödt considers unauthentic all Son-of-Man sayings which refer to Jesus' ministry and sufferings. Among the apocalyptic sayings he accepts as genuine only those which, without any reference or allusion to Scripture, refer to the Son of Man as an eschatological figure distinct from Jesus. Vielhauer's contention that the apocalyptic Son of Man and the coming Kingdom are unrelated concepts in Jewish eschatology is also influencing the on-going discussion.

Immediately several questions arise. If apocalypticism, especially the apocalyptic figure of the Son of Man, exercised a commanding influence on the theology of the Palestinian Church, could we not expect, and should we not presume, that it also influenced Jesus' reflections on and understanding of his mission? The fact that, with the exception of Acts 7:56, the Son-of-Man title occurs only in Jesus' sayings would seem to indicate a community remembrance of Jesus' use of the title as a self designation.

The burden of Jesus' preaching was the coming Kingdom. The Synoptic tradition attributes to Jesus the apocalyptic concepts and language of his contemporary Judaism. There is no question that this Jewish apocalypticism was indebted to the Book of Daniel. Dn 7:13f. associates the Son of Man with the eschatological kingdom. Therefore, could not Jesus, who proclaimed the coming of the Kingdom and saw the power of the Kingdom proleptically pres-

ent in his ministry, have spoken of himself in a similar proleptic manner as the expected Son of Man, the leader of the eschatological people of God?

The criterion of dissimilarity is valid and helpful in determining some of Jesus' teaching: what is unique in his teaching. But I am uneasy when this criterion is applied in so rigorous and negative a manner as to exclude all Jesus' sayings which contain concepts current in his contemporary Judaism and in the teaching of the primitive Christian community. Such a use of the criterion of dissimilarity severs Jesus' continuity with Judaism and the continuity of the early Christian community with Jesus. Such a use of the criterion of dissimilarity removes Jesus from the religious world of his people and of his disciples. The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation and the beginning of the community's theologizing. But it does not follow that there are no echoes of Jesus' teaching about himself in the community's christology. A very short time span separates Jesus' ministry from the early Christian community.

The Christ of the church's faith was always identified with the Jesus of history. We should then expect the early theologizing of the community to be related to the remembered teaching of Jesus. I am asking that we give due consideration in our study of the Son of Man theology to Jesus' continuity with his contemporary Judaism, and to the Christian community's link with Jesus. Perhaps we should begin with a presumption in favor of the probable genuineness of sayings found in both Q and the Marcan traditions. While recognizing the evident modifications by the community of many Son-of-Man sayings, I think that we should examine all these sayings individually with a mind open to the conclusion that they may contain a genuine expression of Jesus' thinking about his mission and about himself. A man of his day, Jesus could have employed the apocalyptic concepts current in his contemporary Judaism and, just as he spoke of the proleptic presence of the kingdom in his ministry, he could have designated himself, on occasion, in a similar proleptic manner as the Son of Man.

RICHARD KUGELMAN, C.P.

Response

My comments are based upon studies made by Brueggemann, Wolff, and Clements. Each of them has started with the "David Story" in Sam-Kgs to show that this document was the basis for the Yahwist's account in the present book of Gen. Thus, I would argue that the "son of man" in both Jewish apocalyptic and the NT has its roots—along with other concepts such as the "messiah" and the "servant"—in the royal pre-exilic traditions of the Davidic monarchy in Jerusalem. Instead of understanding the "son of man" as either a title for a heavenly figure or the personal expression of a shared humanity, I believe we should understand both meanings as originally applied to David and his family. Only with the fall of the monarchy and the exile did the "son of man" concept "disintegrate," finally to be "reintegrated" in a modified, apocalyptic form in late Judaism and the NT. Perhaps Jesus identified himself as the "son of man" much as the prophet Ezekiel had earlier adopted this

royal description for himself in the temporary absence of "David" and the "kingdom." This originally implicit royal description would then have become an explicit Christological title in early Christianity, when the resurrection established the identity of Jesus with "David" and the arrival of the "kingdom."

