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## Theological Observer. – Kirchlich Zeitgeschichtliches

Paul M. Bretscher

*Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

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## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### THE NCCCUA

The ecumenical movement in American Protestantism, one of the most significant trends in Christendom in the first half of the present century, reached its climax on November 29 when there came into being, in Cleveland, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Whatever one's personal reaction may be to the nature of this venture and however dubious one may be regarding its future, the fact remains that in Cleveland 25 Protestant and 4 Eastern Orthodox groups, representing a total membership of more than 31,000,000, joined hands for co-operative efforts in the areas of home and foreign missions, of Christian education, and of Christian life and work.

Merged in the new Council are agencies which for decades operated independently, chief among them being the Federal Council of Churches, the Foreign Missions Conference, the Home Missions Council, the International Council of Religious Education, the Missionary Education Movement, the National Protestant Council on Higher Education, the United Council of Church Women, and the United Stewardship Council.

The functions of the Council as outlined in the "Inaugural Message of the National Council" and approved on December 1 by the General Assembly, are the following:

The Council assists in the preparation of materials for the church school, and through its scholars is making ready for the world the Revised Standard Version of the Bible; it serves as a clearinghouse for full reports and statistics bearing upon church membership, denominational organizations and programs, and social trends of interest to Christians; it seeks to aid the churches in undergirding and co-ordinating their home and foreign missions; it searches out and trains leaders for Christian undertakings; it lifts up its voice in behalf of the Christian way of life in messages to the people of the country; it provides a single inclusive agency through which, if they wish, the denominations may nominate and support chaplains and ministers to the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States; it offers a means of approach to agencies governmental and civil in matters of justice and good will; it devotes itself to the presentation of Christian ideals through radio, television, and motion pictures; it is an organ of evangelism both specifically and broadly conceived, standing ready to serve the cause of Christ in every area as need arises, to the end that the



entire country may be permeated by the blessings of the Gospel. Through these and other means it gives help to the churches, bringing the experience of all to the service of each.

On the other hand, the "Inaugural Message" assures American Christians that "the Council is not a denomination, not a church above the churches. The autonomy of each communion is assured by constitutional provision. The Council is an agency of co-operation — not more but magnificently not less." In similar language, *The Living Church* (Episcopal) editorializes (Dec. 10):

The NCCCUSA is not a super-Church, a United Church, or any kind of Church at all. It has no power to deal with doctrinal questions and no governing authority over its constituent bodies. It cannot dictate to the Episcopal Church, or to any other communion, in any way whatever. It has no control over the General Convention or the National Council of our own Church, or over similar organs of other members. . . . The constitution of the NCCCUSA specifically provides that the Council shall have no authority or administrative control over the Churches which constitute its membership. Specifically, it is declared that it shall have no authority to prescribe a common creed, or form of church government, or form of worship, or to limit the autonomy of the Churches co-operating in it.

From the sheaf of reports and newspaper clippings on the Cleveland convention it appears that the new Council is the result of careful planning, which reaches back almost twenty years. The agencies enumerated above had to agree to sacrifice some of their sovereignty in order to fit into the larger and more inclusive framework. Furthermore, the denominations represented in the Council had first to get the approval of their bodies. An endless mass of detail had to be attended to. The releases to the press suggest that external pomp and pageantry was not lacking. The "Oeffentlichkeitswille," as German visitors to our shores call the American eagerness to make the headlines, was mightily evident. One is impressed also by the large number of executives and staff workers which the Council will employ. "A hasty estimate indicates that the NCCCUSA will employ the services of somewhere between 800 and 1,000 persons — clergy and laity, men and women, with a fair sprinkling of youth representatives. In addition, there will be the employed staff, but we are not yet able to offer even an approximate figure as to its size. If the employed staff of the hundreds of state and local councils of churches are included, the total will be large" (*The Christian Century*, Dec. 13). If money speaks, then the total budget for 1951, which exceeds \$4,000,000, is impressive.

