

2-11-1957

Secretary's Report on the Chicago Convention

Mariological Society of America

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies

Recommended Citation

Mariological Society of America (1957) "Secretary's Report on the Chicago Convention," *Marian Studies*: Vol. 8, Article 3, Pages 5-12.

Available at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies/vol8/iss1/3

This Front Matter is brought to you for free and open access by the Marian Library Publications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Marian Studies by an authorized editor of eCommons. For more information, please contact mschlange1@udayton.edu, ecommons@udayton.edu.

REPORT ON THE CHICAGO CONVENTION

THE Eighth Annual Convention of the Mariological Society of America was held at the Hotel Morrison, in Chicago, Illinois, on Thursday and Friday, January 3 and 4, 1957. The two-day meeting, which was attended by approximately 125 delegates from the United States and Canada, centered mainly on the much-disputed problem of Our Lady's death.

The first general assembly was called to order at ten o'clock in the morning by the Rev. Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M., secretary of the Society. In his introductory remarks, Father Carol extended cordial greetings to all the guests, and wished them a very enjoyable and profitable sojourn in Chicago. He then introduced the Most Reverend Raymond P. Hillinger, Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago, who, as personal representative of the Cardinal Archbishop, addressed the "official welcome" to the delegates, and expressed his sincere wishes for the continued success of the organization.

After thanking Bishop Hillinger for his warm welcome, the secretary announced that the Rev. Bernard J. Le Frois, S.V.D., president of the Society, had been transferred by his Superiors to the Philippine Islands, and that he had recently submitted his resignation in a letter addressed to the members of the Society. The secretary read the nostalgically worded message and remarked that Father Le Frois' resignation was accepted only reluctantly and with deep regrets. He took the opportunity to thank the retiring president publicly for the outstanding services rendered to the Mariological Society during the brief period of his presidency, and wished him abundant success in his new field of activity.

The untimely death of our beloved vice-president, the Very Rev. Peter A. Resch, S.M., likewise called for a few pertinent remarks by the secretary. Father Resch was summoned to his eternal reward on April 29, 1956. He had been an active and

enthusiastic member of our organization from the very beginning, a true friend and a generous benefactor when the Society needed him most.

The secretary then informed the audience that Father Salvatore Bonano, C.M.F., the keynote speaker of the Convention, had wired his inability to attend the meeting, due to a sudden illness. In view of this unpleasant development, the order of papers on the program had to be rearranged by the chairman. The secretary expressed his deep concern for Father Bonano's health, wished him a speedy recovery, and asked the members of the Society to remember him in their prayers. We are happy that, having recovered in the meantime, the distinguished Claretian theologian was able to finish his excellent paper so that it could appear in this volume of the PROCEEDINGS.

At the conclusion of his introductory remarks, the secretary called on Father John F. Sweeney, S.J., to introduce Father Walter J. Burghardt, S.J., the next speaker on the program. Father Burghardt regaled his audience with a brilliant exposition of *The Testimony of the Patristic Age Concerning Mary's Death*. After a careful examination of the available data, the learned scholar concluded that the present champions of Mary's immortality could hardly base their theory on the teaching of the early Church.

At 12 30 in the afternoon the Convention delegates were invited to the luxurious *Cotillion Room* of the hotel, where the traditional refreshments were served, followed by an exquisite luncheon.

The second general meeting was called to order promptly at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The secretary announced that, with the approval of the Board of Directors, the election of officers would be held at this time, instead of Friday afternoon. He invited the Very Rev. Stanley Matuszewski, M.S., chairman of the Nominating Committee, to come to the podium and submit

the names of the various candidates. Father Matuszewski explained that this was not a normal election year, but that since the president had resigned, and the vice-president had gone to his eternal reward, it was deemed advantageous to select their successors at this time for the period of one year, until the following January. He then proceeded to read the list of candidates as follows: For president, the Rev. Eamon R. Carroll, O.Carm.; for vice-president, the Rev. Walter J. Burghardt, S.J.; for the Board of Directors, the Rev. Fathers Roger M. Charest, S.M.M., and Richard Kugelman, C.P. (for a period of three years), and the Rev. Denis M. McAuliffe, O.P. (for a period of two years, filling the vacancy left by Father Carroll). The above slate having been unanimously approved by the delegates present, the secretary invited the newly-elected president to take his rightful place on the rostrum and to conduct the remainder of the session.

