

Marian Studies

Volume 35 *Proceedings of the Thirty-Fifth
National Convention of The Mariological
Society of America held in Washington, D.C.*

Article 8

1984

Report on the 1984 Convention (Washington, D.C.)

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Recommended Citation

Koehler, Théodore (1984) "Report on the 1984 Convention (Washington, D.C.)," *Marian Studies*: Vol. 35, Article 8.

Available at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies/vol35/iss1/8

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REPORT ON THE 1984 CONVENTION (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

As Bishop Eugene Marino noted in his Welcome Address, the Mariological Society of America came back to visit its cradle, convening once again (for the fourth time) in the federal capital, where it was begun in 1949. The Thirty-Fifth National Convention of the Society took place at the Washington Retreat House (4000 Harewood Road, N.E.). Some fifty-three delegates participated in these sessions, held on May 29 and 30, 1984.

Registration opened on Tuesday, May 29, at 9:30 A.M., under the direction of our Treasurer, Rev. Albert Bourke, O.C.D. In the conference room, the new coat of arms of the Society, artistically rendered on ceramic tiles by Dr. St. Galy of Carmel, California, was admired by all. The first session was called to order by the outgoing President, Dr. William H. Marshner, who invited our Episcopal Chairman, the Most Reverend Austin B. Vaughan, Auxiliary Bishop of New York, to offer the Opening Prayer. Sister Mary Emerson then greeted the delegates in the name of the Retreat House; she briefly outlined the history and development of her Congregation: originally members of the Episcopalian Church at Graymoor in Garrison, New York, they entered the Catholic Church in 1909 and became the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement. The hospitality and gracious service of the Sisters at the retreat house was much appreciated by all the conventioners, also the location of the house which made it easy to visit the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

The Secretary, after handling some practical matters regarding the day's program, asked Rev. Charles Neumann, S.M., professor in the Theology Department of St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas, to introduce the first speaker, Dr. William Marshner, our President. In his Keynote Address, "Mary, the Church, and Sinlessness," Dr. Marshner presented a synthesis, a conclusion to the reports he has given

in the past two years. He summarized again the various difficulties theologians encounter when they analyze the topic "Mary, type or archetype of the Church," since there are various approaches to ecclesiology, Mariology, and symbolism. He insisted on three approaches (those included in the title of his paper), containing several questions: the Holy Spirit is given to us—the question of grace; Mary is type of the Church, but what is the nature of the Church in the order of grace? Dr. Marshner pointed out that to establish the relationship of Mary with the Church, we need to make several distinctions: the Church as the Bride of Christ; the Church and Christ, Head of the Church; the Church on earth (*militans*) and in heaven; the Church as Hierarchy and as the Faithful; the actions of God and the ministry of the Church. He stressed the importance of the Immaculate Conception of Mary as a key to placing in order the various relationships uniting Mary and the Church in the order of grace.

The fullness of grace from her conception reveals the perfect conformity of Mary with Christ, but this grace is the grace of the New Eve who would bring forth the New Adam and, with him, his Mystical Body. This grace is also an exemplary charity. Here, our speaker followed Cardinal Journet in affirming a sinless Church and Mary as the type of this *ecclesia credens*. Finally, he showed that grace means Christ born in her heart. Grace is a mystery of soul and body. Mary is the new womb for a new mankind: the Son of God is, through her, our New Adam. Jesus is already Head of the Church in the womb of the New Eve. This rich report of the President was followed by a discussion led by Father Neumann, dealing especially with the views of Yves Congar, O.P., on a Church of sinners and on the theology of the Holy Spirit in modern views (S. Bulgakov, the Orthodox Church).