Of the Lutheran bodies in our country, the Augustana Lutheran



Church, the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the United Lutheran Church of America became charter members of the Council. Disregarding the other Lutheran bodies in our country which did not join the Council, *Life* (Dec. 25) comments on a picture showing the delegation leaders: "Of all major U.S. Protestant denominations, only Southern Baptists and Missouri Synod Lutherans did not join the Council."

"Where there is much light, there is also much shadow," is an old saying. What are some of the shadows of the Cleveland convention? We note the following:

1. In the mass of materials on the convention we fail to discover even a semblance of that theological earnestness which characterized the convention of the World Council of Churches held in Amsterdam in 1948. In the addresses and reports one finds a farrago of religious sentiments and high and noble ideals, but precious little solid theological thought. As was to be expected, there was a complete crossing of denominational lines in the divine services.

2. According to the "Inaugural Message," the Council will shape "its policies in the light of the aims of the United Nations." What does this mean? We read in the literature before us that the Council is patterned after the United Nations Organization. Are we to assume now that the NCCCUSA is to become the religious arm of the U.N.?

3. We are optimistic enough to believe that the new Council will, in course of time, "shake down" and make it possible for the average mind to understand the complex organizational structure of the new organization and the manner in which it hopes to co-operate with boards, committees, and commissions of the churches which constitute its membership. But we are not the only ones who already see difficulties ahead. *The Living Church* (Dec. 10) reminds its readers (and we share its concern):

We want to take this opportunity, at the outset of the NCCCUSA, to caution it against invading the rights of its member churches to exercise missionary jurisdiction and control, at home or abroad. One of the things that caused the Episcopal Church to hesitate so long about joining the Federal Council of Churches was its sponsorship of a "United Church" in the Panama Canal Zone, in direct rivalry to the long-established work of the Episcopal Church in its missionary district of the Canal Zone. The Episcopal Church cannot permit the funds that it contributes to this co-operative agency to be used to undermine its own work, or to set up a rival jurisdiction. If that were done, the NCCCUSA would instantly forfeit the support of a con-



siderable body of Churchmen. We know that Lutherans and members of other centrally-organized communions share our convictions in this respect.

Indeed, one cannot escape similar concern with regard to other areas of church work which the Council will promote, in particular the areas of foreign missions and Christian education.

In conclusion: What happened at Cleveland was more than the establishment of a National Council. What happened was the establishment of an organization which is super not only to the agencies merged in it, but super also to the denominations represented in it. This is the road that will lead either to gradual centralization of power in the Council or to endless strife between the Council and the Christian bodies constituting it. One hesitates to predict for the Council what is happening to the U.N., since, after all, Christian men and women are heading the Council. Yet, even Christian men and women in high and responsible positions have always found it difficult to renounce completely the drive and urge for power and ultimate supremacy. But this is not the way in which God establishes His kingdom in the hearts of men nor is it the way in which oneness in Christ is achieved.

P. M. B.

#### MINISTERIAL ENROLLMENT AT LUTHERAN SEMINARIES

The *Lutheran Outlook*, December issue, submits the following statistics on enrollment at Lutheran theological seminaries:

Seminary	Affiliation	Enrollment	Change
Concordia (St. Louis) .....	MO	495	+51
Concordia (Springfield, Ill.) .....	MO	385	+48
Luther .....	ELC	347	+75
Augustana .....	AUG	206	+57
Capital .....	ALC	161	+26
Philadelphia .....	ULCA	136	+33
Wartburg .....	ALC	133	+ 7
Gettysburg .....	ULCA	130	+24
Chicago .....	ULCA	88	+17
Northwestern .....	ULCA	87	+15
Hanna .....	ULCA	80	+ 5
Thiensville .....	WIS	57	
Southern .....	ULCA	45	+ 3
Augsburg .....	LFC	38	+14
Central .....	ULCA	33	+12
Saskatoon .....	ULCA	27	+ 2
Saskatoon .....	ELC	26	— 1
Suomi .....	FINN	20	+ 1
Trinity .....	UELC	18	+ 3
Waterloo .....	ULCA	12	
Grand View .....	DELC	5	— 1
<b>Total</b> .....		<b>2,529</b>	<b>391</b>



