

REPORT ON REGIONAL MEETINGS, 1955-56

I

THE FACTS

During the academic year 1955-56, seven regional meetings were held: two in the Baltimore-Washington area, and one in each of the other regions as now constituted—as follows:

(1) On November 23, 1955, a meeting of the Chicago region (embracing Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana) was held at the Congress Hotel in Chicago from 10:30 a. m. to 3:30 p. m. At the morning session Father Edward O'Connor, C.S.C., of the University of Notre Dame, presented a paper on "The Nature of Faith in the Synoptic Gospels: A Study in Biblical Theology." This paper, about one hour in duration, was followed by a discussion which lasted until 12:30 p. m. At 1:30 p. m. a business session dealt with various matters relating to regional meetings. After the business meeting a discussion of moral problems treated principally matters of modesty and purity, and especially the morality of bathing beauty contests. Attendance: 13.

(2) On December 14, 1955, a meeting of the Baltimore-Washington region (embracing Maryland and the District of Columbia) was held at Woodstock College, Woodstock, Maryland, from 2:30 p. m. to 5:00 p. m. Father Charles J. Corcoran, C.S.C., of Holy Cross College, Washington, D. C., presented a short paper on "The Authority of, and Assent Due to, Papal Allocutions," which served as the springboard for audience discussion. Father Eugene I. Van Antwerp, S.S., of St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, led an informal seminar on questions of fundamental theology; the discussion centered on the proper use of the Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ as the Messiah. Attendance: 63.

(3) On December 30, 1955, a full-day meeting of the Boston region (embracing Massachusetts and Rhode Island) was held at Weston College, Weston, Massachusetts. At the morning session the discussion was guided by Father John J. Galvin, of St. Mary's Church, Taunton, Massachusetts, who read an introductory paper on "Pius XII and the Teaching Authority of the Church." At the afternoon session the discussion leader was Father J. Richard Quinn, of St. John's Seminary, Brighton, Massachusetts; the topic was "The Time of the Administration of Extreme Unction." Attendance: 30.

(4) On January 30, 1956, a full-day meeting of the Quebec-Montreal area (embracing the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario) took place at the University of Montreal. Two reports were submitted, each followed by

discussion. At the morning session Father Eugene Marcotte, O.M.I., spoke on "The Theology of Textbooks." His conclusion: "To provide for the deepest needs of the human soul, nowadays as in any other time, it is necessary to come back, beyond the theology of the textbook, to the scientific synthesis of St. Thomas Aquinas." At the afternoon session Father Pierre Germain, C.S.C., spoke on "The Concept of Thomistic Theology Since the Reaction of Father René Draguet and Father Charlier, O.P." As the audience was mostly bilingual, each spoke in his own language, and the main ideas were repeated in the other language. Attendance: about 75.

(5) On February 29, 1956, a meeting of the Baltimore-Washington region was held at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D. C., from 2:30 p. m. to 5:00 p. m. Father Edward F. Siegman, C.P.P.S., Editor of the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, led a discussion on "The Proper Use of Sacred Scripture in Dogmatic Arguments." Father William Hill, O.P., of the Dominican House of Studies, guided an informal seminar which was almost entirely devoted to the problem of dogmatic development. Attendance: about 145, including perhaps 30 seminarians.

(6) On March 19, 1956, a meeting of the Cleveland area (embracing Ohio, Kentucky, and Michigan) was held at the Major Seminary of the Blessed Sacrament Fathers in Cleveland from 2:30 p. m. to 5:30 p. m. There were two discussions. The first, led by Father Stanislaus J. Brzana, Vice-Officialis of the Diocese of Buffalo, treated the subject, "Is it a Formal Effect of Extreme Unction to Prepare the Soul for Immediate Entrance Into Heaven?" The second, led by Father Adrian Hebert, S.S.S., Professor of Moral Theology at the Major Seminary of the Blessed Sacrament Fathers in Cleveland, concerned "Company-keeping with a non-Catholic." Attendance: 30.

(7) On April 3, 1956, a full-day meeting of the New York region (embracing New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut) was held at Cathedral College, New York City. At the morning session the topic of discussion was "The Role of Scripture in the Theological Treatises," and was led by Father George S. Glanzman, S.J., Professor of Old Testament at Woodstock College. At the afternoon session Msgr. Gerhard Fittkau read a paper on "The Concept of Mysterium." Attendance: 30.

II

A CRITIQUE

(1) With reference to the facts outlined above, the Committee and the Region Chairmen feel that good reasons exist for a sense of restrained satisfaction and an outlook of cautious optimism:

- (a) seven meetings were held—at least one in each region;
- (b) attendance, though varied, was in general gratifying;
- (c) the primary desideratum mentioned in last year's critique was achieved: a maximum of discussion, of audience participation;
- (d) the reaction of the participants was highly enthusiastic.

(2) A number of problems remain to be ironed out:

(a) reorganization of regions so as to include all states of the Union and all members of the CTSA, and so as to make individual attendance geographically and financially feasible;

(b) more significant topics, more acceptable dates, etc., with regard to the individual meetings.

These problems, and others, are too intricate to be detailed here. It will suffice to assure the members of the CTSA that the Committee and Chairmen are aware of the problems, will devote time and thought to them, and will welcome constructive criticism.

Two brief items I find it imperative to mention. In the first place, the success of the 1955-56 regional meetings would have been impossible without the gracious co-operation of the Regional Chairmen, Msgr. Lawrence J. Riley, and Fathers Myles M. Bourke, Edward J. Hogan, S.S., Francis D. Costa, S.S.S., Gregory J. Staniszewski, C.P., and Richard P. Brosseau, S.S., as well as my associates on the Committee, Fathers Edmond D. Benard and John F. X. Sweeney, S.J. In the second place, in consequence of the charity of individuals and institutions, no expenses had to be borne by the general treasury of the CTSA.

WALTER J. BURGHARDT, S.J., *Chairman.*

Dated June 27, 1956.