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### Report on the 1988 Convention (East Aurora, N.Y.)

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## **REPORT ON THE 39TH CONVENTION**

**(May 31-June 2, 1988—East Aurora, New York)**

The 39th Convention of the Mariological Society of America (MSA) gathered some fifty-five participants, last May 31-June 2, at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, New York. His Excellency Edward D. Head, D.D., Bishop of Buffalo and U.S. Episcopal Chairman for the Marian Year, had invited the MSA to his diocese for this Marian Year. He explained in his letter:

I am confident you will experience in the Diocese of Buffalo a faith community characterized by deep devotion to Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church. Your presence within our diocesan family would help deepen devotion to Mary in Western New York and also strengthen the faithlife of our local Church.

The convention was indeed a true celebration of the Marian Year. Rev. Edward M. Grosz, director of the Office of Worship, also director of the Permanent Marian Committee and of the special Committee for the Marian Year in the Diocese of Buffalo, had led the organization of the convention. Each participant, upon arrival, was provided a kit containing all the necessary information, including a map of the various buildings of Christ the King Seminary. Our rooms were at St. Ignatius, St. Paul, and the Administration buildings; the sessions took place in the auditorium, and the dining room and the main chapel were together at the center. Those who arrived by plane were picked up at the Buffalo airport by Father Grosz, Rev. Bernard Confer, O.P., or one of their assistants.

*Tuesday, May 31*

The Board of Directors met in the evening to prepare future conventions. Present were the Most Rev. Austin B. Vaughan, episcopal chairman; Rev. James T. O'Connor, president; Rev. William J. Cole, S.M., vice president; Rev. Theodore A. Koehler, S.M., secretary; Rev. Albert Bourke, O.C.D., treasurer; the non-officers: Rev. Charles W. Neumann, S.M.; Rev. William L. Lahey, S.S.C.; Bro. John Samaha, S.M.; Rev. James Parker; and an invited guest, Rev. Thomas A. Thompson, S.M., director-curator of The Marian Library (Dayton, Ohio). Non-officers unable to attend were the Rev. Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M., president emeritus; Rev. William B. Smith; and Rev. Matthew F. Morry, O.P. Father Carol could not participate in our sessions; coming by train from St. Petersburg, he caught a bad cold and had to remain at the Friars' Residence.

Bishop Vaughan opened the Directors' meeting with a prayer. The secretary then distributed to the Board documents to assist our discussion: the program on our next convention (as made in 1986); a list of suggested topics for future sessions; Father Neumann's summary of *Marialis Cultus*; and a list, published in 1950, of the 136 charter members, with another indicating the 13 charter members who are still active.

The secretary expressed the appreciation of all for the excellent organization provided by Father Grosz and read the names of those who had written that they could not attend: Sister Mary Elise Krantz, S.N.D.; Rev. Walter Burghardt, S.J.; Rev. Joseph Schielein, S.M.; Rev. Walter Pelczynski, M.I.C.; Rev. Bertrand Buby, S.M.; Rev. Timothy Holland, S.S.J. (Three members died during the year: Rev. Joseph E. Jones, O.G.S.; Rev. M. Jerome Siler, O.C.S.O.; Rev. G. Gordon Henderson, S.J.) The secretary also mentioned important Marian events in preparation: the National Rosary Congress at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C., June 6-11; the International Ecumenical Conference on "Mary, Woman for All Christians," June 17-21,

organized at the University of San Francisco, by the University of San Francisco, the Western Region of the MSA, and the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Francisco, in cooperation with the dioceses of Oakland, Sacramento, San Jose, Santa Rosa and Stockton; the National Marian Year Congress on "Marian Devotion—A Reality," sponsored by the Militia Immaculatae, at the University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois, August 11-15, with the closing Eucharist for the Marian Year celebrated by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin. (He mentioned other local and diocesan celebrations of the Marian Year, for example, the program established for the Diocese of Buffalo.) The secretary also announced the annual conference of the North American Academy of Ecumenists: "Mary in Ecumenical Discussion," September 23-25, 1988.

He explained that, because a new printing process was tried to reduce costs, *Marian Studies* 38 (1987) was delayed! With Kramer Graphics, which specializes in camera-ready documents, we prepared the 207 pages of our volume; these were sent to Abbey Press (St. Meinrad) for printing. But this process took more time than expected, because the computer operation was new. Abbey Press continued to make the cover and do the mailing (labels prepared by us).