WALTER WIFALL

Response

Fr. Kugelman's comprehensive overview of recent literature on the Son of man theology is a challenge to reflect on methodology in studying early Christian literature. His paper prompts me to ask these further questions:

(1) Can we answer the question, "Did Jesus identify himself with the Son of man?" by a simple yes or no? Historical research points to the use of this phrase as a symbol with a function in the apocalyptic genre rather than as a clear concept. Although the term is rarely found, different traditions employ it for a variety of purposes. Usage in the canonical gospels is an interpretation in the light of the resurrection, a translation into a literary situation. Can we trace its trajectory back to the earthly Jesus?

(2) What methodology is involved in tracing this trajectory to prevent modern categories from doing violence to the ancient mentality? Is N. Perrin correct in concluding that, for Jesus, this was not a title but a call "to radical questioning," and shatters the very possibility of confining Jesus to human horizons? If so, the term brings us face to face with an important dimension of the self-consciousness of Jesus and should be linked to the valuable insights of recent parable research.

(3) We must further ask why Jesus chose to use this phrase. L. Audet recently warned against overemphasizing a purely apocalyptic view of Jesus. Perhaps the combining of the term Son of man with the figure of Jonah, the type of one exalted only after humiliation, provides a link between the community's use of the term after the resurrection and Jesus' self-witness. Fr. Kugelman's paper is a plea not to let our presuppositions curb research in this crucial area.

JAMES M. REESE, O.S.F.S.

Sessions on Tuesday, August 21

Two Task Forces were a new feature in this year's program; their aim was to provide those working in particular areas with an ideal forum to share the results of their research and receive informed feedback and criticism and to enable a larger circle of auditors to follow the discussion and development. William G. Thompson chaired the Task Force on "The Composition of the Gospel of Matthew," the core group of which included Joseph A. Comber, Lamar Cope, Douglas R. A. Hare, Daniel J. Harrington, Jack D. Kingsbury, John P. Meier, James M. Reese, and Donald Senior. The second Task Force addressed itself to "Apocalyptic Tradition." Richard J. Clifford was its moderator and the core

group was John J. Collins, John R. Donahue, Paul D. Hanson (not present), Joseph Jensen, John Kselman, Pheme Perkins, Kent H. Richards, Robert B. Wright, and Adela Yarbro. These Task Forces met simultaneously each morning, 9:00-10:45.

During the same period each morning, six Continuing Seminars were offered. The Seminar leaders and their respective topics were as follows: Richard J. Dillon, "Revival of Marcan Source Criticism"; J. Massingberd Ford, "Biblical Teaching Relevant to the Ordination of Women"; Edward Glynn, "The Theology of Matthew's Gospel"; Bruce J. Malina, C. Thomas Moore, and John J. Pilch, "Jewish Christianity"; Robert Polzin, "Structural Analysis of Biblical Texts"; and J. Mark Sheridan, "Disciples and Discipleship in the Synoptics."

The morning's general session consisted of a paper by Peter J. Kearney on "Creation and Liturgy" which presented the thesis that the seven speeches of God in Ex 25-34 were edited to correspond to the seven days of the Priestly creation account. Two responses followed: Richard J. Clifford spoke of a similar association of creation and cult in other Near Eastern texts; and James C. Plastaras discussed Gen 1 as an extended metaphor comparing creation to the setting up of a temple sanctuary.

The Most Rev. Francis Mugavero, Bishop of Brooklyn, was principal celebrant at the mid-day liturgy; in his homily he warmly welcomed the CBA members to the diocese, spoke with gratitude of the work of Scripture scholars and of its importance to the Church, and urged them to continue to speak out with courage even when they experience opposition in doing so.

The afternoon session was devoted to a program of half-hour Research Reports, each followed by a brief discussion, as follows: Walter R. Wifall, "David—Prototype of Israel's Future?"; J. Massingberd Ford, "Some Affinities Between the Lucan Infancy Narratives and the Revelation of John"; Thomas Buckley, "'The wrath of God revealed from heaven' (Rom 1:18ff.): Modification of a Traditional Polemic in the Light of Apocalyptic"; Kent H. Richards, "Teaching of the Bible in the Seminary"; James A. Fischer, "The Ultimate Why in Wisdom"; Irvin M. Arkin, "Hillel: An Influence in the Theological Structure of St. John's Gospel"; Jerome Kodell, "The Meaning of *logos* in Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20"; Sonya A. Quitslund, "The Concept of Woman in the Bible, Talmud, and Early Christian Literature"; Mitchell J. Dahood, "Northwest Semitic Notes on Genesis: A Review of Genesis in *NAB*"; William G. Most, "Pauline Focusing"; P. Joseph Cahill, "Biblical Mythology: Critical Reflections on Ricoeur's Hermeneutics"; Imre Mihalik, "The Man of God in Early Israel" and "Nomadenwanderungen" (silent film with German and French subtitles); Aloysius Fitzgerald, "Lam 2:18a: Yahweh, the Wall of Daughter Zion"; Bernard B. Scott, "Some Implications of Redaction Criticism for the Development of Christology"; Jerome D. Quinn, "The Pauline Canon of P 46"; and Richard J. Sklba, "The Notion of Hearing: Its Biblical Origins and Apocalyptic Dimensions."

