

Progress Noted In Bible Studies

Purchase, N.Y.—(RNS)—Catholic Biblical scholarship has progressed and many Biblical questions today are nearer definitive solution, the Rev. Brendan McGrath, O.S.B., of Lisle, Ill., told members of the Catholic Biblical Association here.

He said this was so because "even when confronted with theories that at first glance seemed quite bizarre and fantastic, sincere and dedicated Catholic scholars have been ready to concede, following the famous line of H. I. Mencken, that 'there may be something in what you say.'"

THE GATHERING—brought to Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart 125 Biblical scholars from 29 different religious communities — including seven nun scholars — as well as members of the secular clergy.

Father McGrath, a monk of St. Procopius Abbey, the association's outgoing president, pointed out that this progress in Biblical scholarship is a result of an "altogether admirable willingness on the part of Catholic scholars not only to avail themselves of the assured results of the fruitful labors of their non-Catholic colleagues, but also to consider seriously and objectively the suggestions and theories of these same non-Catholic scholars."

"And this they have shown themselves ready to do even when these suggestions and theories have seemed at first glance to run directly contrary to positions which have been traditionally taken for granted among Catholics," he said.

Emphasizing that Catholic scholarship would never compromise defined questions of Catholic faith with any openly contradictory positions, Father McGrath called on Catholic scholars to pursue the truth in that free spirit of inquiry encouraged by Pius XII when he warned that "all should abhor that intemperate zeal which imagines that whatever is new should for that very reason be opposed and suspected."

Independence Asked By Congo Clergy

Leopoldville — (NC) — The 44 prelates and vicars apostolic of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi have issued a new pastoral letter which favors political independence based on principles of religion and social justice.

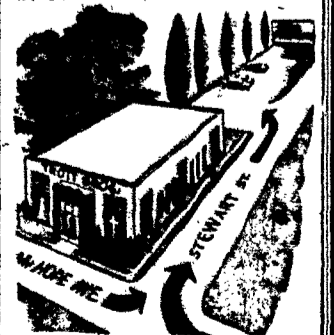
THE PRELATES restated their 1956 declaration that the Church hopes for independence and its intentions are proven by the fact that it was the first body to give responsibilities to the African.

"But," the pastoral stressed, "a true religious sense shall be at the base of the coming constitution, as religion is the traditional power and deeply-rooted value of Africa." For this reason, the prelates said, any attempt to laicize the constitution would be undesirable.



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Scholars At Bible Meet

Purchase — (RNS) — Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, lauded the Catholic Biblical Association of America here for "greatly improving" the quality of Biblical research and scholarship.

The cardinal commented on the work of the association in a talk to the group's 22nd annual meeting.

Attending the sessions were 125 Biblical scholars from many parts of the country, including priests and nuns. Requirements for admittance to the association include a working knowledge of Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic, the language spoken by Christ.

Present at the meeting as an observer was Dr. Robert C. Denton of New York, who represented the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, which consists of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish scholars. Dr. Denton is a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

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Bible Scholars Elected

Purchase — (RNS) — New officers of the Catholic Biblical Association elected at Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart during the group's 22nd annual General Meeting are: Msgr. John F. Whealon, Cleveland, O., vice-president; Father Joseph E. Fallon, O.P., of Washington, D.C., treasurer; and Father John J. Collins, S.J., of Weston, Mass., president.

Same Bible Soon For All

Sydney — (NC) — Australia's first national Biblical Congress was told that "the day is coming in the near future when Catholics and Protestants may use a uniform Bible."

Father Alexander Jones of England, a Scripture scholar, said that contemporary translations of the Bible, whether Catholic or Protestant, have honesty as their hallmark.

"I don't think it is possible for any modern scholar of reputation to do a tendentious translation of the Bible today," he said. "They all are too jealous of their reputations as scholars even to insert notes of questionable validity."

Father Jones, professor of Sacred Scriptures and Hebrew at Uppholland, secretary of the Liverpool archdiocese, was guest speaker at the congress. About 1,800 persons were present for his talk on the relationships between the Bible and the Church and the Bible and Protestantism.

The five-day Biblical Congress was inaugurated with a Solemn Mass in St. Mary's Cathedral here in the presence of Gregorio Pietro XV Cardinal Agagianian, Pro-Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, and Norman Cardinal Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney, as well as Archbishop Romolo Carboni, Apostolic Delegate to Australia.

FATHER JONES traced the background of the Catholic and Protestant attitudes toward the Bible.

"The Reformation is now dead," he said. "The reformers made the mistake of cutting themselves off from the Church, and in so doing they

Lay People Study Bible

Assisi — (NC) — Two thousand persons crowded into this town of less than 5,000 inhabitants for a study-week on the Holy Scriptures. Almost all were layfolk and most are Italian.

The studyweek is the 17th annual "Course of Christian Studies" given at the headquarters of Pro Civitate Christiana (Towards a Christian Commonwealth), a modern complex of residence halls and study halls in the center of this city of St. Francis.

Bible Not Mere History British Priest Says

Sydney — (RNS) — To reduce the Bible to the level of a history book would be disastrous, Father Alexander Jones, visiting British Biblicalist told the First Catholic Biblical Congress here.

STRESSING the difference between the Hebrew idea of history and the Greek idea of history, he said some books of the Bible generally considered as history "might not be history."

The 59-year-old scholar was the principal speaker at the five-day congress which was attended by more than 1,200 priests, nuns and laymen. Its theme was "The Catholic and the Bible Today."

College Here Opening

Buffalo — (NC) — Lt. Gov. Malcolm Wilson of New York will deliver the main address at the academic convocation marking the formal opening of Duns Scotus Hall at Rosary Hill College here September 20.



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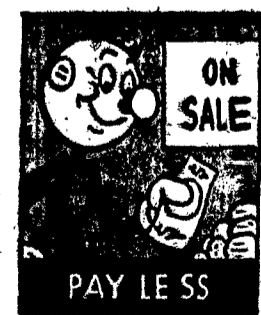
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