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SUMMARY REPORT ON REPLIES TO THE SEMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE

Fr. Frederick M. Jelly, O.P.
President of the MSA

Before summarizing my report on the replies to the above letter and questionnaire, I should like to call your special attention to the proposals made in the final part of my presidential address which recommend some ways in which our Society can help meet the need of providing more adequate preparation in marian doctrine and devotion for our future priests. If you are interested in any further details, please send your questions directly to me and I shall do my very best to answer them.

Although there were only 30 replies to about 260 questionnaires sent out, and approximately 24 of these represented centers of priestly formation, they do speak for a good cross-section of seminaries around the country in just about every kind of American setting: the diocesan seminary both local and regional; religious houses of studies; centers of forming future priests that are part of consortia with ecumenical and interdisciplinary theological education as well as those geographically removed from access to universities and other Christian seminaries. The following statistics, therefore, are quite representative:

1. Two require 'explicit' courses in Mariology; 7 provide electives; and cir. 15 have no such 'explicit' or distinct courses.
2. Thirteen out of these 15 teach marian doctrine in the context of other courses: 6 in Christology; 4 in Ecclesiology; 1 in

Scripture; 1 in the theology of grace; and, 1 in Christian anthropology.

3. Two provide periodic lectures on mariological questions; on the whole, however, very little is done in this area.
4. About 4 considered that 'explicit' courses should be required; most of the remainder thought Mariology should be treated in the Christology or Ecclesiology courses, and that there ought to be periodic programs of special lectures, seminars or workshops on mariological topics.
5. All celebrate the solemnities, feasts and obligatory memorials—some with greater degree of solemnity than others; very few choose options such as the Mass of BVM on Saturday which often depends upon the one who is presiding at the community Mass; the preaching of homilies on Mary with practical significance for the seminarians' or religious clerics' daily life seemed to be quite deficient and part of a much wider problem, namely, the lack of such preaching on any Christian topic.
6. A few places provide optional recitation of the Rosary in common or other forms of marian devotion outside the Liturgy; usually just a small percentage of the total community participate.
7. A variety of suggestions mainly centering upon devotion as solidly based in Scripture and living Tradition of the Church taught in seminary courses and also the application of marian doctrine and devotion to the pastoral ministries.

My only comment as a practical conclusion from this survey is that our Society must offer its rich resources in the ministry of renewing Mariology and devotion to Mary in our seminaries and other centers of priestly formation. The replies to our questionnaire indeed indicate that much is being done upon which we can build. At the same time much more can and should be accomplished. Once again I refer you to my presidential address for the specifics such as forming an MSA com-

mittee on collaboration, reviving the seminarians' annual contest under a modified format, restoring regional meetings between annual conventions, improving the channels of communication by a newsletter, and, as soon as possible, organizing teams of speakers to visit seminaries.