

PRESS RELEASE

On October 17-19, 1986, the twenty-four members of the Roman Catholic-Southern Baptist Scholars' Dialogue met at the CARA Retreat Center in Washington, D.C. The meeting was a new experience among inter-church conversations because symbolic imagery was used to help the participants grapple with issues involving the mission of the church. Sr. Aquin O'Neill, Chair of Religious Studies at Salve Regina College in Newport, Rhode Island, and Dr. William Hendricks, Professor of Christian Theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky led the group through worship, a Foreign Mission Board film, slides, and a tour of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception to focus on the topic of mission.

The meeting in Washington was the third in a series of six meetings planned for the 1985-1988 triennium. Two other triennia have preceded this one. Two sets of papers have already been published from the dialogue. The first set appeared in the April, 1982 issue of Review & Expositor and the second set in the January, 1986 Southwestern Journal of Theology. A third publication is projected for the end of the current triennium.

This widely publicized conversation has been jointly sponsored by the Interfaith Witness Department of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs. Many American church leaders see this conversation between persons from the two largest religious bodies in the United States as one of the most significant events in contemporary American religious life.

The Southern Baptist members of the Scholars' Dialogue are Dr. William Angell, Dr. Eljee Y. Bentley, Dr. Bruce Corley, Dr. James Leo Garrett, Dr. C. Brownlow Hastings, Dr. William L. Hendricks, Dr. E. Glenn Hinson, Dr. Fisher Humphreys, Mr. Donald Kammerdiener, Dr. Alan P. Neely, and Dr. Richard Harmon, co-coordinator.

The Roman Catholic members are Rev. James D. Niedergeses, Rev. C. Gerard Austin, Rev. Robert Dalton, Rev. John R. Donahue, Sister Rita Forbes, Rev. Richard R. Greene,

Rev. Frederick M. Jelly, Sister Aquin O'Neill, Rev. William Reiser, Rev. Donald Senior, Rev. Carroll Stuhlmuehler, Rev. Thomas Stransky, and Rev. Joseph Witmer, co-coordinator.