The editor states that there seems to be a corollary between the number of students and the growth of a church body. The American Lutheran Conference has a total of 929 students, an increase of 181. The five Conference bodies had a total increase in 1949 of 86,215 baptized members. The ULCA seminaries have 638 students enrolled, an increase of 111. This Church gained 32,747 baptized members. The Missouri Synod, with a total enrollment of 880 resident students, representing an increase of 99 students, gained 60,149 baptized members. The Thiensville Seminary records no change in student enrollment. The increase of membership in the Wisconsin Synod during 1949 was 2,386 baptized members.

The editor concludes: "It would seem that the church bodies which build up their seminaries are the church bodies which grow most rapidly. Or is it just a coincidence that the more rapidly growing bodies also have the larger number of ministerial graduates?" It certainly is true that interest in missions generally keeps pace with interest in the training of workers for the Church. The above table does not reflect the enrollment of college students at the teachers' colleges of the Missouri Synod, a total of 772. And yet the training of our teachers and the support of our parochial schools is a tremendous factor in developing the mission spirit and one of the best agencies for doing real mission work where it is needed sorely, namely, on the home and congregational level. The mission-mindedness and the sacrificing spirit of our future teachers came to light in a report by Dr. Albert Huegli, dean of students at Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Ill. Six Freshmen have turned down a total of \$2,069 in scholarships to other institutions in order to prepare themselves as teachers in the Lutheran elementary school system. Among the 191 entering College Freshmen, nine were salutatorians and ten valedictorians of their respective high schools, and forty-four are members of various honor societies.

F. E. M.

#### ALL GERMAN LUTHERAN FREE CHURCHES IN FELLOWSHIP

On October 1, 1950, the Renitente Kirche der U. A. C. in Nieder-Hessen, founded by A. F. C. Vilmar in 1873, united with the Unabh ngige Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Baden, Hessen und Niedersachsen. As a result there are now only four Lutheran Free Churches in Germany: The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Old Prussia (Breslau Synod), the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Germany (the Saxon Synod), the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church of Baden, Hessen, and Niedersachsen, and the recently established Evangelical Lutheran Refugee Mission (organized by pastors of the former Polish



Evangelical Lutheran Church, in membership with the Wisconsin Synod). More important still is the fact that within a period of five short years these Lutherans have reached a God-pleasing unity.

F. E. M.

#### HISTORICAL SKETCH OF WEIMAR-LUTHER EDITION

The *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* (September 30, 1950) reports that the Bishops' Conference of the VELKD decided in its recent meeting to pledge the support of the VELKD in the completion of the Weimar Edition of Luther's works. In reporting this resolution, R. Jauernig presents a historical sketch of the genesis of the Weimar Edition.

The first to suggest and to put into action the scholarly edition of Luther's works was J. K. F. Knaake (1835—1905). As early as 1818, Knaake conceived the plan of editing a scientific edition of Luther's works, because the Frankfurt-Erlanger Edition was inadequate. Julius Koestlin encouraged Knaake in this undertaking by supporting Knaake's request to the Prussian State Minister for a subsidy. On September 22, 1880, Knaake submitted his plan, according to which Luther's complete works were to be published in 36 to 40 volumes *Grossoktav*, each volume comprising forty-five to fifty *Bogen*. After some discussion the Prussian State promised to support the work with an annual subsidy of 4,000 M. for ten years. Knaake promised to have the first volume ready in 1883. It is interesting to note that among the original subscribers of the WA, listed in the first volume, there are kings, grand dukes, dukes, eminent professors, churches, including also the library of Concordia Seminary at St. Louis.