Prompted by a Program Committee decision to provide a discussion of a pastoral topic in the open evening session, George T. Montague delivered a paper

entitled "Baptism in the Spirit and Speaking in Tongues: An Appraisal." Drawing upon his pastoral experience in the charismatic movement as well as his NT expertise, Fr. Montague surveyed recent scholarship on the biblical data regarding Spirit-baptism and glossolalia and then related this material to the neopentecostal use of the phrase "baptism in the Spirit." His conclusion concerning glossolalia was that it is essentially neither "foreign languages" nor "ecstatic speech" but a form of pre-conceptual prayer. (The full text of Fr. Montague's paper is scheduled to appear in the Winter 1973 issue of *Theology Digest*.) Martin Hopkins, the first respondent, elaborated on the importance of the charismatic emphasis on sacrament as sign. The second respondent, Francis Martin, affirmed the contemporary ability to integrate experience and biblical interpretation; and he offered further suggestions regarding the biblical references to baptism in the Spirit. This was followed by a brief period of questions and discussion.

Sessions on Wednesday, August 22

The Task Forces and Seminars continued.

At eleven o'clock, President Kugelman called the annual business meeting to order. James Clifton presented the Financial Report. The statement of the Board of Trustees concerning CBA assets was then given by its Chairman, Myles M. Bourke.

Joseph Jensen presented the Executive Secretary's report. He announced that the Executive Board had voted a \$500 subsidy to *Elenchus Bibliographicus* and \$750 to Bernardin Schneider's translation project, by way of support toward the education of a young Japanese Franciscan priest; grants of \$1500 plus air fare were awarded to Raymond E. Brown, CBA Visiting Professor to the Pontifical Biblical Institute, and to Charles Homer Giblin, CBA Visiting Professor to the École Biblique.

A close vote chose Loyola University in Chicago as the location of the 1974 meeting of the CBA. After some discussion, the dates August 19-22 were confirmed.

Speaking as delegate to the Council on the Study of Religion, Joseph Jensen announced that the financial arrangements proposed last year for CBA membership in the CSR had been accepted by the CSR Executive Committee; that a new society (the American Theological Library Association) had been admitted to CSR membership; that a new CSR publication named TOIL (an acronym for Teaching Opportunities Information Listing), designed to help both institutions and individuals in job placement, will soon be inaugurated; that the CSR had voted to purchase SBL's share of an IBM composer system for the executive office in Waterloo; and that the CSR *Bulletin* would come out in a new format beginning with the January 1974 issue.

George T. Montague, reporting as General Editor of *CBQ*, said that 65 articles were received last year, of which 22 were accepted, 34 rejected, and 9 still under review. He noted that approximately one half of the articles accepted came

from CBA members. Articles for the forthcoming Skehan Festschrift have already been commissioned. A recent citation analysis (sponsored by the American Theological Library Association) found that, of all periodicals analyzed, *CBQ* cited the greatest variety of sources and contained the fewest internal references—signs of healthy scholarship. Members interested in reviewing were invited to write to the Book Review Editor (Mark Sheridan), indicating their competencies and the languages, ancient and modern, they control. Those whose interests and competencies have shifted were asked to update this information. A new *CBQ* policy was announced: barring special difficulties of interpretation, quotations from scholars writing in other languages should ordinarily be done in English translation.

Reporting for the *CBQ* Monograph Series Editorial Board, Patrick W. Skehan noted that a switch from hot-type to photo-composition has resulted in a dramatic cut in costs. Three new manuscripts (two in NT and one in OT) are currently under consideration. CBA members were encouraged to submit manuscripts for evaluation.