Mrs. Cecilia Mushenheim, assistant to the secretary, updated the statistics of the MSA. The secretary reported the membership total at 499, 100 more than last year. Our regional units show increase, especially the Western Region and the newly created New Jersey Region. We do not have many back issues of *Marian Studies*: 1951 (1), 1952 (3), 1954 (8), 1958 (14), 1959 (16), 1960 (2), 1962 (12), 1963 (2), 1964 (3), 1967 (1), 1968 (2), 1970 (48), 1975 (1), 1978 (152), 1979 (76), 1980 (117), 1981 (108), 1984 (165), 1986 (72). However, the contract made last year with University Microfilms International offers the possibility to answer requests for out-of-print volumes.

The Board discussed the dates, sites, and programs of our future conventions. In 1987, we had decided to hold the 1989 convention, marking the 40th anniversary of the

MSA, in the West. Brother Samaha had indicated three possibilities, and the Board requested the location nearest to the airport, which also offered the needed facilities. The Board decided to organize the convention at Mercy Center, the conference center of the Sisters of Mercy in Burlingame, near San Francisco. The dates and the schedule of the sessions were discussed. Because of the time difference between East and West, it appeared difficult to retain the ordinary schedule: arrival in the evening before the convention, and two days of sessions ending the second day at 3:00 p.m. The Board decided to hold the convention May 31 and June 1, 1989, with a new schedule: 1) Wednesday, May 31, 1989—arrival by noon (with the possibility to have lunch); 2:00 p.m.: registration; 2:30 p.m.: first speaker; 5:00 p.m.: Eucharist, refreshments and dinner; 8:30 p.m.: Board Meeting; 2) Thursday, June 1—8:30 a.m.: General Assembly (elections) and second speaker; 10:30 a.m.: break; 10:45 a.m.: third speaker; 12:00 noon: lunch; 2:00 p.m.: fourth speaker; 3:15 p.m.: break; 3:30 p.m.: "Survey"; 4:45 p.m.: Business Meeting; 5:30 p.m.: Eucharist, 6:15 p.m.: dinner; 3) Friday, June 2—Eucharist (time to be decided), breakfast, departure. This schedule would allow us to close the convention the evening of June 1, and to depart June 2, at the convenience of the participants. (So that the Sisters of Mercy could reserve the needed rooms, the secretary was asked to write immediately to learn how many members want to participate in this convention.)

The 1989 program (proposed in 1986) had to be changed, since some topics would already be treated in our 1988 convention. With the documents distributed to them, the directors discussed again a program based on *Marialis Cultus*. The title of this program was decided anew: *Marialis Cultus: 15 Years Later (1974-1989)*. The Board retained four topics: 1) Mary and the Holy Trinity as reflected in the liturgical year; 2) Mary in the Eucharistic celebration, with consideration of the new *Collectio Missarum B.M.V.*; 3) Mary in the Liturgy of the Hours; and 4) Marian Devotions in the light of *Marialis Cultus*. Rev. Eamon R. Carroll,

O.Carm., will give his annual survey on Mariology at the end of the convention.

For the 1990 convention, the Board asked the secretary to explore the possibility of meeting in Atlanta. The following topics were suggested: 1) The *Sensus plenior* and the biblical figures of Mary in the Old Testament; 2) The Woman clothed with the Sun; 3) Mary, Model of the Church; 4) Apparitions: a report on present developments (with historical and canonical information). The dates May 30 to June 1 were proposed.

The Board passed in review some other questions. We no longer have to send a representative of the MSA to the Joint Committee of Catholic Learned Societies and Scholars (JCCLSS) meetings, since they were cancelled. The secretary gave a brief report on the project to seek a publisher for a new edition of *Marian Studies* 37 (1986); it was intended to give to a larger public our study on Chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium*. None of the contacted publishers accepted the project (Paulist Press, Glazier, Sunday Visitor, etc.). We increased the number of copies to be printed of *Marian Studies* 38 (1987) to 800. Since MSA membership is increasing, the secretary proposed raising that number to 1,000 copies for volume 39 (1988); the proposal was accepted.