Knaake insisted that the writings of Luther should be published in their original form, including also spelling mistakes and patently false punctuation. More important still was his principle that Luther's works were to appear in a strictly chronological order, so that the student could obtain—in the words of the Preface—"a deeper insight into Luther's spiritual being and work, all the various phases of his activities as preacher, teacher, and reformer." It soon became apparent that Knaake could not carry on the work of editing and publishing Luther's works alone. The materials were too voluminous, and the combined efforts of many scholars were required to issue a really critical study of Luther's writings. This becomes quite evident as one examines Volume 35, dealing with Luther's hymns, on which a number of scholars labored for seventeen years. At first a commission composed of two theologians and two German philologists was appointed to assist Knaake in his



work. In 1882 Julius Koestlin was added to the commission, and since that time the ratio of theologians and philologists was three to two. In the course of almost seventy years many outstanding scholars have participated in this tremendous undertaking. In addition to Knaake and Koestlin such men as Otto Clemen, George Buchwald, and E. Kroker must be mentioned, and especially the publisher, Hermann Boehlau and his successors.

The original plan to follow a strictly chronological sequence could not be carried through consistently, particularly because research uncovered some previously unknown manuscripts. This was true especially of the lectures on Romans delivered by Luther in 1515/16, of which Joachim Ficker published photostatic copies in 1908. This significant find is embodied in Volume 56 of the WA. The original plan was amplified so that the WA is divided into four sections: 1. *Die Werke*; 2. *Table Talks*; 3. *The German Bible*; 4. *Luther's Correspondence*. *Die Werke*—Luther's exegetical, doctrinal, polemical, homiletical, catechetical, and miscellaneous writings—are contained in Volumes 1—54, 56, 57, and 58 containing the Index. However, it must be kept in mind that Volumes 17, 31, 34, 39, each have two sections; Volumes 10, 30, and 40, three sections. A total of sixty-nine volumes comprises *Die Werke*. The *Table Talks* fill six volumes and were prepared chiefly by E. Kroker. Luther's correspondence is contained in eleven volumes, prepared chiefly by Otto Clemen. The plan now calls for twelve volumes dealing with all the material on the German Bible; eight of these have already been published. To date ninety-four volumes have appeared, sixty-nine devoted to *Die Werke*, six to the *Table Talks*, eleven to the *Correspondence*, and eight to the *Bible*.

Concordia Seminary has two sets of this scientific and scholarly edition of Luther's works. In this day of a reawakening of interest in Luther's theology it is highly desirable that our young theologians make a thorough study of Luther's theology on the basis of his own "*theologische Werdegang*." Pritzlaff Library of Concordia Seminary hopes to become increasingly a depository for Lutherana and thereby to attract students who wish to specialize in the field of Luther research.

F. E. M.

#### MORE PROTESTANT MISSION WORK IN NORTHERN AFRICA

In a recent issue the *Christian Century* directed the attention of its readers to the fact that Northern Africa, from Cairo to Casablanca, constitutes an indisputably promising area for more extensive and intensive mission work by Protestant denominations. The mission call of this wide-awake periodical, frequently showing unusual insight



and foresight, should not go unheeded. Every student of church history remembers what the narrow fringe of land, north of the Sahara, used to mean for the Christian Church. In the city of Bone, derived from the Latin *bona*, *sc.*, Villa Bona, so-called because of its excellent site and climate, there still is a sort of suburb, called Hippone, where once stood Hippo Rhegius. There in A.D. 399 and 419 St. Augustine directed church councils to determine the canon of the New Testament. Tunis is practically identical with Carthage, where in 397 the Third Council of Carthage was held, at which all the present books of the New Testament were accepted. Bone is still a large city, with a Roman Catholic cathedral, while Tunis is gaining in importance as a commercial and political center from year to year. In Casablanca many refugees, as we were told last summer, are seeking new homes, and mission work, other than Mohammedan, seems to be badly needed.