George T. Montague, Chairman of the Committee on Nominations, proposed the following candidates: *President*: John E. Huesman; *Vice-President*: Francis S. Rossiter; *Treasurer*: James P. Clifton; *Consultors, '73-'75*: Richard J. Sklba and Kent H. Richards; *Executive Secretary*: Joseph Jensen; *Book Review Editor of CBQ*: Mark Sheridan; *Associate Editors of CBQ*: Aloysius Fitzgerald, Carroll Stuhlmueller, Robert J. Karris, and Elisabeth Fiorenza. The entire slate was elected by the members.

Speaking for the Committee on Credentials, Aloysius Fitzgerald proposed the following names:

For Active Membership: Prof. Paul J. Achtemeier, Rev. David K. Ashbeck, O.F.M.Cap., Sr. Elizabeth Bellefontaine, Rev. Lawrence E. Boadt, C.S.P., Rev. David Bossman, O.F.M., Rev. Juan Boudet, O.C.D., Rev. Pierre D. Bougie, S.S., Rev. Javier Colmenero Atienza, Rev. Keith R. Crim, Rev. Robert J. Daly, S.J., Dr. Frederick W. Danker, Rev. Jose Fernandez Lago, Dr. Frank S. Frick, Prof. Walter Harrelson, Rev. Edmund J. Hartmann, S.J., Dr. Walter L. Humphreys, Prof. Everett R. Kalin, Dr. Maurice S. Luker, Dr. Peter D. Miscall, Rev. Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., Rev. Michael M. Mulhall, O.Carm., Rev. Patrick J. O'Donnell, Dr. PHEME Perkins, Dr. John J. Pilch, Prof. Jimmy J. Roberts, Dr. Kenneth C. Russell, Rev. Donald P. Senior, C.P., Rev. Victor G. Sison, Rev. Edward Jan Theunissen, O.S.B., Dr. David L. Tiede, Rev. Vincent H. van Zutphen, O.S.A.

For Associate Membership: Sr. Mary Tarcisia Ball, O.S.F., Rev. Russell C. Becker, O.F.M., Rev. Don C. Benjamin, O.Carm., Rev. Mr. Gerald R. Blaszcak, S.J., Prof. Robert D. Branson, Sr. Mary T. Corbett, S.C., Rev. John Burke, O.P., Mr. John J. Delaney, Mr. Michael Dick, Rev. Jan O. Flaaten, Prof. Virgil R. Fry, Miss Maurya P. Horgan, Rev. A. Vanlier Hunter, Rev. Thomas R. Hurst, Mr. Paul M. Jurkowitz, Rev. Frederick J. Kelly, S.J., Rev. Francis K. Kumaki, Mr. Robert B. Lawton, S.J., Rev. James F. Leary, Rev. John J. Mc-

Donnell, C.M., Sr. Mary Timothy McHatten, O.P., Rev. Thomas P. Mallaghan, C.M., Rev. Elliott C. Maloney, O.S.B., Ms. Marylu Milano, Rev. Mr. Alan C. Mitchell, S.J., Sr. Nanette M. Navarre, O.S.U., Mr. Patrick V. Reid, Mr. & Mrs. Earl J. Richard, Mr. Dennis M. Sweetland, Ms. Adela L. Yarbrow.

Acceptance of these candidates was voted unanimously.

Reporting on Visiting Professorships, Carroll Stuhlmueller asked that interested members submit their requests to Edward J. Ciuba, William G. Thompson, or himself, and that such requests include a *curriculum vitae*, a list of recent publications, and a description of the courses they would like to teach.

Brendan McGrath, speaking for the Committee of Resolutions, proposed two resolutions. The first expressed thanks to Bishop Mugavero for his words of welcome, support, and encouragement; to Msgr. Jerome D. Quinn and the Program Committee; to Rev. Thomas J. Gradilone, Rev. Martin T. Geraghty, and the others at Cathedral College for the tireless efforts which made this pleasant and successful meeting possible; and to all those who contributed to the program. The second took the occasion of the proximate thirtieth anniversary of the promulgation of *Divino Afflante Spiritu* to reaffirm grateful devotion to the See of Peter and to reiterate their support for those who are being made the target of irresponsible attacks. (See the Executive Board's letter to the Bishops on the following pages for full text.) The resolutions were voted on separately; both passed unanimously.

