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THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

SUMMER SEMESTER AT OBERURSEL

The Lutherische Hochschule (theological seminary) at Oberursel, near Frankfurt, Germany, announces the following program for the summer semester (May 4—July 29).

Old Testament: Hezekiel (4 hrs.) and selections from Judges (2 hrs.)

New Testament: Hebrews (3 hrs.); Pauline and Lucan proclamation (2 hrs.); Biblical studies (2 hrs.)

Church History: History of the Ancient Church (3 hrs.); The Formula of Concord (2 hrs.)

Systematic: Dogmatics I (4 hrs.); Dogmatics III (4 hrs.); Eschatology (2 hrs.); Readings in the Lutheran Confessions (3 hrs.)

Practical: Homiletics (2 hrs.); History of Missions (2 hrs.)

At the invitation of the theological faculty of Oberursel Seminary, Dr. John T. Mueller of Concordia Seminary will serve as guest lecturer during the coming summer semester. He will present two courses: The Christian Kerygma in an Unchristian World and The History and Development of Lutheranism in America.

F. E. M.

COMMUNISM AS A RELIGION

The Anglican Theological Review (January, 1954), in an article under this heading, points out the fact that Communism cannot be understood properly unless its religious aspects are kept in mind. Communism, the writer says, has, in the first place, the positive doctrine that "the most evident reality in the universe is nature and that nature's laws are rational." Behind nature, however, is matter as the ultimate reality. Though this fundamental Communist doctrine cannot be proved true, yet it is asserted dogmatically so that the whole Communist system is erected upon an act of faith. Again, Communism reveals a goal of history presented in terms of a drama of redemption. In this drama there are a number of principal elements, such as the evil of capitalism and the triumph of the proletariat. In place of the Christian doctrine of sin, repentance, and conversion Communism offers to its adherents the doctrine that private property is the root of all evil and that salvation can come only by repentance and the rejection of everything which hinders the triumph of World Communism. Finally Communism offers its adherents the millennial hope that with the triumph of the proletariat and the elimination of capitalism there will be no more class struggle so that the State will wither away, because there will be no more need for its functions, and the result will be an everlastingly just human society.

The writer illustrates the religious implications of fundamental Communist doctrines by embodying them in the following creedal form: "I believe in Matter, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Nature, the only begotten of Matter, being of one substance with Matter. I believe in the Dialectic (social revolution), the Lord and Giver of Life, which proceedeth from Matter through Nature, which with Matter and Nature is worshiped and glorified, which spake by Marx and the Communist prophets. And I believe one Communist Party; I acknowledge the evils of Capitalism and the sins of private property; I believe in the class struggle through which redemption shall come; in the Communion of the proletariat, and in the withering away of the State; and I look for the life everlasting of a triumphant World Communism."

This is not a blasphemous travesty of the Christian Creed, but an earnest attempt on the part of the writer to show how deeply lodged in the minds of Communists are the Marxian principles as so many religious fundamentals. In his "Summary" he says "that for this reason World Communism cannot be either adequately or effectively dealt with on political, economic, or military grounds alone. The threat of World Communism can be successfully met only when its basic religious appeal is neutralized. Communism will be liquidated only by the sincere adoption of a religious philosophy which makes sense as an interpretation of universal reality and also guarantees the achievement of those human rights and dignities which mankind generally holds to be part of its inherent right." Such a "religious philosophy" can, however, be maintained only where Christianity in its Biblical truth will rule and direct the hearts of a people.

J. T. MUELLER

THE DOGMATIC FOUNDATION FOR ROME'S MARIAN CULT

A prominent Roman Catholic theologian of Europe is reported to have said that the dogma of Mary's Assumption is of greater significance in Rome's dogmatical history than the 16th century reformation. During recent years the *Una Sancta* movement, sponsored jointly by Roman Catholic and Evangelical theologians of Europe, seemed to bring the two bodies into such a relation that a fraternal exchange of

