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THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

The American Bible Society has released the following report:

The number of languages and dialects in which at least one book of the Bible has been published has now passed the 1,200 mark. The milestone was announced at the 147th Annual Meeting of the American Bible Society in New York City on May 9.

The 1,200th language was the Rincón dialect of Zapotec, which is spoken by about twelve to fourteen thousand Indians in the northern part of Oaxaca, Mexico, the state most heavily populated by Indians. The most numerous are the Zapotecs, who were dominant there before the Christian era. The publication of the Gospel of Mark in the Rincón dialect is the sixth dialect of the Zapotecs in which a book of the Bible has been printed.

A specially bound copy of the new translation was presented at the society's annual meeting to His Excellency, Dr. Francisco Cuevas Cancino, Alternate Representative of Mexico to the United Nations.

The total number of languages into which at least one book of the Bible has been translated and published stood at 1,202 on December 31. Of this number, the whole Bible has been printed in 228, a whole Testament in 285, and at least a complete Gospel or other book in 689.

The 1,200th translation was done by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Earl, who are Wycliffe Bible translators and members of the Calvary Baptist Church in St. Paul, Minnesota. It was published under the imprint of the Bible Society of Mexico and financed and approved for publication by the American Bible Society.

It is estimated that the task of providing a translation of the Scriptures in all sig-

nificant languages and dialects is now nearing the halfway mark.

During 1962 Scriptures were published for the first time in 22 new languages and dialects. In most instances, the publication of these Scriptures required the first reduction of the language to written form. In many cases new alphabets had to be created. The 22 languages are used, in addition to Mexico, in Guatemala, the Philippines, Brazil, Ghana, Peru, Tanganyika, Tchad, Colombia, Burma, and Bolivia.

The Society also reported that it is now doing regular, annual Bible work in 40 additional countries in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean area, increasing the total number of such countries to 107.

Scripture distribution both here and abroad rose by the highest percentages in the Society's history and now stands at record highs. A total of 14,590,751 copies of the Scriptures were distributed in the United States, an increase of 15 percent over the previous year; 16,919,070 were distributed overseas, an increase of 49 percent. The Society's total distribution in 1962 was 31,509,821, an increase of 31 percent over the previous record of 24,183,024, established in 1961. These figures are the American Bible Society's part (about 60 percent) of the total worldwide distribution of Scriptures by the United Bible Societies, an organization of national Bible societies all over the world. The total worldwide distribution of Scriptures by these societies in 1962 was 51,089,209, an increase of about 30 percent.

The American Bible Society reported large unmet needs in newly emerging nations and that a "crisis" exists in meeting these needs. As a result, it has instituted an Advance Program and is seeking \$500,000 in additional funds this year in a World Oppor-

tunity Fund. The Advance Program will culminate in 1966, the year of the Society's 150th anniversary, when it is hoped that a distribution of 60,000,000 copies, almost double last year's total, may be achieved.

Here are some other highlights of the Society's report for 1962:

It distributed 62,663 Scriptures in Braille and on records, in about 50 languages and systems, to the blind.

It adopted the largest budget in its history, \$5,382,000 for 1963.

It assisted in the preparation of 122 language publication projects, 67 of which were completed in 1962.

It published a new English Reference Bible, a ten-year project, to bring up to date the King James Version with special features for Bible study.

It donated 175,646 copies of the Scriptures to Cuban refugees in the greater Miami area.

In overseas distribution of the Scriptures, one country, Brazil, passed the four-million mark; two countries, India and Argentina, passed the three-million mark; Japan was over two million for the second year, and Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela joined Korea among nations where more than one million were distributed.

The Society, which traditionally has supplied Scriptures to the armed forces of this country, is supplying them also for the armed forces of Lebanon, Greece, Korea, and Haiti, among others.

The Society also instituted, in 1962, the Bible-a-Month Club, whose members give, rather than get, a Bible a month.

BRIEF ITEMS FROM THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

NEW COLLEGE CAMPUS DEDICATED AT ANN ARBOR

Ann Arbor, Mich. — "From the church's point of view the opening of a college like this is as basic as West Point, as essential

as Annapolis, and as vital as Colorado Springs," the Rev. Dr. Walter F. Wolbrecht, St. Louis, executive director of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, told a large crowd who gathered here Sept. 29 for the dedication of Concordia Lutheran Junior College.

The new \$6,000,000 campus will provide the first two years of college for students who are planning church careers in teaching or the ministry. One of the 11 similar schools operated by the Synod, the new junior college is the first to be built in 35 years. It is located on a 210-acre site overlooking the Huron River.

COLLEGE ANNIVERSARY

River Forest, Ill. — The 50th anniversary of the dedication of the 40-acre campus of Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Ill., began with a special golden anniversary Founders Day on Saturday, Oct. 12.

Ground breaking for the specialized instruction center housing foreign language, art, and additional music areas, and the gymnasium of the school came at the close of the fiftieth Founders Day celebration on Oct. 12. Members of the 1913 student body living in the area and the public were invited.

In honor of the golden anniversary, officers of the present student body worshiped together on Sunday, Oct. 13, at Zion Lutheran Church, Bensenville, Ill., the founding congregation of the college. A representative group of the student senate worshiped at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Addison, Ill., the original home congregation of the Addison student body.

Founded in 1864 at Addison as the Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, expanding enrollments and deteriorating buildings forced a move in 1913 from the campus in Addison. After viewing several sites available at the time, the Lutheran Educational Society of Chicago convinced the international parent church body, The Lutheran Church — Mis-

souri Synod, to purchase land in the suburb of River Forest.