Raymond E. Brown announced that the sales of *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (now in its eighth printing) have passed 50,000, and that the forthcoming 9th printing will bring it to 53,000. The editors request that members note and communicate any minor errors that might be corrected in the next printing.

The principal celebrant and homilist of the 12:30 Eucharist was Robert Karris.

The afternoon session was a preview of the forthcoming *Peter in the New Testament*—a collaborative study by an eleven-man ecumenical team and intended as background for discussion of the role of the papacy in the universal Church. Edited by Raymond E. Brown, Karl P. Donfried, and John Reumann, it is scheduled for late August 1973 publication in paperback by the Paulist Press. Fr. Brown sketched the background and progress of this cooperative study and reviewed the book's contents. Myles M. Bourke responded by elaborating his interpretation of Jesus' prayer for Simon's faith, an opinion stimulated by (but not included in) this study. And Dr. Donfried gave a further taste of the book by discussing, among other things, Mt 16 as a church-founding resurrection tradition.

In the evening session Neil J. McEleney, currently doing research in Jerusalem, presented a paper entitled "Conversion, Circumcision, and the Law." His research into first-century Judaism indicates that the commonly held distinction between God-fearers and full Jews was not then operative, that *phoboumenoi* and *sebomenoi* could refer to born Jews, that the proselytes of Acts were probably

full converts (distinguished only in that they were not born Jews), and that full membership in Judaism without circumcision was, in certain cases, possible, and a precedent for Paul's rejection of that rite. McEleney reviewed several NT passages in the light of his circumcision research—among them Eph 2:11ff., where he sees the death on the cross presented as the Gentile circumcision. Carroll Stuhlmueller's response was a discussion of passages from Deutero-Isaiah, which appear to view the Gentiles with uncommitted neutrality.

Sessions on Thursday, August 23

The Continuing Seminars and the Task Forces held their concluding meetings. The convention came to its formal closing with the 11:15 Eucharist, at which Jerome D. Quinn was the principal celebrant.

The following were registered in attendance:

Achtemeier, Paul J.	Ellis, Peter F., C.S.S.R.
Adams, Claire	Fischer, James A., C.M.
Arkin, Irvin M.	Fitzgerald, Aloysius, F.S.C.
Bailey, Joseph G.	Flanagan, James W.
Batto, Bernard F.	Foley, James J.
Becker, Russell, O.F.M.	Ford, J. Massingberd
Bellefontaine, Elizabeth, S.C.	Fortna, Robert T.
Bergant, Diane, C.S.A.	Fournelle, Geron E., O.F.M.
Bossman, David, O.F.M.	Gallagher, Patrick, O.F.M.Conv.
Bougie, Pierre, S.S.	Gigliotti, Marcus A., O.F.M.Conv.
Bourke, Myles M.	Glimm, Francis X.
Branson, Robert D.	Glynn, Edward, S.J.
Brown, Raymond E., S.S.	Graycar, Paul M.
Brown, Schuyler, S.J.	Hamm, Dennis, S.J.
Brummel, Thomas, C.M.F.	Hare, Douglas R. A.
Buckley, Thomas	Harrington, Daniel J., S.J.
Bushinski, Leonard A., C.S.S.P.	Hartdegen, Stephen J., O.F.M.
Cahill, P. Joseph	Heemrood, John A., O.M.I.
Cathcart, Kevin J.	Henkey, Charles H.
Christensen, Duane L.	Heupler, Charles G., O.F.M.Cap.
Ciuba, Edward J.	Hollar, John
Clifford, Richard J., S.J.	Hopkins, Martin K., O.P.
Clifton, James P., C.F.X.	Huesman, John E., S.J.
Collins, John J., S.J.	Humphrey, Hugh M.
Collins, Thomas A., O.P.	Janecko, Benedict F., O.S.B.
Comber, Joseph A., C.F.X.	Jensen, Joseph, O.S.B.
Corbett, Mary T., S.C.	Jones, David
Cordano, Virgil G., O.F.M.	Karris, Robert J., O.F.M.
Crane, Thomas E.	Kearney, Peter J.
Crowley, Edward J., C.S.S.R.	Keating, John R., S.J.
Cunningham, James P., O.P.	Keegan, Terrence J.
Dahood, Mitchell J., S.J.	Kelly, James C., O.S.B.
De Vault, Joseph J., S.J.	Kelly, Joseph G.
Dietlein, Damian L., O.S.B.	King, Philip J.
Donahue, John R., S.J.	Kingsbury, Jack D.
Donfried, Karl P.	Kodell, Jerome W., O.S.B.
Eisenberg, Roberta M.	Kselman, John S., S.S.