theological views was possible. But the proclamation of Munificentissimus (1950) declaring the dogma of Mary's Assumption, shattered these hopes, and deepened the gulf between Rome and all non-Roman bodies to such an extent that even Liberal Protestantism is genuinely disturbed by the steps which the Roman Pontiff has taken in proclaiming this dogma. In brief the following has occurred: Under Pius IX Roman theology was aimlessly drifting dogmatically. Under the present Pope the Church is reverting to a more dogmatic position. In the meantime, however, a complete shift in its dogmatic foundation seems to have taken place. Formerly Rome, theoretically at least, recognized two sources of doctrine, Scriptures and traditions. But in announcing the bodily assumption of Mary, Rome has virtually and officially declared that it can dispense with these two sources and has substituted a new source, the current religious views of the Church, the hierarchy. It should be kept in mind that the Pope first circularized the episcopal hierarchy and proclaimed the new dogma only after he obtained the affirmative replies of the majority, which ostensibly reflected the thinking of the Church (Glaubenssinn der Kirche). This is said to be the new source of dogmatic formulations. No attempt was made to find references to the new dogma in the Scriptures or in tradition. The only question seemed to be whether the new dogma was in accord with the general religious views of the hierarchy and whether this dogma was "definable" by logical syllogisms. This new criterion for Roman Catholic dogma especially in Germany and France greatly disturbed many theologians prior to the proclamation of the new dogma and since its proclamation places them in a dilemma. In Theologische Literaturzeitung (Vol. 79, No. 1, Jan., 1954) Prof. Friedrich Heiler of Marburg reviews all the pertinent literature by Romanists and non-Roman theologians - almost 100 books and articles — dealing with this matter. In this summary we can only refer to a few of these.

Dr. Heiler considers as the most significant contribution to the entire field the work by Martin Jugie, La mort et l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge (1944). Jugie was professor of the papal Athenaeum and at the Institut Catholique at Lyon and dedicated his dogmatic opus to the Pope. The author shows that prior to the end of the sixth century there is no reference anywhere to Mary's assumption. The so-called "transitus" legend arose about this time and was no more than a memorial festival of the Virgin and was celebrated chiefly as the glorification of Mary's soul. Jugie is very emphatic in pointing out that there is no historic foundation whatsoever in Scripture or tradition

for the bodily assumption of Mary. Not until the 13th century was the bodily assumption accepted as a pious opinion, though as late as the sixteenth century the Roman breviary contained a warning against accepting the opinion without qualifications. Though Jugie admits that there is no historical evidence, he holds that there are dogmatic reasons to support the dogma of Mary's corporal assumption. He maintains that this dogma is contained in her immaculate conception. In this dogma lies her sinlessness, her perfect holiness, her divine motherhood, her perpetual virginity. Being without sin she has a rightful claim on the immortality of her soul and body. Jugie, a first-rate historian, can therefore dispense with all historical evidence and cast all scientific investigation overboard, and rely solely on syllogisms to establish a Roman dogma. In Roman Catholic terminology Mary's assumption is a "definable" dogma. Giuseppe Filiograssi, La definibilità dell' Assunzione di Maria (1949) and W. Hentrich, De definibilitate assumptionis B. M. V. (1949) maintain that the long period of silence concerning Mary's assumption is followed by an unfolding of this dogma, so that the lack of historical evidence is more than offset by the high dogmatic criterion. Klaudius Jüssen of Freiburg in Tatsache und Definierbarkeit der leiblichen Himmelfahrt Mariens (1948) also freely admits that there is no historical evidence for the dogma. He maintains that faith in the dogma is based on the facts implicitly contained in the other Marian dogmas which are stated explicitly in traditions, and that the church can therefore also explicitly proclaim this implicitly taught dogma. Some Roman dogmaticians have openly espoused the Newman theory of development of doctrine. Joseph R. Geiselmann, Am Vorabend der feierlichen Dogmatisierung der leiblichen Aufnahme Marias in den Himmel (1950), maintains that the dogma is not based on the handing down of dogmas deposited in the shrine of the Church through the act of traditio, allegedly based on John 16:12 ff., but that a real development of doctrine has taken place. Gradually the Church came to see more clearly that Mary's assumption is but the anticipation of the final bodily resurrection of all men. Therefore to postpone Mary's assumption until the end of human history would be tantamount to severing the bond which unites her with Christ, and therefore her assumption must have occurred at the earliest possible moment. According to this author the assumption is veritas implicite revelata, and while there is no evidence in Scriptures and traditions, it is nevertheless "definable" as a dogma and must be accepted by all the faithful.