Although Board members agreed we could print a brochure on the MSA (with information on our history, nature, purposes, types of membership, annual conventions, proceedings, and regional units), they decided to reserve such a brochure to answer inquiries. The present flier is still useful. The members of the Board asked for a copy of the Constitution and By-laws of the MSA; they recommended these documents be given to each new member of the Board and the Committees.

Finally, the Board discussed the Cardinal Wright Award. A suggestion to rename it the Paul VI Award was not accepted. Father Carol, our founder, created a committee to name the recipient of the Cardinal Wright Award. The secretary was directed to write him about the conferral of that award in 1989 in San Francisco.

The meeting ended at 9:50 p.m.

Wednesday, June 1

Our first session began at 10:00 a.m. in the auditorium. In the name of Bishop Head and of the Christ the King Seminary, Father Grosz welcomed the members of the Society; he placed our work under the patronage of Mary, Mother of the Church. Near the lectern he placed the statue of Mary, Immaculate Spouse of the Holy Spirit (with a dove in her hands and the moon under her feet); our banner dedicated to Our Lady "*Mater sapientiae*" decorated the lectern itself.

The secretary thanked Father Grosz for his remarkable organization of our convention in Christ the King Seminary. He asked the members who had changed address to inform the secretariate immediately. Father Carroll agreed to send a report of our convention to the *Marianum*, the international periodical of the Servites in Rome, and Father Neumann agreed to report to *Ephemerides Mariologicae*, published by the Claretians in Madrid.

In his presidential address, Father O'Connor, professor at Saint Joseph Seminary, Yonkers, New York, took the audience on a journey, explaining the hierarchical role St. Thomas gave to the angels: God's use of them to govern the universe. (The speaker alluded to the current news on Nancy Reagan's belief in astrology.) The influence that moves the world comes not from stars, but from the angels through the "secondary causality" given to them by God. The journey ended when the speaker explained the secondary causality given to Our Lady, Star of the Sea, Queen of the Angels, Queen of the Universe. Mary "moves" with gentleness the angels, the apostles, the priests, the Church. And we all, in turn, are co-causes in the universe, at this secondary level.

The Very Reverend Augustine M. Kulbis, Prior Provincial of the Eastern Province of Servites, introduced our keynote speaker, Bishop Vaughan, Auxiliary Bishop of New York. Father O'Connor had already expressed to Bishop Vaughan our admiration for his courageous stand in the recent manifestation organized in New York for the respect of human

rights and of the life of the unborn (he entered the ranks of American bishops arrested for their convictions). Bishop Vaughan explained why he took this risk. His keynote address, "Mary—Dawn of the Redemption," began our study of the encyclical, *Mother of the Redeemer*; the goal of our Convention was to show important themes that John Paul II treated in this inaugural of the Marian Year. The Pope named the encyclical "Mother of the Redeemer" because in it he explains the role of Mary in our Redemption. His introduction calls Mary the "Morning Star" announcing Christ: "For just as this star, together with the 'dawn,' precedes the rising of the sun, so Mary from the time of her Immaculate Conception preceded the coming of the Savior, the rising of the 'Sun of Justice' in the history of the human race" (RM 3). With a remarkable sense of the theological and pastoral implications of the encyclical, Bishop Vaughan reviewed the applications of the title, *Dawn of the Redemption*, to the union of Mary with her Son in all the mysteries of his work of Redemption. As there is no sunrise without dawn and vice versa, so there is an intimate and necessary union of the Redeemer with his mother.

In the afternoon, Rev. Emmanuel Sullivan, O.C.D., in the name of the Committee of Nominations, proposed to the General Assembly the following changes—which were approved. Co-presidents, Rev. William J. Cole, S.M., former vice president, and Brother John Samaha, S.M., secretary of the Western Region, will prepare the next convention in California. The new vice president is Rev. James McCurry, O.F.M. Conv., director of the *Militia Immaculatae*. Rev. Thomas A. Thompson, S.M., as assistant secretary, will help Father Koehler. Rev. James T. O'Connor and Rev. Walter T. Brennan, O.S.M. (the new Prior Provincial of the Eastern Province of Servites) were elected to the Board of Directors.