Kugelman, Richard, C.P.
 Kurz, William S., S.J.
 Langerholz, Callistus F., O.F.M.
 Leahy, Thomas W., S.J.
 Lussier, J. Ernest, S.S.S.
 McCarthy, Dennis J., S.J.
 McCarthy, Jean V., O.P.
 McEleney, Neil J., C.S.P.
 McGovern, John J., M.M.
 McGrath, Brendan, O.S.B.
 McKenzie, John L.
 McLinden, Marion D., O.P.
 Makarewicz, Sylvester E., O.F.M.
 Malina, Bruce J.
 Malinowski, Francis X., C.S.Sp.
 Mallaghan, Thomas P., C.M.
 Maloney, Elliott C., O.S.B.
 Maly, Eugene H.
 Martin, Francis
 Martinez, Ernest, S.J.
 Maurer, Mary S., C.S.C.
 Meier, John P.
 Mihalik, Imre
 Miller, Julian
 Milne, Pamela J.
 Montague, George T., S.M.
 Moore, C. Thomas, O.P.
 Most, William G.
 Murphy, Roland E., O.Carm.
 Murray, Daniel A.
 Musholt, Silas A., O.F.M.
 Nickels, Peter H., O.F.M.Conv.
 O'Toole, Robert F.
 Perkins, PHEME
 Petronek, Thomas C.
 Petru, Francis A., S.J.
 Pierce, Justin A., S.D.S.
 Pilch, John J.
 Plastaras, James C.
 Polzin, Robert M.
 Quinn, Jerome D.
 Quitslund, Sonya A.

Reardon, Patrick H.
 Reese, James M., O.S.F.S.
 Richards, Kent H.
 Rossiter, Francis S.
 Ryan, Thomas J.
 Saldarini, Anthony J., S.J.
 Schmitt, John J.
 Schoenberg, Martin W., O.S.C.
 Scott, Bernard B.
 Senior, Donald P., C.P.
 Shea, Thomas E.
 Sheridan, J. Mark, O.S.B.
 Sherlock, J. Alexander
 Sison, Victor G.
 Skehan, Patrick W.
 Sklba, Richard J.
 Sloyan, Gerard S.
 Smith, David W.
 Sorenson, Howard J., O.M.I.
 Spilly, Alphonse P., C.P.P.S.
 Steinmueller, John E.
 Stuhlmueller, Carroll, C.P.
 Sullivan, Kathryn, R.S.C.J.
 Suriano, Thomas M.
 Tambasco, Anthony, S.M.M.
 Tetlow, Elisabeth M.
 Thompson, William G., S.J.
 Tibesar, Leo J., Jr.
 Trautman, Donald W.
 Vancik, Vladimir G.
 Van Linden, Philip A., C.M.
 Wcela, Emil A.
 Wifall, Walter R.
 Woods, Joseph, O.S.B.
 Wright, Robert B.
 Yarbrow, Adela L.
 Zalotay, Joseph
 van Zutphen, Vincent, O.S.A.

DENNIS HAMM, S.J.
Yale University
Recording Secretary

LETTER TO THE AMERICAN BISHOPS

The following letter was sent to all the Catholic Bishops of the United States on September 14, 1973:

Your Excellency:

At the business session of its recent 36th General Meeting (August 20-23), the Catholic Biblical Association of America unanimously passed the following resolution:

that as they [the members of the Association] look forward to the observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the promulgation, on September 30, 1943, of the

magistral encyclical of Pope Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, rightly regarded as the magna carta of modern Catholic scientific biblical studies, they reaffirm their grateful devotion to the See of Peter for this and many other signs of its interest in and support of the dedicated labors of so many loyal sons and daughters of the Church further to open up the treasures of God's Word; and that *they emphatically reiterate their fraternal support of those fellow biblical scholars*, some of them honored members of their Association, *who have been and are being made the target of irresponsible and totally unfounded attacks* in the press and elsewhere, often precisely because they have tried to follow the lines of scientific investigation laid down and warmly recommended in *Divino Afflante Spiritu*.