The president called upon Father Joseph Montalverne, O.F.M., discussion leader for the next scheduled paper, to introduce the speaker, Father James M. Egan, O.P., of Notre Dame, Indiana. In his scholarly lecture on *The Doctrine of Mary's Death During the Scholastic Period*, the learned Dominican showed conclusively that the Catholic theologians of those centuries were in unanimous agreement on the fact of Our Lady's death. The extended and very lively discussion which followed had to be brought to a close, rather abruptly, lest it might interfere with the next item on the program.

At 4 o'clock the members of the Society gathered in the beautiful Franciscan Church of St. Peter, across the street from the hotel, for the customary religious services. His Eminence, Samuel Cardinal Stritch presided over the Holy Hour and also delivered a very appropriate sermon in which he emphasized that Catholic devotion to Mary was based on the authentic teaching of the Church concerning her sublime mission and prerogatives. The sermon was followed by the recita-

tion of the Rosary, a few Marian hymns, and benediction with the Most Blessed Sacrament

On the second day of the Convention, at 10 o'clock in the morning, the delegates were privileged to hear the Rev. John P. O'Connell, of Chicago, on the subject *The Testimony of the Sacred Liturgy Relative to Mary's Death*. The well-known speaker outlined the complex history of the feast of the Assumption (originally known as the "Dormition"), analyzed the contents of the orations *Veneranda* and *Subveniat*, and concluded that the liturgy left no room for doubt concerning the fact that Our Lady had actually died. The spirited discussion occasioned by his paper was conducted by Father Eamon R. Carroll, O Carm, president of the Society.

After a ten-minute recess, the guests returned to the Embassy Room for the next scheduled paper. The session featured a very interesting and thought-provoking lecture on *The Thesis of Mary's Death in the Light of "Munificentissimus Deus,"* by the Rev William Coyle, C.SS R, of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. Having surveyed the various opinions of theologians on the subject, Father Coyle expressed his preference for the view of those who contend that the papal document neither endorses nor rejects the thesis of Mary's death. The profitable discussion, in which not a few of the delegates took an active part, was conducted by the Rev Lawrence P Everett, C.SS R.

The afternoon session was called to order by the president at 2 o'clock, and was presided over by His Excellency, the Most Rev Raymond P Hillinger, Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago. The Rev. William G Most, of Dubuque, Iowa, read part of his lengthy dissertation on *The Teaching of Post-Tridentine Theologians Concerning Mary's Death*. After assessing numerous witnesses (found mostly in Balić's well-known collection *Testimonia de Assumptione* . . .), the speaker advanced the opinion that, while there was a moral unanimity among theo-

gians of that period concerning Mary's death, nevertheless, their consensus did not necessarily constitute a reliable argument pointing to the revealed character of the doctrine. The reason is that a large number of the authors surveyed mention this event only in passing and adduce no reasons in its favor. They simply take it for granted. The animated exchange of views following the lecture, was led with great ability by the Very Rev. Msgr. George W. Shea, president of the Catholic Theological Society of America .

The final item on the agenda was the business meeting at 3:30 in the afternoon. It opened with a brief report by the Rev. Armand J. Robichaud, S M , treasurer, on the financial status of the Society during the year 1956. His detailed statement appears on p. 167 of this volume.

The secretary's own report disclosed that the 1958 National Convention would be held at the Miami Hotel in Dayton, Ohio, on Thursday and Friday, January 2 and 3. The general theme for discussion will be: *The Mutual Relationship between Mary and the Church*. He explained that Dayton had been selected by the Board of Directors in order to give our delegates an opportunity to visit the famed Marian Library located on the grounds of the University. The secretary then read the long list of applications for membership and, upon a duly seconded motion, all applicants were officially enrolled in the Society. This brought our present membership to 354, of which 295 are active members, and 59 associate members. The total given takes into consideration the forty-three individuals who forfeited their membership during 1956 because of their failure to pay their dues for two consecutive years. It was also explained that, in the future, all annual dues would be collected, not by the secretary, but by the treasurer of the Society. Finally, the secretary announced that he had been appointed by the Board of Directors to represent the Mariological Society at the International Marian Congress to be held in Lourdes in

1958. Since he himself was not planning to attend the Congress, the secretary had suggested that Father Eamon Carroll, the newly-elected president, be given that honor. The secretary informed those present that the members of the Board had unanimously endorsed his suggestion.