Rev. Frederick L. Miller, recently named chaplain at the center of the World Apostolate of Fatima (Blue Army) in Washington, New Jersey, introduced the second speaker, Rev. Edward D. O'Connor, professor at Notre Dame University, whose report was a kind of "first": he described "The

Roots of Pope John Paul II's Marian Devotion," its origins in his youth, in his life.

Father O'Connor said the Pope's Marian devotion is rooted in his Polish Christian formation. He learned to love Our Lady of Czestochowa, Queen, Protectress of his country. He discovered, with the treatise of Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort, the secret of a deep, personal love for Mary. Through the attempt on his life in 1981, he became aware of the special protection that saved his life. He was shot on May 31, the anniversary of the first apparition of Our Lady of Fatima. He made to this shrine a pilgrimage of gratitude, and he renewed twice the consecration of the world to the Sacred Heart of Mary. Did the Pope consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary? According to Rev. Arthur B. Calkins—who summarized the conference given by Rev. Canon René Laurentin in Fatima at a symposium in 1986, about the pontifical consecrations of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary—Father Laurentin said that John Paul II, as his predecessors, has so consecrated Russia.

In the evening, Bishop Head presided over the concelebrated Eucharist in honor of Mary, Seat of Wisdom; in his homily he insisted on personal devotion to Mary. Father Grosz had prepared a very appropriate program for Eucharist celebrations, including special songs for the Marian year.

After the concelebration, the participants gathered in the dining room for the customary "happy hour" and dinner. Later that evening, Father Grosz showed a fifteen-minute video cassette (VHS), *Mary, Mother of the Church*, presenting an excellent contemporary theological summary on the place of Mary in the mystery of Christ and the Church, with a remarkable choice of slides to illustrate the presentation; the introduction is by Bishop Head. The video cassette (\$25) can be ordered from the Diocesan Marian Year Committee, Catholic Center, 795 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14203.

#### *Thursday, June 2*

In the morning, Bishop Vaughan celebrated the Eucharist

in honor of Mary, Mother of the Church, which was also the topic of his homily. After breakfast, Rev. James L. Heft, S.M., chairman of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Dayton, introduced the third speaker, Rev. Frederick M. Jelly, O.P., director of studies and professor at the Mount Saint Mary's Seminary of Emmitsburg, Maryland, and well known in ecumenical dialogue. Father Jelly's conference was "Ecumenical Aspects of *Redemptoris Mater*."

He pointed out that the encyclical insists on the riches of the devotion towards the *Theotokos* in the liturgies of the Eastern Churches. "Such a wealth of praise . . . could help us to hasten the day when the Church can begin once more to breathe fully with her 'two lungs' the East and the West" (RM 34). The encyclical mentions the twelfth centenary of the Second Ecumenical Council of Nicea (787-1987), which put an end to the iconoclastic crisis, and also the first millennium of the conversion of the peoples of ancient Rus' (988-1988).

Father Heft led the discussion, asking the following questions: Is there some fundamental ecumenical agreement regarding Mary as *Theotokos* and as our Spiritual Mother? When the Pope speaks of a maternal mediation of Mary, is it helpful to distinguish it from the mediation of Christ? Do we see the reconciliation of the East and the West as a bridge to a better dialogue with the Reformation Churches? Is there a reticence in *Redemptoris Mater* about the Reformation Churches, since the text speaks only of the Eastern Churches? Father Heft concluded by saying that the pope insisted on the Holy Scriptures and not so much on the traditional stress given to the Marian privileges and dogmas; in its own way, the East is more attached to the liturgical praise of Mary than to a dogmatization of Marian doctrine.

In his reply, Father Jelly noted that the pope shows his concern about the unity with the Protestant confessions in an implicit way, since he insists on the scriptural texts concerning Mary and on the doctrine about the grace of God given to us in Christ (the *sola scriptura*, *sola gratia*, *solus Christus*). On the mediation of Mary, the encyclical cites

and comments on the texts of *Lumen Gentium* that affirm the subordination of all secondary mediations to Christ *Unus Mediator*. The special character of Mary's mediation is defined as *maternal*.