After lunch, the second session began with a business meeting. The Nominating Committee submitted the following slate of candidates, all of whom were subsequently approved unanimously: for President, Rev. Emmanuel Sullivan, O.C.D.; for Vice-President, Rev. James T. O'Connor; for Secretary, Rev. Theodore A. Koehler, S.M.; for Treasurer, Rev. Albert Bourke, O.C.D.; for the Board of Directors—Rev. George Kirwin, O.M.I. (replacing Rev. William L. Lahey, S.S.C.), Dr. Wil-

liam H. Marshner (replacing Rev. James T. O'Connor), Rev. J. Armand Robichaud, S.M. (re-elected after serving one year for a Board member who resigned); for the Nominating Committee—Rev. Matthew Morry, O.P. (replacing Rev. George Kirwin, O.M.I.).

Rev. Arthur Calkins, currently studying at the International Marian Research Institute in Dayton, Ohio, then introduced the second speaker, Rev. Eamon R. Carroll, O.Carm., professor at Loyola University of Chicago, Illinois, who presented his annual "A Survey of Recent Mariology." Father Carroll reviewed a record number of some 303 titles in Marian literature published since our last convention, most in English but many also in the main European languages. The survey began with *Mary and ecumenism* and focused on many encouraging activities, for example, the Sixth International Congress (April, 1984) of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary (founded by the late Martin Gilllett). The speaker announced the sad news of the sudden death of Pastor John de Satgé, one of the founding members of the Ecumenical Society, well known for his recent publications on ecumenism and Mary. De Satgé was at the ecumenical meetings organized by the Pontifical International Marian Academy at their Ninth International Congress in Malta (September [8] 9-18, 1983). He was among the signers of the declaration on Mary and the communion of saints agreed upon there by seven Roman Catholic theologians and seven theologians of other Christian confessions. This statement was formulated by the ecumenical roundtable at Malta after three days of meetings.

In the second part of his report, Father Carroll analyzed the main Marian periodicals and annuals: *Marianum*, *Ephemerides Mariologicae*, *Études Mariales*, *Scripta de Maria*, *Cahiers Marials*, *Marian Library Studies*. In the other parts, he talked about the *Magisterium*, especially the consecration made by John Paul II last March 25th with all the bishops of the world; *Scripture and tradition*, announcing the English translation of Laurentin's book on the Infancy narratives; *General and specific studies*; *Liturgy and devotions*, mentioning studies of the apparitions in Medjugorje (Yugoslavia); and, finally, concluded with a list of miscellanea. The discussion which followed was cut short because Father Carroll had to catch a plane for Rome that afternoon.

At 4:30 P.M., we gathered in the Chapel at the Retreat House for a concelebrated Eucharist. Most Reverend Eugene A. Marino, S.S.J., was the presiding celebrant and homilist. He welcomed us to the archdiocese in the name of Archbishop James A. Hickey and prepared the assembly for the eucharistic celebration by speaking to us of Mary and the Liturgy (His homily is published later in these proceedings.). After the Eucharist, the participants gathered for a "happy hour" followed by dinner.

That evening, at 8:00 P.M., the Board of Directors met to discuss future activities of the Society. Present were: Most Reverend Austin B. Vaughan (Episcopal Chairman), Rev. Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M. (President Emeritus), Rev. Emmanuel Sullivan, O.C.D. (President), Rev. James T. O'Connor (Vice-President), Rev. Theodore A. Koehler, S.M. (Secretary), Rev. Albert Bourke, O.C.D. (Treasurer), Rev. Roger M. Charest, S.M.M., Rev. James Parker, Rev. Frederick M. Jelly, O.P. (Board Members), Rev. George Kirwin, O.M.I. and Dr. William H. Marshner (newly-elected Board Members). Rev. J. Armand Robichaud, S.M. (re-elected Board Member), was unable to attend. Also present was Rev. Alfred Boeddeker, O.F.M., invited for the discussion about the new western regional unit of the M.S.A.

The next convention was set for May 29-30, 1985, at the Bergamo Center in Dayton, Ohio (with arrival in the afternoon and evening of May 28). This will make possible a visit to the Marian Library at the University of Dayton. The Board also discussed possible sites for 1986, and selected May 28-29, 1986, with arrival in the afternoon and evening of the 27th (since Memorial Day falls on the 26th that year).