As you know, this great encyclical called for nothing less than a "new look" in Catholic biblical studies. Pius XII spoke repeatedly of the new situation which had come into existence because of the immense scientific advances realized in the previous forty or fifty years—a new situation which offered new possibilities and challenges as well as new problems (#11, 31, 32, 36). He exhorted Catholic biblical scholars to acquire expertise in biblical and related languages (#14-16), in techniques of textual criticism (#17-19), and in methods of literary criticism (#35-39)—in short, to use all those helps which are "wont to be pressed into service in the explanation also of profane writers, so that the mind of the author may be made abundantly clear" (#23). Pius XII clearly did not prescribe this program of Scripture study in the expectation that the new approach would simply repeat what had been said in the past. He pointed out that very few passages of Scripture had been authoritatively interpreted by the Church (#47), blamed those who "quite wrongly . . . pretend . . . that nothing remains to be added by the Catholic exegete of our time to what Christian antiquity has produced" (#32), spoke of solutions which had eluded the early Fathers (#31), saw the need of "grappling again and again with these difficult problems, hitherto unsolved" (#46), and expressed the hope "that our times also can contribute something towards the deeper and more accurate interpretation of Sacred Scripture" (#31). Scripture scholarship was to be no isolated discipline but the means by which the Catholic commentator "may contribute his part to the advantage of all, to the continued progress of the sacred doctrine and to the defense and honor of the Church" (#47); he named "true liberty of the children of God" as "the condition and source of all lasting fruit and of all solid progress in Catholic doctrine" (#48) and urged all other sons of the Church to "abhor that intemperate zeal which imagines that whatever is new should for that very reason be opposed or suspected" (#47).

The Catholic Biblical Association has always tried to accept a share of the responsibility outlined for you in *Divino Afflante Spiritu* and to meet its challenges. We have always encouraged high scholarly standards, broad use of every available scientific tool, faithfulness to the teachings of the Church, and close cooperation with the American Hierarchy. Active membership in our Association is granted only to those who have undergone the type of training prescribed in *Divino Afflante Spiritu*. We are happy to list among our accomplishments the

production of THE NEW AMERICAN BIBLE, a translation from the original languages made in accordance with the provisions of *Divino Afflante Spiritu* and under the sponsorship of the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine; the fifty scholars whose labors over twenty-five years produced this accomplishment of dedicated scholarship received virtually no remuneration except the satisfaction of having served the People of God. For the last thirty-five years we have provided for the advance of research and scholarly exchange through publication of our periodical THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL QUARTERLY, which is sold to subscribers at less than cost, and, in more recent years, also through THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL QUARTERLY—MONOGRAPH SERIES. We have helped pay the expenses of the ELENCHUS BIBLIOGRAPHICUS published by the Pontifical Biblical Institute, have contributed support for the training of young Japanese scholars to complete the work of translating the Bible into their native tongue, and have provided Visiting Professors to the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome and to the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem. We have made the assured results of biblical scholarship available to the clergy and faithful through cooperation in THE JEROME BIBLICAL COMMENTARY, THE BIBLE TODAY, and countless other publications. We have actively promoted the fullest use of Scripture in the liturgy (see our letters to you of October 15, 1969, and February 10, 1972) and have advanced the cause of Church unity through participation in ecumenical dialogue. Perhaps the clearest sign that our service has been approved and accepted is the fact that whenever the Holy Father has chosen consultors or (since the recent reform) members of the Pontifical Biblical Commission from North America, he has chosen members of our Association; indeed, his choice has consistently fallen upon men we have honored as our Presidents.

In all our endeavors we rejoice in the guidance given by *Divino Afflante Spiritu* and other documents of the Magisterium, which reached a culmination in the Constitution *Dei Verbum* of Vatican II. Yet we are concerned because strident voices have been raised against us by certain Catholic groups precisely for following the approach to Sacred Scripture imposed by *Divino Afflante Spiritu*; these critics advocate a fundamentalism foreign to this document and to the Catholic tradition, and they attempt to reimpose on us early decrees of the Biblical Commission concerning authorship and composition that the Secretary of the Commission has explicitly declared to be superseded. Ignoring Pius XII's injunction about passing judgment and using their "intemperate zeal" as an excuse to abandon both Christian charity and common justice, they freely level against responsible scholars charges of heresy and perversion of faith. Almost without exception these self-appointed "defenders of the faith" are people who have never undergone the rigorous discipline of preparation prescribed by the Popes and the Biblical Commission. They do not seriously attempt to enter into scholarly debate; indeed, their attacks could not meet the standards of any scholarly biblical journal, and so they promote their views through popular publications, appealing to a readership that is little able to evaluate their asser-