Because of the sudden death of his mother, Rev. Donald J. Keefe, S.J., could not attend the convention. In his place, Father Neumann, professor at St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas, introduced the fourth speaker, Dr. Joyce Little, professor at St. Thomas University, Houston, Texas. Her conference had the title "*Redemptoris Mater*: The Significance of Mary for Women." This topic is also a "first." Dr. Little quoted a striking text of the encyclical:

It is precisely Mary's faith which marks the beginning of the new and eternal Covenant of God with man in Jesus Christ; this heroic FAITH of hers PRECEDES the apostolic WITNESS of the Church, and ever remains in the Church's heart, hidden like a special heritage of God's revelation. All those who . . . accept the apostolic witness of the Church share in that mysterious inheritance and IN A SENSE SHARE IN MARY'S FAITH. (RM 27)

The role of Mary in our salvation reveals the plan of God for women. God entrusted himself to Mary, giving her his own Son (RM 39), and Jesus entrusted all humanity to his mother at Calvary (RM 45). This action, entrusting to the love of Mary as mother, reveals that motherhood means trust: the child depends on the mother. This ministry given to Mary, for Jesus and for the salvation of all humanity, reveals the role of trust given to all women. But in our world, distrust and fear reign as fruits of sin. To restore trust is first of all the responsibility of women, of mothers. In her conclusion the speaker noted: "Distrust has produced fragmentation, and only a renewal of trust can repair it. If the Pope is correct in locating ENTRUSTING in the mother-child relationship [as God did for Jesus and Mary], then a renewal of trust must begin there and it must be initiated by women."

In the afternoon, Father Grosz introduced the final speaker, Father Eamon R. Carroll, professor at Loyola University in Chicago, who presented the annual "Survey of Recent

Mariology." Father Carroll, recovering from knee surgery, made his report in his customary spirited Irish manner. He reviewed specifically the Marian publications in English. The Marian Year gave rise to a new interest in Our Lady, with special editions of past writers, like the superb book *God Alone*, the complete works of Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort, and new studies, like *The Sacred Memory of Mary*, by Father Brennan, and *The Significance of Mary*, by Sister Agnes Cunningham, S.S.C.M. Father Carroll promised to indicate publications in other languages in his complete "Survey" (which appears in this volume).

At the business assembly, the co-president, Father Cole, announced that our next convention would take place at Mercy Center, in Burlingame near the airport, beginning May 31 at 2 p.m. and ending June 1 in the evening, with departure June 2, at the convenience of the participants. After Father Cole spoke, the regional units gave their reports for the activities of the Marian Year. The multiplication of these units is encouraging: the Rhode Island, Houston, San Antonio and New Jersey regions; the Mid-Western Region; and the Western Region, in which, for the first time, we will have our next convention. Reports were presented by Father Morry for Rhode Island, by Rev. Msgr. Francis G. Wear-den for Houston, by co-president Brother Samaha for the Western Region, and by Father Fred Miller for New Jersey.

The assembly accepted the proposal of Father Morry and approved the nomination of Rev. Peter J. Cameron, O.P., Providence College, as member of the Society.

Father Cole closed the convention by expressing our gratitude to the following people:

- a) to His Excellency, the Most Reverend Edward D. Head, Bishop of Buffalo, for his words of welcome, the hospitality of his diocese and for presiding at the Eucharist on June 1;
- b) to His Excellency, the Most Reverend Austin B. Vaughan, the Episcopal Chairman of our Society, whose presence at this convention was most appreciated;
- c) to Mr. Arthur W. Clinton, Jr., to Chaplain Lt. C. Alfred M. Croke, to the Very Reverend Stanley Matuszewski (editor of

*Our Lady's Digest*) and to the Very Reverend Walter Pelczynski for their generous contributions to our Society—and to many other benefactors not mentioned here by name to whom we also owe our gratitude, especially to our Supporting Members;

- d) to the staff of the Christ the King Seminary, to the rector of the seminary, Rev. Kevin Mackin, O.F.M., and especially to Father Edward Grosz for the warm, efficient, and abundant hospitality extended during the two days;
- e) and, finally, to our distinguished speakers and discussion leaders, for their scholarly papers and thought-provoking comments and questions.

Father Cole then called for a motion of adjournment. The motion was seconded and approved by the assembly. The convention concluded with the singing of the "Salve Regina."

REV. THEODORE A. KOEHLER, S.M.  
*Executive Secretary*

P.S. At the suggestion of Father Neumann, the Mariological Society congratulated the secretary, Father Koehler, on the occasion of his diamond jubilee of religious profession in the Society of Mary.