For 1985, the following topics were decided upon: "Mary and Ethics," "Laurentin's New Book on the Infancy Narratives in Comparison with Other Such Studies," "Mary in the Doctrine of Bérulle on the Mysteries of Christ," "The Mariology of Maximilian Kolbe," and (the annual) "A Survey of Recent Mariology." Other topics were also discussed and retained for future conventions. The entire program of 1986 will be dedicated to a commentary on Chapter 8 of *Lumen Gentium*, making use of the *Acta* recently published. The text of Chapter 8 will be divided into four sections: Fr. Frederick Jelly, O.P., will treat the intro-

ductory paragraphs (52-54) in connection with Chapter 7; Fr. James T. O'Connor will treat paragraphs 55-59; Fr. Charles Neumann, S.M., will take paragraphs 60-65; and Fr. George Kirwin, O.M.I., will address paragraphs 66-69.

It was announced that those who have not paid dues for the last three years will be dropped from the membership list printed in *Marian Studies*, 1984. The Secretary explained the circumstances which led to his application for an Employer Identification Number for the MSA. Legal advisors felt that this would be adequate to clarify the tax-exempt nature of the Society.

Fr. Alfred Boedddeker, O.F.M., was then invited to explain to the Board how the western regional unit of the MSA had begun. He mentioned that initially the Servites in Portland (Oregon) and the Marianists in Cupertino (California: Pacific Province) each had in mind an anniversary celebration in which each hoped to involve members of the Mariological Society. Representatives of the two orders met together with several other MSA members, and the western regional unit of the MSA evolved. In the discussion that followed, the purpose of regional units was defined more precisely, based on the past experience already had in Texas and Rhode Island. While the MSA itself has a doctrinal purpose which must be maintained, it was felt that members of the MSA in their various regions may organize conventions and invite non-members to join them for a more pastoral purpose. The many questions raised during this discussion indicated a need for some definite policy about the goals and activities of MSA regional units. The Secretary proposed a new article for the MSA Constitutions. The text of this proposed article will be sent to all eligible members of the Society for study and comment, prior to the vote which will be taken at the Convention of 1985.

The Secretary announced that one hundred answers were received to the survey sheets mailed to all MSA members in 1983 regarding the new coat of arms; a total of sixty-eight color prints (8½" x 11") were requested. The Board decided to ask \$3.00 per color print, in view of printing and mailing costs.

The Board then decided that the price of a foreign subscription to

Marian Studies would be reduced to \$12.00 (instead of \$12.50). This seemed feasible since we use surface mail; we have lost several foreign subscribers because the monetary exchange is very costly abroad. A special rate was also set for foreigners who wish to purchase the three-volume set (1981-82-83) of *Marian Studies* which forms a reappraisal of Marian doctrine for our times: \$32.00 (instead of \$37.50).

Rev. Joseph Schielein, S.M., had asked the Board to propose to the Liturgical Commission the translation into English of the Votive Mass in Honor of Mary, Mother of the Church, which is in the Latin Missal. The Secretary was directed to write to this Commission for the Society. Mr. John R. Page, the Executive Secretary of ICEL (International Commission on English in the Liturgy) answered this letter; included here are several excerpts from his response (July 24, 1984):

First, a point of clarification. The edition of the *Missale Romanum* that contains the formularies for Mary, Mother of the Church is the 1975 edition, the *editio typica altera*. The translation of the *Missale Romanum* used in the United States and in the other English-speaking conferences was done in 1974 from the first edition of the *Missale*, which was published in 1970. This accounts for the omission of the texts in question from the Sacramentary used by the English-speaking countries.