But there have also appeared some sharp criticisms of the new dogma, Heiler calls particular attention to two English Romanists, R. Winch and V. Bennet, *The Assumption of Our Lady and Catholic Theology* (1950), who question the papal infallibility decree, the lack of historic evidence, and the dogmatic argumentation, especially the "argument from convenience" as formulated by Duns Scotus: *Potuit, decuit, ergo fecit.* Other Roman theologians published books under such titles as *Katholische Kirche, wohin gehst du?* and *Quo vadis, Petre?* and several publications appeared under pseudonyms.

Friedrich Heiler has included in his survey also the non-Roman Catholic material, from the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Anglican Church, and the German Evangelical and Lutheran Church, such as Evangelisches Gutachten zur Dogmatisierung der leiblichen Himmelfahrt Mariens prepared by the theological faculty of Heidelberg, and Hans Asmussen, Maria, die Mutter Gottes, Walther Kuenneth, Christus oder Maria? Kuenneth sees a straight line from the Isis cult in Egypt and the Diana-worship in Ephesus to the worship of Mary at Fatima and Altoetting (Bavaria) and to the wild enthusiasm of the masses at the proclamation of Mary's assumption. He correctly brands Rome's Mariology as a denial of Christology and therefore as mythology, and states that for the first time a myth becomes a dogma of the Church. The chasm between Roman theology and Bible-centered theology is absolutely unbridgeable.

In the light of the foregoing one can understand, at least to a degree, how some of America's leading Roman theologians can enthusiastically support the new dogma and still remain faithful to a scholarly approach to history. The Marian cult will undoubtedly expand in scope and intensity. Since it has been established that Mary's assumption is "definable" on the basis of logic, Mariology will experience further expansion. John A. Flynn, president of St. John's University, Brooklyn, has declared that within the next century three further Marian dogmas will be proclaimed, all "definable" as dogmas, namely Mary's coredemptive activity, her mediatorship of all graces, and her queenship of the entire universe. For all practical purposes the Roman Mariolators already accept these as pious opinions, including such Romanists as Bishop Sheen, whose TV program at the opening of the Marian year was a blatant invitation to all listeners and viewers to join the Romanists in their Mariolatry. F. E. M.

WILL MARY BE DECLARED CORREDEMPTRIX IN 1954?

In a review of a Roman Catholic study on the meaning of the *Protevangelium* (Gen. 3:15), the writer, T. F. Torrance, comments: "It becomes apparent that most Roman Catholic scholars can speak of the Virgin Mary in terms of *corredemptio*, although there are many

who will not go so far as this.... No doubt the Marian year 1954 will see the proclamation of the dogma *Maria Corredemptrix*, which for the Protestant world could only be the *reductio ad absurdum* of this whole development" (*Scottish Journal of Theology*, March, p. 98).

Whether 1954 will witness the proclamation of Mary as corredemptrix is a matter of speculation. Rev. Torrance may be right, however, in his assumption that "most Roman Catholic scholars can speak of the Virgin Mary in terms of corredemptio." We submit the following evidence from a tract recently sent us by a correspondent and titled Mistakes About Mary. Father D. F. Miller is the author. It is published by the Liguorian Pamphlet Office, Liguori, Mo. In this small vest-pocket-size pamphlet, Father Miller attempts to answer ten major objections which Protestants have often raised against the undue veneration accorded Mary by Roman Catholics. Objection 10 reads:

The only requirement for salvation is faith in Jesus Christ. Nothing else is necessary or profitable to attain that end. Therefore the final and clinching argument against devotion to the Mother of Christ is that it is contrary to the basic principle of Protestant Christianity, viz., that the one and only thing a man can do and must do for the salvation of his soul is to believe firmly in Jesus Christ.

