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REPORT ON THE LOUISVILLE CONVENTION

For the second consecutive year The Mariological Society of America chose as its general topic for discussion the nexus between Our Blessed Lady and the various salvation history themes. The papers were read at the Seventeenth Annual Convention, held at the Sheraton Hotel in Louisville, Ky on Monday and Tuesday, January 3 and 4, 1966, under the auspices of His Excellency, the Most Reverend John A. Floersch, D.D., Archbishop of Louisville.

The first session began promptly at ten o'clock in the morning with a few words from Archbishop Floersch. While extending a warm welcome to the assembled guests, he recalled with obvious pride that devotion to Our Lady had been quite evident in the history of his archdiocese from the very beginning, as witness the dedication of some of its oldest churches to honor Marian titles. Following His Excellency at the podium, the Rt. Rev. Msgr George W. Shea, Rector of Immaculate Conception Seminary, Darlington, N.J., read his presidential address entitled *Mary in the Documents of Vatican II*. Among other things, the distinguished speaker called attention to the fact that the Council had spoken of Our Blessed Lady in ten of its sixteen documents. This—he pointed out—is sufficient to answer the accusation that the Council Fathers were endeavoring to downgrade the Mother of God. The fact that Monsignor Shea was himself a *peritus* at the Council lent no little weight to his observations on the subject.

Having finished his own address, the President introduced the next speaker, the Rev. Anthony T. Padovano, professor of dogmatic theology at the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Darlington, N.J. Father Padovano spoke on Our Lady as "Mother of the Church." It was not his purpose to trace this title back to its original appearance in Catholic literature,

but rather to evaluate its doctrinal content in a truly theological setting, and to answer some of the objections recently raised against it. He showed how even our separated brethren would not be hostile to this title if properly explained and understood.

At 3:30 in the afternoon the guests gathered again in the general assembly room for the election of new officers and members of the board of directors. The following slate, submitted by the Rev. George F. Kirwin, O.M.I., chairman of the nominating committee, was unanimously approved by the delegates: *President*: Father William G. Most, of Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa; *Vice-President*: Father Alban A. Maguire, O.F.M., Rector of Holy Name College, Washington, D.C.; *Secretary*: Father Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M., of St. Bonaventure Monastery, Paterson, N.J.; *Treasurer*: Father J. Armand Robichaud, S.M., of Boston, Mass. *Board of Directors*: Father Hugh M. McElwain, O.S.M., of Lake Bluff, Ill., and Father Cletus Wessels, O.P., of Dubuque, Iowa. Father Eric May, O.F.M. Cap., of Garrison, N.Y., was elected to replace Father Edmund Andrés, C.M.F. who had requested to be relieved of his duties.

Immediately after the election, the delegates heard a lecture on *Our Lady and the Incarnation* by the Rev. Cletus Wessels, O.P., professor of dogmatic theology at Mount St. Bernard's Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. After a detailed comparison between the Lucan pericope of the Annunciation with various O.T. passages, the lecturer drew our attention to the striking similarity of concepts and even words used in them. He concluded that, as a result of Mary's role in the Incarnation, she has a place of paramount importance in the history of salvation. By her virginity, Mary is a sign of total dependence on God; she represents Israel and, by her admirable faith, a sign of the necessity of man's response to God. She is likewise the Mother of the Church both by reason of her physical motherhood and by her sublime faith. Father Wessels' paper was deemed notable particularly for its clear and orderly treatment of a difficult subject.

The general session on the second day of the meeting opened at 9:30 in the morning with a very scholarly dissertation on *Eschatology and Our Lady*, by the Rev. George T. Montague, S.M., of St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas. Taking into consideration the latest developments in the field of S. Scripture, the author pointed out that biblical eschatology has the twofold dimension of eschatology-fulfilled and eschatology-forecast. He went on to show how Our Blessed Lady is presented in the N.T. under both aspects. The earliest documents, including Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2, reveal Mary in her virginal motherhood and especially in her response of faith as witness to the realized eschatology of the new people of God. She stands out as the virgin Daughter Sion, the ramnant, to whom the Messiah is promised. Luke particularly portrays Mary as the ideal model of N.T. faith, and hence of the Church. In the Apocalypse we see Our Lady set in the eschatological forecast of the Church. The image of the woman bearing the messianic people in pain was no longer merely a metaphor but, as in Luke 1-2, was dramatized and realized in the person of Mary.

The second half of the morning session was devoted to a very thought-provoking discussion on *Our Lady and Christ's Saving Role* by the newly-elected President, Father William G. Most, of Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa. The well-known mariologist undertook to answer those who claim that an understanding of Mary's Coredemption is impossible until we have a theologically plausible theory on the Redemption itself. Briefly, Father Most interprets the Redemption in a covenant framework, and holds: (1) that both old and new covenants were bilateral agreements; (2) that neither *moved* the Father to reconciliation, since they are (on a secondary, not a fundamental level) just a *ratio cohonestans* by which His love wishes to bind itself so that He would owe it to Himself to grant favor. He acted thus in order to reassure men, and to move them to respond. The author then brought out that (3) the obedience

of Christ (cf. *Rom.* 5:19) and of Mary (cf. Vatican II, *Const. De Ecclesia*, Ch. 8, n. 61) formed the human condition in the new contractual covenant, or, in other words, the "price" of our Redemption.

