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REPORT ON REGIONAL MEETINGS OF THE MSA

In my presidential address last year, one of the proposals that I made to our membership was "to resurrect the MSA's practice of providing regional meetings" (*Marian Studies*, 1977, p. 19). I should like to make a report on the regional meeting held at the Dominican House of Studies for members of the greater Washington, D.C. area in the hope that other regions will do likewise. Several have expressed their interest and intention to organize regional meetings in their areas. This information will be included at the end of the report. Please bear in mind from the outset that these regional meetings are not to substitute for the annual national conventions, but to stimulate greater interest in them.

More than a month prior to our regional meeting last May, I contacted our membership in the greater Washington area by letter informing them of the program. Approximately 15-20 were able to participate, a good response proportionately. The program began at 11 a.m., Monday, May 16, 1977, with a paper given by Fr. George Kirwin, O.M.I. on *The Nature of Mary's Queenship in Recent Thought*, a topic based on his doctoral thesis. Fr. Eamon Carroll, O.Carm., who had directed the dissertation for the theology faculty at CUA, led the discussion. Some very interesting observations were made on Fr. Kirwin's fine presentation, particularly about appropriating the image of Mary as Queen for contemporary Mariology and Marian devotion. At noon we recessed for refreshments and lunch.

We resumed at about 1 p.m. when I made some comments on the proposals in my 1977 presidential address. These proposals were then discussed and voted upon for our region in

the form of several resolutions. A summary of what was resolved is as follows: regarding the regional meetings themselves, that our region, at least for the time being, embrace the Middle Atlantic States, and that we meet next the latter part of April, 1978 in Washington; that Fr. Eamon Carroll, Dr. Ross Mackenzie, and Fr. Fred Jelly be the Committee on Collaboration (cf. *Marian Studies*, 1977, p. 19) for our region; that this Committee help organize teams of speakers on Marian topics, especially to conduct seminars, workshops, etc. at centers of priestly and religious formation, and to assist the leadership at the national level to coordinate the efforts of the various regions; that, without prejudice to the status of associate membership in the MSA, more laity, women as well as men, be attracted to become active members; that there be greater communication between members of the MSA during the time between annual conventions as well as between members of the MSA and other national Marian societies, diocesan commissions, etc., particularly by means of a Newsletter or circular letter.

The final item of business before we adjourned about 3 p.m. was to agree upon some basic ideas about Mary and the renewal of catechetics in our time which would be submitted to Cardinal Carberry for his consideration to be used at the Synod of Bishops held in Rome last October. These ideas were sent to His Eminence and they included such observations as: the need to emphasize the biblical basis of Marian doctrines; the importance of liturgical catechesis on Mary in our parishes; the advantages for Christian faith and life to contemplate the Marian dogmas within the context of Vatican II's "hierarchy of truths"; the need for greater concentration upon doctrinal content; and the place of non-liturgical devotions to Mary.

The following members of our Society have indicated their willingness to organize meetings in their regions: Frs. Francis G. Wearden and Charles Neumann, S.M. in the Houston and San Antonio areas as a regional center for Texas; Fr. Matthew

F. Morry, O.P. in the New England region; and Fr. Alexis E. McCarthy, O.Carm. in the greater Chicago area. My prayerful best wishes for success in all these regions with the hope that eventually there will be a regional meeting accessible to each one of the members of MSA.

REV. FREDERICK M. JELLY, O.P.