Father Miller's reply to this objection reads:

To one who is content to rest on this "basic principle of Protestant Christianity," in the face of all the clear commands of the Bible that one must keep the commandments, pray without ceasing, make use of the sacraments, besides believing in Christ, there is little to be said. To anyone who will take the Bible as a whole, who will accept, not only Christ's command that he believe in Him, but also His other commands and instructions, it can be made amply clear that He chose a Mother, endowed her with all beauty and fullness of grace, and permitted her to co-operate with Him in effecting the redemption of mankind, in order that men beg for her intercession in behalf of the graces they would need to save their souls . . . [italics ours].

This is simple and direct language which neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant can misunderstand.

If 1954 witnesses the proclamation of the dogma of *Maria Corredemptrix*, Roman Catholics will not be surprised. Nor ought Protestants be surprised. But if what we expect to happen will actually happen, then Mariolatry will have reached the zenith of development. And yet, on second thought, will it? There is still the possibility that the Pope may at some later time elevate the "Queen of Heaven" to the chief position in the redemption process and declare her to be its

principal author. There is still the possibility that in Roman Catholic teaching the Mother of God, rather than her Son, will be accorded the seat at the right hand of the Father. There is still the possibility that the Fatherhood of God will be matched by the Motherhood of God. One's mind fades out at the thought of what else could happen if Mary is declared corredemptrix. In any case, if Pope Pius XII proclaims the dogma of Maria Corredemptrix, the split between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism will become absolute and the anti-Christ character of Roman Catholic speculative theology will be past redemption.

P. M. B.

BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

Portland, Oreg. — An Oregon circuit court judge ruled here that Portland's public schools must admit parochial school children to special classes for the handicapped.

Circuit Judge Alfred P. Dobson upheld William C. Elkins, father of Patsy Elkins, a student at Holy Cross parish school. She was one of four parochial school children who had been refused admission to special lip reading and speech correction classes in the local public schools.

Mr. Elkins contended in his suit that the law's definition of handicapped includes all children and puts their admission to special classes on the basis of need rather than of enrollment in the public schools.

Attorneys for Portland's school district No. 1 indicated they would appeal the decision to the Oregon Supreme Court.

Minneapolis, Minn. — The Church Council of the 900,000-member Evangelical Lutheran Church has decided not to approve a report favoring planned parenthood.

The report was submitted by the commission on social relations of the American Lutheran Conference, to which the ELC and four other bodies belong.

The ELC Council said it found in the report "a number of statements . . . which it cannot approve" and consequently "does not give approval to its release in the name of the American Lutheran Conference."

The council did, however, authorize the appointment of a committee "to study the subject of marriage and parenthood and to prepare material for publication which would be helpful to our people."

It was understood that the American Lutheran Conference report was rejected largely on the basis that the Lutheran Church should not make pronouncements on subjects for which there is no clear Scriptural guidance.

Madrid. — Generalissimo Francisco Franco, head of the Spanish State, was awarded the Supreme Order of Christ, highest Pontifical decoration, at a special Mass held in the Royal Palace's chapel here.

The rare honor was conferred upon General Franco by Enrique Cardinal Play Deniel, Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain. It was given for Franco's services to Spanish Catholicism and the conclusion last year of a concordat between Spain and the Vatican, recognizing Catholicism as the only religion of the Spanish people.

Oslo.—The Norwegian Cabinet has declared that Bishop Kristian Schjelderup of Hamar was not unfaithful to his ordination pledges in maintaining that the conception of an everlasting punishment in Hell is incompatible with Christianity as a religion of love.

His position in the "Hell-discussion," which has stirred Norwegians for nearly a year, was conveyed to the bishop by Dr. Birger Bergersen, Minister of Church Affairs.

The charge of "unfaithfulness" against Bishop Schjelderup was made by Prof. Ole Christian Hallesby, Norwegian lay leader, pietistic theologian, and former head of the provisional council of the State Lutheran Church.

It followed a protest by Bishop Schjelderup against a radio address made last year by Professor Hallesby in which the latter stressed the condemnation to Hell of all unbelievers. The address made headlines in the Norwegian press.

Bishop Schjelderup took the position that Christianity was a religion of love and that Professor Hallesby's teachings were incompatible with this concept.

Professor Hallesby then said the bishop was unfaithful to his ordination pledges. Whereupon the bishop asked Norway's Department of Church Affairs to clarify its position on the matter. The Department, in turn, asked the bishops and theological professors for their views.

