

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
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Zero!!

The following interesting editorial is from The Denver Register:

"Notre Dame University, in one of the Religious Bulletins issued for its students, predicted that the meeting of the Religious Education association at Cincinnati, seeking a new formula 'to make religious learning a more vital force,' would arrive nowhere, because the leaders of the movement were too chaotic about religious principles. The Cincinnati Enquirer, in one of its reports of the convention, said:

"Just what is religious education? Even the most prominent religious educators in the country, in Cincinnati to discuss what's wrong with it, can't agree on what it is. Several demands - and they were demands! - for a definition were made at last night's conference session of the Religious Education association at the University of Cincinnati. One delegate said it would be impossible - that no six delegates present could agree on a definition. Another offered a more material suggestion. He said that inasmuch as some of the most prominent religious educators in the nation were present, three of them should get together and draft a definition overnight, this to be chalked on a blackboard this morning for the delegates to accept or reject. He made it in the form of a motion 'to get action,' but the chairman ruled it out. And there the matter stands - with 200 religious educators meeting to solve the pressing problems of religious education and yet, by their own admissions, not knowing what religious education is.

"The men at the Cincinnati meeting might be hazy about what religious education is, but we are not. The reason they cannot agree is because they regard religion as a highly debatable thing. Our idea of religion is the revelation made by God through the ancient Jews and the early Christians, particularly by His Divine Son Jesus Christ, and protected in the Catholic Church through the constant assistance of the Holy Ghost. It is a very positive body of doctrines, backed up by an immense wealth of study on the part of theologians, philosophers and historians throughout the ages. One can study Catholicity all his life without making more than a dent in its accumulated scholarship. The chaotic condition of religious thought outside the Catholic Church today is startlingly exposed by the failure of the men who met at Cincinnati."

The Bulletin in question, "Oil and Water Will Not Mix," was read to the assembled delegates at the Cincinnati meeting. No public comment was made. One of the delegates has asked for 175 copies, saying: "I think your Bulletin very well represents the Notre Dame idea in matters of this kind, and wish to send it to some of my friends." It is not merely the "Notre Dame idea" - it is the Law of the Catholic Church. Canon 1325 states:

"Catholics shall not enter into any disputes or conferences with non-Catholics - especially public ones - without the permission of the Holy See or, in urgent cases, of the local ordinary."

The reasons behind this Canon are outlined in the supplementary Bulletin, "Explaining an Explanation." This attitude has its parallel in the civil order, as the following incident will show: At the Peace Conference at Versailles, in 1919, the British delegates, in a sectional meeting, insisted on taking up a discussion of the disposal of the German ships seized by the United States when we entered the War. Admiral Benson stopped the discussion promptly with this fiat: "Gentlemen: You are questioning the sovereignty of the United States. Those ships belong to the United States by Act of Congress. You have nothing to say about them." That ended the discussion.

Custody of Revelation belongs to the Catholic Church by her Divine Commission.