

## REPORT ON REGIONAL MEETINGS, 1954-55

### I

#### THE FACTS

During the academic year 1954-55, four regional meetings were held: two in the Baltimore-Washington region, one in the Metropolitan New York area, and one in the Boston area—as follows:

(1) A full-day meeting was held at St. John's Seminary, Brighton, Massachusetts, November 26, 1954. The morning session featured a paper on "The Immortality of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Light of the Encyclical, *Munificentissimus Deus*," by Bertin Farrell, C.P.; discussion followed. In the afternoon session two papers were presented by John Ford, S.J., on "The Moral Evaluations of Films by the Legion of Decency," and "The Refusal of Blood Transfusions by Jehovah's Witnesses," each followed by discussion. Attendance: 45.

(2) An afternoon meeting at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, December 15, 1954, featured a short paper, followed by discussion, on "The Natural Virtues and the Supernatural Life," by Thomas A. Brophy, S.J., and an informal seminar on dogmatic topics. Attendance: approximately 60, exclusive of seminarians.

(3) A full-day meeting was held at St. John's University, Brooklyn, New York, December 28, 1954. The morning session featured a full-length paper on "Modernism," prepared by Vincent Nugent, C.M., and John Flynn, C.M., and read by Father Nugent. In the afternoon session Charles Connors, C.S.Sp., spoke on "Cooperation of a Husband With a Wife Who is Using an Occlusive Pessary," and Martin J. Healy led a discussion on problems in apologetics. Attendance: 46.

(4) In an afternoon meeting at St. Paul's College, Washington, D. C., February 9, 1955, Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., introduced and guided a discussion on "The Excision of Healthy Bodily Members," while James A. Brennan, S.S., led an informal seminar on moral questions. Attendance: approximately 30, exclusive of seminarians.

In addition to these four meetings which have already taken place, specific plans have been formulated for regional meetings in the Chi-

cago and in the Quebec-Ontario areas, to be held in the fall of 1955. In both instances the groundwork has been laid, and it only remains to iron out technical difficulties.

With respect to the Cleveland area, an admirably thorough investigation by the regional chairman has resulted in the following conclusions:

(a) The Cleveland region as now constituted (Ohio, Kentucky, Michigan) is too vast to make a short regional meeting in the City of Cleveland practicable, save for those living within easy striking distance.

(b) The Cleveland area members from the City of Cleveland itself find themselves unable to attend regional meetings in any other city of the region as now constituted; on the other hand, they feel that a local meeting would prove genuinely beneficial in fostering interest in the CTSA and in theology generally.

(c) The Cleveland area members should make every effort to thrash out the problems involved during the current CTSA Convention.

In consequence of charity, generosity, and gracious hospitality too widespread to be detailed here, expenses incurred by the treasury of the CTSA amounted to only \$46.00.

## II

### A CRITIQUE

It is no exaggeration to say that the experience of the past year justifies the recommendations made at the 1954 Convention with respect to regional meetings, and warrants continued effort on the part of the Committee on Regional Meetings in the year to come. In consequence of this experience, and with an eye to 1955-56, the Committee respectfully submits the following *credo* for regional meetings.

Regional meetings were most successful where as many of the following items as possible were fused together: where

- (1) the *content* of the formal papers
  - (a) was particularized, that is, was not too general or vast in scope;
  - (b) was of some current interest or vital significance;

- (2) the *presentation*
  - (a) was brief, that is, less than one-half hour in length;
  - (b) had as its primary aim to stimulate discussion and to suggest problems;
  - (c) omitted material perhaps relevant but almost certainly familiar to the specialized audience;
- (3) the *discussion* period
  - (a) was properly prepared for by advance distribution of papers or outlines;
  - (b) was more than a series of questions directed to the discussion leader and answered by him;
  - (c) encourage the spirit of audience participation, and took for granted that an audience of this nature was capable of making a substantial contribution to the matter under discussion.

It remains only for the Committee on Regional Meetings to express its deep-seated gratitude to the various chairmen whose selfless co-operation has transformed the dream of regional meetings into reality: Msgr. Lawrence J. Riley, and Fathers Richard Brosseau, Francis D. Costa, Edward J. Hogan, James Mara, Paul E. McKeever, and Gregory J. Staniszewski.

Dated June 27, 1955.

WALTER J. BURGHARDT, S.J., *Chairman.*  
EDMOND D. BENARD.  
JOHN F. X. SWEENEY, S.J.

*Ad Hoc* COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL MEETINGS

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REV. EDMOND D. BENARD  
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