The last paper featured on the program was to be given by the Rev. Bernard J. Cooke, S.J., of Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wis. Since the speaker himself was unable to attend the meeting, the appointed discussion leader, Father Eugene Peterman, C.P., graciously volunteered to serve as a substitute. The paper in question dealt with a topic seldom treated by Catholic theologians, namely, *Our Lady and the Sacraments*. It endeavored to show, giving concrete illustrations, how a genuine attachment to the mystery of Mary is in no way opposed to a growing depth of sacramental life. On the contrary, Father Cooke said, the more profound and accurate our understanding of Mary, the better will we understand the attitudes and values which we are meant to express in the faith-commitment which is the very heart of our sacramental participation.

During the business meeting which followed immediately after Father Cooke's paper, several reports were read, e.g. by Father Philip C. Hoelle, S.M., chairman of regional meetings; by Father J. Armand Robichaud, S.M., on the financial status of the Society; and by Father John P. Schaefer, C.S.S.R., on the forthcoming pilgrimages to Rome in connection with the centennial celebrations of St. Alfonso's Church. On behalf of the Secretary (present but somewhat indisposed), the President, Father Most, announced that the next annual convention would be held at the Passionists' Retreat House in North Palm Beach, Fla. on Monday and Tuesday, January 2 and 3, 1967, pending approval of the Ordinary, Bishop Coleman Carroll. Father Most also read the list of applicants for membership, asked for a vote, and all were officially enrolled. The Society, he said, now had 383 members, of which 331 are active, 52 associate. The various reports were immediately followed by the reading of the usual citation in connection with the annual award.

THE MARIOLOGICAL AWARD FOR 1966

Citation

In its endeavor to promote scholarly work in the field of Marian theology, The Mariological Society of America confers an annual Award on one of its members in recognition of unusual merit. The candidate deemed worthy of the honor this year is the distinguished Spanish theologian, Reverend Ovidio Casado Fuente, head of the theology department at Lewis College, Lockport, Illinois.

Father Casado was born in La Felguera (Austrias), Spain in 1927. He studied the Humanities in Segovia (1937-1942), and Philosophy and Theology in Santo Domingo de la Calzada (1942-1950), where he was ordained to the holy priesthood in 1950. He received his Doctorate in Sacred Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University of Rome, Italy, in 1956, and the diploma on Paleography and Diplomatics at the Vatican School of Paleography in 1953. At present he is a candidate for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Prior to his taking up permanent residence in the United States in 1960, Father Casado was professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Major Seminary of Santo Domingo de la Calzada for six consecutive years. It was mainly in his native Spain that Father Casado displayed an uncommon activity in the field of Mariology through his many lectures and publications. His vast erudition, reflecting years of patient and careful research, is at once evident in the several scholarly contributions he made to *Ephemerides Mariologicae*, *Estudios Marianos* and other well known periodicals. The first volume of his massive work entitled *Classical Spanish Mariology*, published in Madrid in 1958, reveals the author's remarkable ability as a speculative theologian, and has deservedly received the enthusiastic acclaim of professionals everywhere.

As a further indication of Father Casado's varied interests in the scientific field, we note his active membership in the following organizations: The Spanish Mariological Society, The Theological Society of the Sacred Hearts, The Institute "Francisco Suárez," The American Catholic

Philosophical Association, Phi Alpha Theta, National Honor Society in History, and of course, The Mariological Society of America.

While paying this fitting tribute to him on this occasion, The Mariological Society of America expresses the hope that Father Casado will be stimulated to further valuable contributions to the field of scientific Mariology.

The matter of the award being finished, Fr. Most proceeded to extend a word of sincere thanks to the delegates present for their active participation in the Louisville meeting. He likewise singled out the following as deserving of special gratitude: His Excellency, Archbishop Floerssh, for inviting the Society to his archdiocese; Bishop John J. Wright of Pittsburgh, for his continued support of our various undertakings; the Rev. Linus Giesler, pastor of the Cathedral of the Assumption, for his assistance in facilitating the celebration of Holy Mass during the convention; the Very Rev. Stanley Matuszewski, M.S., editor of *Our Lady's Digest*, for his generous donations to the Society; the various speakers and discussion leaders for their learned papers and informative exchange of views; and finally, the management of the Sheraton Hotel for its cooperation and efficient service.

When the President asked if there were any further business to be discussed, Fathers Bennet Kelly, C.P. and Edward D. O'Connor, C.S.C. made the timely suggestion that something tangible should be done in order to increase attendance at our annual meetings. Several opinions were expressed and evaluated, and the President said that perhaps the ideal thing might be if each member attending the convention took a special effort to bring a companion along. The meeting adjourned at exactly 3:00 P.M. with a prayer by the President.