. . . At present the work of revising the whole of the 1974 English translation of the *Missale* is just getting under way. The task is scheduled to be completed by 1989. At that time a new English edition of the Sacramentary will be presented to the conferences of bishops, and it is certain that the texts in honor of Mary, Mother of the Church, revised in the light of comments received on the draft version of 1980, will be included in the revised edition of the Sacramentary.

I am happy to enclose a copy of the Green Book, *Sacramentary: Additional Presidential Prayers*. You will find the prayers for the Votive Mass on pages 9-11. On pages 16-17 you will find the Latin texts and some notes to the English translation. Even though the period of consultation ended some time ago, there is certainly time for mem-

bers of the Mariological Society to offer comments on the translation. ICEL would indeed welcome such comments and bring them to bear in preparing the final version of the texts. . . .

On Wednesday, May 30, the day began with a concelebrated Mass with Bishop Vaughan presiding. Rev. William L. Lahey, S.S.C., of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Winter Haven, Florida, opened the 9:00 A.M. session by introducing Rev. Bertrand Buby, S.M., Provincial Superior of the Marianists of Cincinnati. Father Buby spoke on "Mary, a Model of *Ecclesia Orans*, in Acts 1:14." He used the text of Acts 1, 14 that mentions Mary among the apostles, the women, and the brothers of Jesus gathered in the upper room, to analyze the life of the primitive Church in its beginnings: a life in which Luke stressed the constant importance of prayer. The comparison of Acts with the Gospel of Luke and with the Fourth Gospel is important for understanding the beginning of the Church in the history of salvation. The comparison with the first chapters of Luke's Gospel reveals the link between the origin of Jesus and the birth of the Church: each is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Fourth Gospel, containing the scene of Jesus with Mary and the Beloved Disciple beneath the Cross at Calvary, provides another comparison with the Acts of the Apostles: an ecclesiology of unity. Mary appears as the link between the Old and New Testaments, between the eleven apostles, the women, the brothers of Jesus. Finally, an image of the praying Church, Mary appears at the beginning of the spreading of the Church, so well indicated in the progressive summary statements that Luke uses to show how, step-by-step, the Church became universal—from Jerusalem to Rome. Father Lahey, as Reactor, guided the discussion which followed this presentation.

After a brief intermission, Rev. James M. Reese, O.S.F.S., of Jamaica, New York, introduced Rev. Ronald D. Lawler, O.F.M.Cap., of St. John's University there, to deliver an address entitled "Divine Faith, Private Revelation, Popular Devotion." Father Lawler first insisted on the principle that living divine faith is the center of all our piety and that, therefore, all our devotion and private revelations are at the service of our faith. The history of the Church reveals a constant faithfulness to

the central realities of revelation. In particular, we see God's closeness to his people, to the little ones. The Spirit appears powerful in the life of the faithful; there must be a pastoral acceptance of special gifts of God. But the Spirit calls us back to the essential revelation: God's merciful salvation; we cannot substitute the peripheral for the essential. We must be aware of the forces that could draw the faithful away from true supernatural faith. Private revelations and popular devotions can be approved by the Church, as gifts of God—even in hostile environments—to support the Christian life in our times. The Reactor, Father Reese, directed the discussion following this address.

The afternoon session began at 1:30 P.M. Father Frederick Miller of St. Thomas More Church in Fairfield, New Jersey, introduced Rev. J. Patrick Gaffney, S.M.M., theology professor at St. Louis University, for his address on "St. Louis Grignion de Montfort and the Marian Consecration." The speaker began with some preliminary explanations about Montfortian spirituality: the place given to the Marian consecration, the Trinitarian and Christocentric characteristics of this consecration, its place in the life and writings of Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort. In this context, one could see immediately the true theological foundations of this consecration.