tions, and they often employ the weapons of half-truth, innuendo, distortion, and outright misrepresentation. They pretend to speak in the name of a purer Catholic faith and attempt to usurp the role of the Magisterium to decide what can and cannot be taught in the Church; their claim that the Magisterium has been paralyzed is considered to provide justification for this. Their recent insistence on the "authenticity of the Vulgate" (in a sense quite contrary to *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, #20-22), which parallels their Protestant counterparts' attempt to canonize one particular antique translation (the King James Version), indicates how hostile is their spirit to the advances in biblical criticism demanded by *Divino Afflante Spiritu*; their attacks on the theory of evolution, long a target of other fundamentalists, show their unwillingness to permit science a role in the interpretation of the Bible. Catholic fundamentalists appeal to tradition as well as to the Bible, of course, but they cite as "tradition" and declare *de fide* whatever suits them, totally ignoring the sort of sifting and evaluation that sound Catholic theology demands. This kind of attack is not new. In 1941 Pius XII directed the Pontifical Biblical Commission to dispatch a letter to the Italian Hierarchy to answer an anonymous pamphlet entitled *Un gravissimo pericolo per la Chiesa e per le anime. Il sistema critico-scientifico nello studio e nell' interpretazione della Sacra Scrittura, le sue deviazioni funeste e le sue aberrazioni*. The bitter spirit that inspired the pamphlet, which was shown to be a rejection of the Church's traditional teaching on the interpretation of Scripture (cf. ENCHIRIDION BIBLICUM. #522-533), is abroad in the Church in America today.

That control of a Christian community can be gained by militant fundamentalists is witnessed by recent events in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; if the new leadership succeeds in ousting from Concordia Theological Seminary those committed to critical scientific scholarship and remaking the institution along fundamentalist lines, that segment of Christianity will be effectively diminished and ecumenical dialogue will be hindered. Similarly, within the Catholic Church fundamentalists are attempting to make their own views prevail through bypassing the Magisterium and seeking to discredit and destroy solid, moderate scholarship; their attacks cause confusion among Catholic laity and threaten the freedom of responsible scholars to speak out. Such attacks ultimately threaten the ecumenical movement, both because they make any talk of a Catholic consensus impossible and because they tend to destroy the confidence of large groups of Catholics in those who should be their spokesmen in ecumenical dialogue.

As responsible Catholic scholars we will continue to avoid both a fundamentalism alien to the Church's interpretation of the Scriptures and an extreme liberalism that would effectively deny their inspired and normative character. We are grateful that you have always followed the injunction of *Divino Afflante Spiritu* to the Bishops of "encouraging all those initiatives by which men, filled with apostolic zeal, laudably strive to excite and foster among Catholics a greater knowledge of and love for the Sacred Books" (#51). We trust that we will always enjoy your support and confidence and that you will not permit those who labor for the advancement of Catholic truth, in union with the Magisterium

and in conformity with Church directives, to be labeled as perverters of the faith. We earnestly hope the Bishops will find it possible to indicate to the faithful that these uncharitable voices speak for their own convictions and do not represent the views of the Magisterium.

Respectfully and sincerely yours in Christ,
Joseph Jensen, O.S.B.
Executive Secretary

Issued at the direction of the members of the Executive Board present at the meeting of August 20, 1973:

Rev. Richard Kugelman, C.P., President
Rev. John E. Huesman, S.J., Vice President
Very Rev. Joseph Jensen, O.S.B., Executive Secretary
Bro. James P. Clifton, C.F.X., Treasurer
Rev. George T. Montague, S.M., *CBQ* General Editor
Rev. Msgr. Patrick W. Skehan, Chairman, *CBQMS* Editorial Board
Rev. Msgr. Myles M. Bourke, Chairman, Board of Trustees
Rev. Daniel J. Harrington, S.J., Consultor
Rev. Msgr. Jerome D. Quinn, Consultor

P.S. Because of the importance and interest the matters here treated have for many concerned with Scripture, the Executive Board has requested me to make this communication public after a suitable time.