Bishop Schjelderup, who was under attack in many quarters for his stand and nearly boycotted by some of his congregations, said he would resign if the charges against him were upheld.

In its pronouncement on the matter, the Cabinet said that neither the bishops nor the theological professors had reached any common conclusion and that "their opinions seem to vary a good deal."

By taking an official stand in the controversy, the Cabinet has underscored the authority of the King to interpret the Confession and to tell what may or may not be taught within the Church of Norway. While it is not likely that the Cabinet's pronouncement will end the "Hell-discussion," the emphasis may shift to the relationship between Church and State.

This possibility was foreshadowed in a 60-page document on the issue written by Dr. Frede Castberg, professor of Constitutional Law at the University of Oslo, who was also asked by the Department of Church Affairs to examine the question.

Professor Castberg concluded that the King (the Cabinet), according to his own conviction, should interpret the Confession and decide whether a pastor or bishop is teaching according to the Confession, "as their duty is."

"In exercising this authority," Professor Castberg said, "the King has no duty to consult with the bishops or the theological faculties, and if he does so, has no duty to follow their advice."

Bishop Eivind Berggrav, who led the Church's struggle against the Quisling regime during the war, protested against Professor Castberg's views. The bishop announced that he will shortly publish a pamphlet entitled "Contra Castberg in vital questions for the Church."

Only one of the eight bishops consulted by the Department of Church Affairs, Bishop Ragnvald Indrebo of Bjorgvin, said definitely that "Bishop Schjelderup's statements are in contrast with the Confessions and his duty to teach according to the Confessional Books."

Most of the other bishops said the material they were given was too meager to justify any definite judgment on Bishop Schjelderup's teaching. Two bishops went on record as saying that "statements like those by Bishop Schjelderup do not place anybody outside the Confessional Lutheran Church."

While the Free Theological Faculty agreed with the Bishop of Bjorgvin, the theological faculty at the University of Oslo held:

"Bishop Schjelderup's teaching does not deviate from the Confessions, the Bible or the teaching of Jesus to such a degree that he has placed himself outside the Confessional, Evangelical Lutheran Church."

Calcutta. — Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India, has assured Christian missionaries that they will have full freedom to preach and do social work among Indians.

But he urged that these activities should not be motivated by a desire for conversions.

The President's comments were in reply to a statement to him by the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council. The Council said the standard reached by the Garos was "due to the work of the missionaries . . . and we would earnestly pray that restrictions should not be imposed on their work."

Dr. Prasad said the government was determined to implement fully the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. And he praised Christian missions for the good work they had done in many parts of the country.

"We all, whether Christians or not, appreciate their services," he declared. "Gandhi used to say that their services would be still more appreciated if they were not conditioned by one thing. That was, that these services should be rendered purely out of love for the people but not with the motive of conversion. Missionaries should consider this point."

Madrid.—The Rev. Manuel Diaz, pastor of a Baptist congregation at Tetuan, Spanish Morocco, has been expelled from that protectorate by Spanish military authorities, according to reports received by Protestant leaders here.

The reports gave no reason for Mr. Diaz' expulsion but said he now is at Algeciras in Southern Spain.

The Tetuan Baptist congregation comprises some 40 to 50 members and is supported by a Canadian Baptist mission group, Protestant sources said.

Columbus, Ohio. — American Lutheran Church congregations in this area conducted a week-long Spiritual Life Mission as a pilot project for an evangelistic campaign to be undertaken later in all of the denomination's 2,032 congregations in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.

The Rev. Henry E. Hoesman of Columbus, director of evangelism for the A. L. C., said the objectives of the continent-wide mission are "recovery of the loyalties of each congregation's members and deepening of the spiritual life of loyal members."

London. — Pope Pius XII never makes any decisions or takes any action without first seeking the intercessions of St. Teresa of Lisieux, according to Bernard Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster.

He said the Pope "told me all that St. Teresa had done for him and said to me: 'I do not know what lies ahead, but if you pray to her in any difficulty, without a doubt she will help you.'"

New York.—The "official" periodicals of eight church bodies affiliated with the National Lutheran Council now have a combined circulation of 424,329, according to NLC headquarters here.