Montfort began with the biblical revelation of God's will about Mary in our history of salvation: God saved the world through his Son who came among us through Mary, his Mother and Associate in his work as Redeemer. For Montfort, this divine maternity is the principle of all Marian doctrine and devotion, and it is a unique, permanent relationship with the Persons of the Holy Trinity, because Mary was invited freely to consent to the Incarnation of her and our Redeemer. She was full of grace and became Mother of all the members of Jesus' Mystical Body. Queen of all hearts—she is, therefore, a model for all mankind to receive Jesus, Eternal Wisdom; she is mediatrix to the only Mediator. Father Gaffney also explained the true meaning of the expression "slaves of Jesus and Mary": an act of love. The consecration, united with the renewal of the baptismal promises, is a perfect renewal of the grace of Baptism, a surrender to Jesus and his Spirit, to live in union with Mary and to share fully in the graces of our Redemption. During

the ensuing discussion, the speaker clarified more precisely the value of the Montfortian consecration in our times, as shown by the consecration of the world made by John Paul II.

The convention ended with a final business meeting. The new President, Rev. Emmanuel Sullivan, O.C.D., announced that the next convention will be held at Bergamo Center in Dayton, Ohio, on May 29-30, 1985. Two reports were given about regional activities. Rev. Matthew Morry, O.P., responded for the Rhode Island region; Rev. Charles Neumann, S.M., and Rev. Frederick Jelly, O.P., reported for the Texas region. The Treasurer informed those present that the Society had a current balance of \$10,982.82. The President then brought the meeting to a close, expressing the gratitude of the Society to the following:

- a) to His Excellency, the Most Reverend James A. Hickey, Archbishop of Washington, for inviting us to his diocese, and to his Auxiliary, the Most Reverend Eugene A. Marino, S.S.J., for sharing the Eucharistic Celebration with us and for welcoming us to Washington.
- 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. Robert Andrews, to Mr. Arthur B. Clinton, Jr., to Chaplain Major Alfred M. Croke, to the Marian Fathers of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and to Very Reverend Stanley Matuszewski (editor of *Our Lady's Digest*) for their generous contributions to our Society—and to the 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 Washington Retreat House, especially to Sister Mary Emerson, for the warm and efficient hospitality extended to us these past two days.
- e) and, finally, to our distinguished speakers and reactors, for their scholarly papers and thought-provoking discussions.

Having determined that there was no more business to transact, the President entertained a motion for adjournment; the motion was seconded and unanimously approved. The 1984 Convention ended with the *Salve Regina*.

In concluding this report on the Thirty-Fifth National Convention, I would like to present here some messages of interest which were directed to the Society over the past months. First, as Secretary of the MSA, I received the following communication from the Apostolic Delegate (March 16, 1984):

Dear Father Koehler:

With gratitude I wish to acknowledge your letter of March 13, 1984 and the packet of information you enclosed relative to the upcoming 35th National Convention of the Mariological Society of America.

Your thoughtfulness in making this documentation available to me is sincerely appreciated. Permit me to take this opportunity to offer my best wishes for every success as you meet in Washington on May 29-30, 1984.

With kind regards, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,
(signed) Pio Laghi
Apostolic Delegate.

Many members of the Society who could not come for the annual convention also sent greetings and regrets. Among these were two letters from a longtime member, with news of some significant changes in his life. Former Maryknoller Edwin J. McCabe is now Fr. Maria Justin McCabe, O.C.S.O., at Our Lady of Joy Monastery in Hong Kong. In a note on December 22, 1983, he enclosed his Solemn Profession card as a "Cistercian Monk for God and the Whole Mission World" (December 11, 1983), and in February 1984, along with his dues for the year, came a note containing the following:

. . . Happy to continue as a member. In any case as a Trappist all and any holy manner to honor Our Blessed Mother is included in

our Vow of Conversion or ongoing progress in the spiritual life. In a way all Trappists are "members" of the Mariological Society of the world.

Certainly, just as the membership of the Mariological Society of America transcends American geographic boundaries, so too, the special concern for Marian studies which unites us deepens our appreciation of the universal mission of the Woman chosen to be Mother to God's Son and, in him, to all God's children.

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