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## REPORT, 1993-94: NEW ENGLAND REGION

The New England Region of the Mariological Society of America held its annual meeting at Providence College, Providence, R.I., on Saturday, October 16, 1993.

The Reverend Matthew Morry, O.P., S.T.D., director of the New England Region, opened the meeting at 10:00 A.M. The Most Reverend George H. Pearce, S.M., D.D., offered a prayer and blessing for the one hundred and twenty members in attendance. Fr. Morry then introduced the Keynote Speaker, the Reverend Frederick Michael Jelly, O.P., S.T.D., professor of systematic theology at Mt. St. Mary Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland. Fr. Jelly discussed "The Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the Community of Reparation."

The focus of Fr. Jelly's talk was to consider how a balanced devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary effectively leads to intimate encounter with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The result of this encounter is the cleansing of one's sinful heart through the redeeming love of Jesus. One way we strive to make amends is by receiving Holy Communion in reparation. In Mary's Immaculate Heart, as she voiced her *fiat* and consented to the Father's will on Calvary, we behold the greatest example and inspiration for this reparation. From Mary, then, we receive the example to give ourselves readily to things concerning the service of God, or, *devotion*.

As one practices this devotion to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, one is led to its two objectives: (1) adoration, and (2) complete confidence in the merciful love of our Savior. Fr. Jelly noted that devotion to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary shown through liturgical actions dates from the seventeenth century. Theologians have cited Luke 1:26-38 (the Annunciation pericope), Luke 2:19 ("And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart"), and Luke 2:51 ("He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart"). In addition to these scriptural bases, they have called on the witness of St. Leo the Great as theological foundation for this devotion ("A royal virgin of the race of David is chosen to be the mother of the Infant-God and to conceive him in her heart before bearing him in her womb"), along with the private revelations given to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque and to the children at Fatima.

Furthermore, Fr. Jelly pointed out, it is important to consider the Church's faith in the Holy Eucharist to appreciate the Communion of Reparation. The speaker then reflected on the prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas, "O Sacred Banquet." Through five phrases of the prayer—(1) O Sacred Banquet, (2) in which Christ is received, (3) in which the memory of His Passion is recalled, (4) in which the mind is filled with grace, and (5) a pledge of future glory is given to us—Fr. Jelly specified that it is the Flesh and Blood of the suffering and crucified Christ we receive, in order to be filled with God's grace and a guarantee of glory. As Mary did, so we also must ponder these truths of Christ; and we do this in a most effective way through praying and meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary.

Following a period of discussion, the participants assembled for the Marian Liturgy, with Fr. Matthew Morry, O.P., as the celebrant. The homily was preached by the

Reverend Stanley Azaro, O.P., Ph.D., professor, Department of Theology, Providence College.

In his homily Fr. Azaro reflected on how the Woman of Revelation 12 filled his mind throughout his experiences of the presence and words of Pope John Paul II at the two major Lithuanian Marian Shrines, Gate of Dawn (in Vilnius) and the Shrine of Siluva. In Lithuania, the pope noted, "the hour of forced silence about God" is now over. But in America, Fr. Azaro noted, we elect it! Mary, the image of the Woman of Revelation 12, is the Mary of the Assumption and Symbol of the Church, the Mother of Mercy who enables us to live and to be at peace with God and His people. America's opting for silence about God may be seen as the hatreds and division threatening the Woman of Revelation 12, threatening the Church. The realities threatening the Woman of Revelation 12 are still present in our world. To overcome such threats, we must be (as the Woman of Revelation 12) God-bearers to the world, to God's people: "We can shatter the silence about God only by giving birth to the Word of Truth, the Word brought forth amidst the labor and wailing of the Woman of Revelation 12, the symbol of the Church trying to live within this vale of tears."

Following the Marian Liturgy there was a luncheon for the members. The business meeting followed lunch. At the business meeting, the Reverend Matthew Morry, O.P., announced that the next annual national meeting of the Mariological Society of America would be held in New Orleans from May 25 to 27, 1994. He also announced that the next annual meeting of the New England Region would be held on Saturday, October 22, 1994; its theme would be the devotion of the Eastern Churches to Mary. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 P.M.

Matthew F. Morry, O.P.  
*Director, New England Region, MSA*