They have gained 56 per cent since 1947, the report said, and it is estimated they are read by more than half of the 3,064,000 confirmed members of the eight bodies.

Biggest of the periodicals is The Lutheran, weekly magazine of the

United Lutheran Church in America, which, with 1,450,000 confirmed members, is the largest body in the NLC.

The Lutheran's circulation went from 50,000 in 1947 to 143,000 early this year, a gain of 186 per cent.

St. Paul, Minn. — A boarding club housing young men on parole or probation will be established by the board of charities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in co-operation with Luther Theological Seminary here.

Students from the seminary will counsel with the boarding club residents.

The club is tentatively scheduled to be put into operation within a year under the direction of a seven-man commission to be appointed by the ELC charities board.

Barcelona, Spain. — A Diocesan Secretariat for the Preservation of the Faith was created here with the directive "to work for the repression of Protestant propaganda."

Establishment of the new office followed a call issued by Roman Catholic Bishop Gregorio Modrego y Casaus of Barcelona for a "true crusade" in his diocese against the "Protestant danger."

Washington, D. C. — President Eisenhower has nominated Chaplain (Brig. Gen.) Patrick James Ryan to be Chief of Army Chaplains. He has been Deputy Chief since August 21, 1952, and also held that post from 1946 to 1948.

Upon confirmation by the Senate, the 51-year-old Monsignor Ryan will be promoted to the rank of major general. He will become the second youngest man ever to hold the Chief Chaplaincy and the second Roman Catholic to head the Army Chaplains. The first Chief was Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) William R. Arnold (1937—1945).

New York.—A dearth of Roman Catholic educational facilities for scientific research and for the study of pure science was deplored by the Rev. J. Franklin Ewing, S. J., of Fordham University here.

"We Catholics are neglecting to turn out scientists," he said. "And the position of scientists in our civilization is of the utmost importance. There is a tremendous amount of lip service to science in American Catholic education but that is as far as it goes. We have not introduced students to science as such."

Chicago. — Sales of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible have passed the 2,647,000-mark since its publication late in 1952, it was reported here by Dr. Luther A. Weigle, dean emeritus of Yale Divinity School and chairman of the Standard Bible Committee of the National Council of Churches.

In addition, he said, more than 2,500,000 copies of the R. S. V. New Testament have been sold since it first appeared in 1947.

Bogota, Colombia.—A school inspector in the city of Armenia, Caldas province, has ordered a Protestant school there to close down and his directive has been approved by the provincial authorities.

The local newspaper, El Espectador, which reported the development, said the school was run by American and British teachers. It added that they had tried to appeal the school inspector's decision to Armenia's mayor, but were not given a hearing.

The Hague.—The Netherlands government will issue in June a stamp commemorating the 1,200th anniversary of the death of St. Boniface, Apostle of Germany, who was martyred in the Dutch town of Dokkum in Friesland.

To mark the observance, Netherlands Catholics will hold a national pilgrimage to Dokkum on July 6. On the preceding Sunday, special services will be held in Utrecht, oldest diocese in Holland, which was founded by St. Willibrord, companion of St. Boniface.

Washington, D. C. — The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod has been granted an additional 12 months by the Federal Communications Commission to complete a new commercial television station, KFUO-TV, which will be established at Clayton, Mo., a suburb of St. Louis. The scheduled completion date now is April 4, 1955.

When the station goes on the air, it will be the first of its kind to be operated by a national religious body.

Mexico City.—A Roman Catholic nun was arrested at the city's busiest intersection for "wearing religious garb in public." But she was freed after protesting to police officials at the station house that her habit is a "uniform" and, as such, has been authorized since the 1940—46 administration of President Manuel Avila Camacho.

Sister Guadalupe Colon, a member of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, had been taken into custody by two policemen at the request of Gen. Miguel Flores Villar of the Mexican Army, who charged that her appearance on the streets in religious garb violated national laws.

Anti-clerical decrees issued in 1926 during the regime of President Plutarco Elias Calles forbid the wearing of religious garb outside churches. While technically still in effect, the decrees have not been widely enforced since the days of the moderate Avila Camacho administration.

L.W. SPITZ