Work was begun on the new campus Nov. 12, 1912, and on Oct. 12, 1913, Concordia Teachers College was dedicated with a crowd estimated at 45,000 attending the ceremony.

All of the original buildings are part of the present campus which now numbers 1,100 undergraduates, 352 graduate students, and a correspondence school enrollment of more than 1,300.

Since 1864 the college has provided professional personnel for the parishes, elementary, secondary schools, and colleges of the Missouri Synod, which has the largest Protestant parochial school system in the United States.

MEDICAL MISSIONS MARKS GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

St. Louis. — Lutheran Medical Missions are observing their 50th anniversary this year.

After the 1911 convention of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod in St. Louis resolved that the sending of medical missionaries was not the direct responsibility of the church, a group of mission-minded women got together and in 1913 sent Miss Louise Ellermann, R. N., to India, where she established a dispensary at Bargur.

This year also marks the 40th anniversary of the dedication of Bethesda Hospital in Ambur, India; the 25th anniversary of Lutheran medical evangelistic work in Nigeria; the 15th anniversary of the founding of the Lutheran Medical Mission Society; and the 10th anniversary of the dedication of three hospitals: Immanuel at Mambisanda, New Guinea; Lutheran Hospital, Eket, Nigeria; and Karunalaya Dispensary, Wandoor, India.

FATHER OF BOMBING VICTIM CITES NEED FOR REPENTANCE, FORGIVENESS

Birmingham, Ala. — "While I would like to see the culprits who committed the brutal

crime last Sunday brought to justice, I believe their chief need is for repentance and Christian forgiveness," Chris McNair, father of 11-year-old Denise, who was killed in the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church here, commented in a press interview.

"God has given man the intelligence to build a true democracy," the dedicated Negro Lutheran layman commented, "and now it's up to us to pray that the Spirit of Christ will move the hearts of people to act wisely. I firmly believe that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has the answer to our problems."

Mr. McNair serves as Sunday school superintendent at St. Paul Lutheran Church, a congregation of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. He had previously served the congregation as its president. The Rev. Joseph Ellwanger, pastor of the 300-member congregation, described McNair as "a consecrated Christian worker."

Denise, an only child, and her mother held membership in the Baptist church. Mr. McNair, who operates a photographic studio here, credited his daughter's concern for her fellow students and her willingness to help them as a "big boost for my own faith."

Pastor Ellwanger, who visited the families of all the victims, expressed amazement "at the ability of the Negro community to continue to love people of the white race." He said the four families "accepted my Christian witness" and "evidenced no bitterness but expressed a hope rooted in a deep faith in God because they are convinced that God and righteousness are on our side."

Cynthia Wesley, 14, another bombing victim, had frequently attended the newly established Prince of Peace Lutheran Mission here. The Rev. John Oppliger is pastor of the congregation.

Rewards totaling \$78,000 have been offered for the apprehension of the persons who perpetrated the bombing. Of the total \$50,000 has come from religious sources.

**BIRMINGHAM LUTHERAN CHURCHES
ISSUE INTEGRATION STATEMENT**

Birmingham, Ala. — In a statement prepared for reading at all the congregations of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod here yesterday the nine pastors and their Southern District President said: "The Christian church should never dodge an issue that involves the life, the practice, and the Christian confession of its people."

After alluding to the recent bombing in which four Sunday school children lost their lives, the statement continued: "We as Lutheran Christians are compelled by the Word of God to believe that the church is not a segregated community. We are one in Christ. The members of our congregations, as part of the body of Christ, therefore, have no right to segregate any member of that body."

The message was prepared and signed by the eight white pastors and one Negro pastor as well as by the Rev. Dr. Edgar W. Homrighausen, Cullman, Ala., President of the Missouri Synod's Southern District.

Here is the complete text of the statement:

**A MESSAGE TO THE LUTHERAN CHRISTIANS
OF THE BIRMINGHAM AREA TO BE READ ON
THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY,
SEPTEMBER 22, 1963**

The Christian church should never dodge an issue that involves the life, the practice, and the Christian confession of its people. Our community has been stunned by the loss of life through the bombing of a church in Birmingham, Alabama, on Sunday, September 15, 1963.

This act of violence is the responsibility of a man or a group of men. The guilt of such violence is also ours because we did not heed the Savior's directive that "we love one another."

To the extent that we have supported forced segregation by our words or silence, we have given encouragement to such lawlessness. We must repent.

We as Lutheran Christians are compelled by the Word of God to believe that the church is not a segregated community. We are one in Christ. The members of our congregations, as part of the body of Christ, therefore, have no right to segregate any member of that body.

The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod has reiterated its stand on this issue in a resolution of June, 1959, which reads:

" . . . it is wrong for the Christian to try to justify any kind of racial discrimination."

"We acknowledge our responsibility as a church to provide guidance for our members to work in the capacity of Christian citizens for the elimination of discrimination wherever it may exist in community, city, state, nation, and the world."

**MISSOURI SYNOD ASSURES AFRICAN
MISSIONS OF COMPLETE SUPPORT**

St. Louis. — African missions of the Lutheran Synodical Conference have been assured of complete support by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod despite the withdrawal of two member bodies from the Conference.

This promise of support was given at a meeting here of the Missouri Synod's Board of Directors.

Synodical Conference mission work has been carried on chiefly in Nigeria and Ghana. When the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (Norwegian) withdrew from the four-member conference because of strained relationships due to disagreement on fellowship principles and practices, support of the African mission program was uncertain.