In the *Sunday School Times* (November 11, 1950) Dr. Robert Brown has published a most interesting article on North Africa as mission field for Protestant denominations with a definitely Christian theology to combat the errors of Islam and to win converts for Christianity. The climate of this fringe of land, by the way, is Mediterranean, "somewhat like that of California though perhaps not quite so good." Dr. Brown has been a missionary in Tunisia for twelve years and knows the country and people well enough to speak with authority. The work, of course, is not easy. Dr. Brown writes, to quote only a little: "We see [in North Africa] that politically there is an over-all situation that is threatening if not alarming. The magic word *hurria*, 'independence,' is on every North African's lips. In the background is the belligerent figure of Abd-el-Krim, the avowed enemy of France, demanding immediate independence for the whole of North Africa with the threat of five million armed men if it is not granted." — "Yet recently," he goes on to say, "despite a hostile atmosphere, two new stations have been opened in Morocco. . . . Perhaps the most significant and encouraging sign for those interested in the evangelization of North Africa is the readiness to take and read the Scriptures, the most powerful antidote to the poison of Islam, the surest way of bringing light into darkened souls. In Libya, the Bible seller disposes of cases of Bibles, New Testaments, and Gospels in a few days to people who are hungry for God's Word. In Tunisia, Bible sales are unprecedented, and throughout North Africa it is the same story. The old dogmatic Islam cannot withstand the progress of knowledge and science. Materialism is powerless to fill the spiritual void, and the new agnostic Moslem is at least more ready to read than ever before."



This may sound as if Dr. Brown were overoptimistic. But he is not. In the article, which is far too long to be quoted in full, he earnestly intercedes for the prayers of all believers not only for doors to be opened, but also "that doors that are now open shall be kept open." He calls attention also to the costliness of mission work among Mohammedans. "Work among the Moslems has indeed been costly, so costly that many have asked us, 'To what purpose is this waste?'" Nevertheless, he writes: "Yet here and there, scattered across North Africa, there have been jewels won for His crown. There was B—, won for Christ from a fanatical and noble Moslem family. Then we have just heard of a little group of converted Moslems who gather for fellowship week by week in a remote village of Tunisia, everyone led into the light by the testimony of a convert. In Kabilia there is another, who built and decorated in Arab fashion his own preaching hall. In Morocco we are at last seeing the emergence of Christian homes and children brought up to know the Word of God. Conferences in Algeria and Morocco annually gather well over a hundred converts and missionaries. . . ."

Dr. Brown closes his report with the words: "We need men; we need transport; we need modern equipment. But above all we need a volume of continuous prayer. Moslems pray five times a day in the name of a dead prophet to one who is cold and unfeeling. Let us pray in the name which is above every name so that at last in this day Abraham's heartfelt prayer might be answered and that Ishmael might live before Him."

Just what can we do to answer the mission challenges that come to us both directly and indirectly? Our new mission work among the Mohammedans in India was started by a group of Christians who were willing to contribute toward wider mission responsibilities over and above the regular budget sums, special offerings to reach beyond that which we are able to do as a Church. In Germany, England, France, and other countries of Europe, interested mission societies have for centuries done what their churches were unable or unwilling to do. Here in America we have mission-minded congregations in non-Lutheran denominations that support from two to more than a dozen missionaries in special fields of interest. One thing is certain: we must find new ways to save while unloosed Satan is daily searching out new ways to destroy. And the average believer is more mission-minded than we are inclined to think. We still have not tapped the resources in our Church for greater missionary work at home and abroad.