The final report was that of the president. Father Carroll began by announcing that sixteen papers had been submitted by students of theology for the annual Seminarians' Contest and that, while many of them were excellent, the choice of the judges fell on Frater Dominic M. Crossan, O.S.M., of Lake Bluff, Illinois. The title of his entry was: *Mary's Virginity in St. John. An Exegetical Study*. The president said that the secretary had been instructed to wire the congratulations of the Society to the winner, and to send him a check for \$100.00 at once. Father Carroll then disclosed that the priest winner of the Mariological Award for 1956 was the Rev. Dominic J. Unger, O.F.M. Cap., of Washington, D. C., and he proceeded to read the following citation:

THE MARIOLOGICAL AWARD FOR 1956

Citation

One of the primary aims of The Mariological Society of America is to stimulate scientific work in Marian theology among its members. As a means to this end, the Society offers a special award each year to one of its active members who has distinguished himself for his contributions to the field of Mariology. This year the committee in charge of selecting a worthy candidate is happy to bestow this honor on the Reverend Dominic J. Unger, O.F.M. Cap., of Washington, D. C.

Father Unger was born in Herndon, Kansas. His early studies were made with the Capuchin Fathers at Kays, Kansas, and Herman, Pennsylvania. He followed the regular course in philosophy at St. Fidelis Seminary, Victoria, Kansas, and in theology at the Capuchin College in Washington, D. C.

At the completion of his studies in 1935, Father Unger was sent to Rome where he obtained the licentiate in Sacred Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, and the licentiate in Sacred Scripture at the Pontifical Biblical

Institute After another year of study as candidate for the doctorate, he was assigned to teach Sacred Scripture and ethics at St Fidelis Seminary in Victoria, Kansas In 1943 he was transferred to the Capuchin house of theology in Washington, D C, where for ten consecutive years he taught Sacred Scripture, liturgy and ascetical theology In 1953 the Superior General of his Order summoned Father Unger to the Eternal City as a member of the Capuchin Historical Institute, an assignment which he had to relinquish after two years, owing to ill health

Father Unger's contributions to Marian doctrine and devotion are well known in this country and abroad His major Mariological work entitled *The First-Gospel: Genesis 3 15* represents years of patient research, and reveals the vast erudition of the author In his book *Our Lady's Daily Hours* he has gathered copious and valuable information on the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin From the Mariologist's point of view, his most important publications in pamphlet form are those dealing with the encyclicals *Ineffabilis Deus*, *Ad diem illum*, and *Munificentissimus Deus*

Besides the above-mentioned books and pamphlets, Father Unger has written numerous and very thoughtful articles for such highly esteemed periodicals as *The American Ecclesiastical Review*, *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, *The Catholic Educational Review*, *Collectanea Franciscana*, *Franciscan Studies*, *Marianum*, *Theological Studies*, and *MARIAN STUDIES*

Today, as we bring to a close this Eighth National Convention of our Society, we are happy to honor this distinguished Marian author by conferring on him the special Mariological Award for the year 1956 May it prove a source of encouragement to him in his further labors in the service of Our Blessed Mother

After receiving the check for \$100 00 from the president, Father Unger addressed a few words to the delegates expressing his profound gratitude for the public recognition given to his publications in the field of Mariology.

Before adjourning the meeting, the president thanked very sincerely all those who, by their presence and co-operation, had contributed to make the Chicago Convention a real success He singled out the following as particularly deserving of gratitude: His Eminence, Cardinal Stritch, for having so graciously invited us to his archdiocese and sponsored the meeting, His Excellency, Bishop Hillinger, for honoring us with his presence at several of the sessions, and for his generous donation to the

Society, the Very Rev. Stanley Matuszewski, M.S., editor of *Our Lady's Digest*, for his continuous financial support of our organization; Father Terence Thomas, O.F.M., for his kind co-operation in connection with the Holy Hour services; the management of the Morrison Hotel, for its efficiency and courtesy in handling all matter pertaining to the meeting; the various speakers and discussion leaders for their excellent papers and discussion; and finally, the various committees and the Board of Directors for their co-operation in helping to organize the Convention. The meeting adjourned with a prayer of thanksgiving by His Excellency, Bishop Hillinger, at approximately 4:30.