J. T. MUELLER



**"JESUITISCHE FESTUNG AMERIKA"**

The Jesuits have drawn a complete ring of universities, colleges, and high schools around our country, and many in the interior. Here are cities having Jesuit secondary schools: Portland, Me.; Boston, Worcester, Lenox, Mass.; Fairfield, Conn.; New York, Buffalo, Syracuse, N. Y.; Jersey City, N. J.; Scranton, Philadelphia, Pa.; Baltimore, Garrett Park, Md.; Detroit, Mich.; Cleveland, Ohio; Tampa, Fla.; Mobile, Ala.; New Orleans, Shreveport, La.; Dallas, Tex.; Los Angeles, San Jose, Santa Clara, San Francisco, Calif.; Seattle, Tacoma, Yakima, Wash. Cities with Jesuit schools of higher learning are: Washington, D. C., Cincinnati, Ohio, St. Louis, Mo., Chicago, Ill., Milwaukee, Prairie Du Chien, Wis., Omaha, Nebr., Kansas City, Mo., Denver, Colo. Nor is this the end, for Jesuitism is planning yet more universities, colleges, and high schools. Jesuit education, however, is only a part of the Roman Catholic educational program. There are many Roman Catholic universities, colleges, and high schools that are outside the Jesuit order. This sketch of the *Jesuitische Festung Amerika* should startle the Missouri Synod Lutheran who contemplates that his Church has only one university, a few high schools, and not too many parish schools.

J. T. MUELLER

**GERMAN LUTHERAN BISHOPS DENOUNCE ROME'S NEW DOGMA**

The repercussions caused by the proclamation of Mary's assumption are much greater in Germany than in our country. Here the general public remained virtually indifferent to the action taken by the man on the Tiber. The Christian people see in the new dogma the necessary sequel to the two previous dogmas published in 1854 and in 1870. American Lutherans, generally speaking, believe that the proclamation of this new dogma is only another symptom of the Antichristian character which Rome has so patently manifested in the decrees and canons of the Council of Trent. American Lutherans realize that in 1563, with the conclusion of the Council of Trent, Rome has officially forfeited its claim to catholicity, because in the Council of Trent it established the Roman Church as a sect by formally cutting itself off from the *Christian* tradition of the preceding centuries. In Germany, however, the new dogma caused great consternation, as is evident in the Lutheran Bishops' pastoral letter on this issue. There are probably two chief reasons for the totally different reactions in Germany and in America to the most recent evidence of the Antichristian character of the papal system.

In the first place, in many territories of Germany the Evangelical and the Roman Churches have worked side by side, each leaving the other very much alone. As an example, we might mention the arrangement



at the Tuebingen University, where the Evangelical and Catholic theological faculties are housed in the same building and jointly use some of the University's facilities.

The second and the chief reason is the phenomenon that Rome has several theological "faces," and in Germany it reveals a different "face" than in other parts of the world. Since the war cordial and fraternal discussions have been carried on between Evangelical and Catholic pastors, though a papal *Monitum* of 1950 actually proscribes this. Many Evangelical clergymen entertained the hope that German Catholic theologians would become actual "partners" in theological discussions. In our contacts with German Evangelical pastors we had occasion repeatedly to warn against such false hopes. Nevertheless the fact remains that in many sections of Germany the Roman Catholic clergymen are more "evangelical" than anywhere else in the world. The German Catholic clergy study the Bible and follow Lutheran dogmatics quite closely. A prominent Catholic scholar told us that he has Pieper-Mueller Dogmatics in his library. Therefore the German Lutheran clergyman finds it quite difficult to understand how a Roman theologian can speak "evangelically" — as many German Catholic theologians do — and yet unconditionally submit to the new dogma. By philosophical and theological arguments "evangelical" Roman theologians endeavor to make the new dogma theologically meaningful (cp. my article "Mary's Assumption, a Symptom," March, 1950, issue of this journal). A recently advanced argument runs as follows: God does not *force* any of His gifts on mankind. Therefore man's redemption requires not only God's activity, but also man's willingness to accept it. Christ represents God's activity, and Mary by her willingness to become the mother of God represents the whole human race in its willingness to accept God's redemptive work. For this reason Mary must share in all of Christ's works, including the bodily assumption, not as the initiator, but as the willing recipient. A rather specious argument is contained in the following rhetorical question: "Is it not much more pious to maintain both Christ's and Mary's assumption than to deny both, as so many of the liberal Protestant theologians do?"

In the light of this situation in Germany we can understand the difference in the approach of German and American Lutherans to the new dogma. One can also appreciate the deep concern of the Evangelical bishops in publishing the following pastoral letter, which was received a few days ago from Bishop Meiser's office.

1. The dogma of Mary's bodily assumption has no basis whatsoever in the Scriptures and contradicts the clear testimony concerning the



sequential relation of the resurrection of believers to that of Christ (1 Cor. 15:23 f.).

Scripture testifies that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was placed into the service of God in a unique way, so that as a virgin she gave birth to the Son of God. For that reason it is correct when the ancient church fathers speak of her as the mother of God, and in this respect she occupies a singular position in the human race.

But Scripture also shows us that Mary, as all other mortals, was unable to understand the work of Jesus and that His entire life was for her not only a sorrow, but also an offense. After the death and resurrection of Jesus she undoubtedly belonged to the Apostolic congregation, however, merely as a member. The Scriptures give no evidence whatever that the congregation honored her with special respect. If Mary is elevated through the anti-Biblical claim that by her immaculate conception and her assumption she was actually removed from the rest of humanity, elevated above all saints and angels, and was even made co-mediatrix and co-redemptrix next to Christ, then the Biblical picture of the mother of Jesus is completely destroyed.

By establishing a dogma that the body of Mary has already been assumed into glory, man anticipates what God has reserved for the end of time; yes, still more, Mary receives honor and rank which is similar to that of Christ and separates her from the rest of the Christian Church.

Also in the post-Apostolic testimonies there is no reference to Mary's assumption. Approximately 400 years after Christ the following legend appears: The Apostles were gathered about Mary's death-bed when Jesus approached with His angels, received her soul and committed it to the Archangel Michael. When the Apostles wanted to bury her on the next day, Jesus appeared for the second time and removed her body in a cloud into Paradise, where her body and soul were united.

Although responsible teachers of the Church have declared this legend as spurious, folk piety, nurtured in part by pagan traditions, established the festival in honor of Mary's alleged assumption. However, as late as 1568, a Roman breviary states that the Church does not know what happened to Mary's body. By elevating the legend of Mary's assumption to an article of faith and by making its acceptance necessary for salvation, the Pope has departed radically from Rome's historic position on traditions. Rome held that only that is truly Catholic which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all. The Pope has disavowed this completely.

3. Universal Christendom is confronted for the first time with the fact that the Pope, on the basis of the infallibility decree of 1870, decrees an article of faith. The opposition which was voiced by all



Christian denominations in 1870 against the infallibility decree, and which led to the defection of the Old Catholic Church, is now justified in a most terrifying manner through the Pope's new dogma. This dogma is not, as many other old dogmas of the Roman Church, an erroneous interpretation of the Apostolic doctrine. It has absolutely no foundation in the message of the Apostles and is therefore in principle the Pope's refusal to be obedient to the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Although Roman Catholic theology endeavors to distinguish between the adoration given to Mary and the worship given to the Trinity, folk piety will unavoidably be led to a gross transgression of the First Commandment. The motto: "Via Mary to Christ," obscures the way which God has revealed for man's salvation.

4. The declaration of the new dogma fills us with grief as we view the relation of the Christian churches to one another. The common warfare in these apocalyptic times against diabolical forces had drawn the various Christian Churches to one another in such a way that they were ready to listen to one another and to learn of one another. This reapproachment was predicated on the assumption that the testimony of the Apostles is the only basis for Christian doctrine. But through its decree the Roman Church has irrevocably forsaken this foundation. We note with deep grief the consequences which this denial of the foundations of the Church must bring about.

5. In this hour again we testify to our congregations that our salvation rests solely and alone in Christ, the crucified and risen Lord. We abide by the word of our Lord: "No man hath ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven" (John 3:13). We call upon our congregations to testify by word and deed that we need no other mediator than our Lord Jesus Christ, since

On Christ's ascension I now build  
The hope of mine ascension.

F. E. M.

#### ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

In 1949 the Sunday school enrollment in the 243,454 Sunday or Sabbath schools totaled 28,893,789 and marked an increase of 7.03 per cent over the previous year.

The Luther League of America, the official youth organization of the U. L. C. A., has approved a summer youth caravan program to increase its present enrollment from 30,000 to 80,000 members. Young people ranging in age from 18 to 24 will be sent out on tours in caravans of five or six to present programs and speeches on behalf of the League at Lutheran church conventions, at the meetings of youth groups in



churches and summer camps. In announcing the caravan program the Rev. F. Leslie Conrad said: "We will attempt to give our Lutheran young people the opportunity to find the faith to go with these troubled times through a program that accepts the changes brought about by the A-bomb and the H-bomb, just as the youths have already accepted them."

The World Council of Churches has selected St. Paulus Lutheran Church of the American Lutheran Church as one of five churches for a study of "the evangelization of modern man in mass society." Located within six blocks of the big stockyards and meat-packing plants in St. Paul, Minn., the World Council's study committee believes that this parish offers an opportunity to survey and evaluate special techniques that are being used successfully to reach industrial populations with the Gospel and to pass on these techniques in special articles to other churches in industrial areas.

The Order of St. Luke, a national liturgical brotherhood of Methodist ministers, held its third annual convocation in Chicago. Features of the sessions were talks by the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Reynold Hillebrand of the Catholic Liturgical Conference and Mar Eshai Shimm XXIII, Catholicos patriarch of the Church of the East. The program was devoted to "magnifying the place of the sacrament" in Methodism and encouraging wider loyalty to Methodist ritual and use of the book of worship.

Members of the Philadelphia Friends General Meeting re-emphasized the ministry of silence at their recent annual session and insisted that it was as vital today as when the sect was founded almost 300 years ago. They believe, however, that their silent worship should be complemented by a vocal ministry and called upon one another to offer both a "prepared" and a "spontaneous" type of vocal ministry. Their historian, Horace Mather Lippincott, said: "It is the minister and not the sermon that needs to be prepared."

In 1944 the Hillel Foundation at the University of Minnesota set up a \$300 scholarship which is awarded annually to a Jewish student for the greatest contribution in promoting interfaith relationships on the campus. This year the scholarship has been set aside to perpetuate the memory of King Gustav V of Sweden for his work in rescuing thousands of Jews from Nazi-dominated countries early in World War II.

The National Catholic Welfare Conference presented a building program of \$250,000,000 in the next five years for the expansion and modernization of Catholic schools in the United States.

The fourteen oldest Philadelphia Protestant churches—all founded between 1677 and 1796—joined to help Temple Radeph Shalom, the city's second oldest synagog, to celebrate its 150th anniversary. The churches represented at the anniversary celebration, in order of historical precedence, were Gloria Dei Episcopal, the Early Meeting of Friends, Germantown Mennonites, Christ Episcopal, First Baptist, First Presbyterian, Old First Reformed, First Moravian, St. Michael's, Zion Lutheran, St. Peter's Episcopal, First United Presbyterian, St. George's Methodist, Old Pine Street Presbyterian, and First Unitarian.

In the course of a United Nations Security Council debate Jacob A. Malik said: "We all know that missionaries have always been a weapon of aggression and that they have served to promote the conquests of the ruling circles and to enslave peoples who were a source of income. . . . "Missionaries have always been followed by traders and soldiers."

The question of ordaining women to the ministry is receiving wide discussion in Finland at present because a Swedish parliamentary committee is about to present a majority report favoring the reform. Finnish women's organizations in towns and cities have won many supporters for the ordination of women, but in both Finland and Sweden country people, who make up the majority of the population, are against the innovation.

ALEX WM. C. GUEBERT