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SAINT JOHN NEUMANN, C.S.S.R.  
CATECHIST AND WRITER OF CATECHISMS

1. CATECHISM AND CATECHETICS IN NEUMANN'S EDUCATION

For one who knows about the early years, the education and the pastoral experience of St. John Neumann, it comes as no surprise to learn that he was an accomplished catechist and the author of catechisms. Aside from the excellent Christian instruction and example found in his home life, catechism played an important part in the earliest school years of this saint who was born and baptized on March 28, 1811 in Prachatitz (now Prachatice) in Bohemia, then part of the vast Austrian Empire, now situated in Czechoslovakia. He himself tells us about his grammar school days when he writes in his autobiography: « If I recall rightly I was not yet ten years old when I was thoroughly acquainted with the Large Catechism and was also admitted then to First Holy Communion »<sup>1</sup>. Neumann speaks of his proficiency in the « Large Catechism ». In the history of catechism writing, authors (e.g., Canisius) wrote a Catechism. After that, they wrote an abridgement that was entitled, e.g., Smaller Catechism. The original was often then popularly referred to as the « Large Catechism »<sup>2</sup>. His proficiency in the Large Catechism was such that he was admitted to First Holy Communion two years ahead of time.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Autobiography of St. John Neumann, C.S.S.R., Fourth Bishop of Philadelphia. Introduction, Translation, Commentary and Epilogue* by Alfred C. Rush, C.S.S.R., Boston 1977, 23. This will be referred to as Rush, *Neumann Autobiography*. The original manuscript is in the archives of the Baltimore Province of the Redemptorists, now in Brooklyn, New York (= ABPR). For the German edition, see Andreas Samper, C.S.S.R., *Joannes Nepomucenus Neumann Kurze Lebensbeschreibung (Baltimore 27 März 1852)* in *Spicilegium Historicum C.S.S.R.* 11 (1963) 82-104.

<sup>2</sup> B. Schneider, « Canisius, Peter, St. », *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 3 (1967) 25; G. Sloyan, « Catechism », *ibid.*, 227.

He started going to confession at seven, was confirmed at eight, and received Holy Communion when not quite ten.

The catechist and director of the school was Father Peter Schmidt. There was a warm bond between the two. It was in the garden of the catechist that he learned the mystery of plant life and flowers by day and the marvels of the heavens by night. This was the beginning of Neumann's lifelong hobby of botany and his lifelong interest in astronomy<sup>3</sup>. In those days, students who planned to go on for further studies to become lawyers, doctors or priests, took special Latin classes in their last year or two at the grammar school. These were given by Father Schmidt. At the same time, he gave tutoring lessons to prepare the boys for their entrance examination into the Budweis *Gymnasium*, a six year course that amounted to the American four years of high school and the first two years of college. When Neumann reached that stage he was timid about signing up on account of the expenses. Father Schmidt encouraged his « exceedingly diligent and good-natured pupil » on to higher studies and brought the matter to his parents who were overjoyed and agreed at once<sup>4</sup>. The transcript of the examination record shows Neumann's grasp of catechism at the completion of grammar school. He received the grade of « Very Good » in religion, Bible History and Gospel, the equivalent for our catechism or Christian Doctrine and Bible History of the Old and New Testaments. With few exceptions, this was the grade he received in all subjects. One easily understands why the report says that he passed the entrance examination « with distinction ». The transcript and Neumann's testimony show us how thorough was Father Schmidt's tutoring. Telling us about his reaction to his entrance into the Budweis *Gymnasium*, Neumann writes: « I had to learn little because the catechist at home taught us so much in the few hours each week that, with little preparation, we could have been admitted into the third year. However that was not permitted us »<sup>5</sup>.

Certain experiences in the various periods of his education

<sup>3</sup> ABPR, Neumann Section (= N), Prague Province, Peter Schmidt to Philip Neumann, Oct. 12, 1837, Obermalldau; ABPR, N, Berger Papers, Peter Schmidt to John Berger, C.S.S.R., Feb. 27, 1872, Falsching. See Michael J. Curley, C.S.S.R., *Venerable John Neumann, C.S.S.R., Fourth Bishop of Philadelphia*, Philadelphia 1952, 7. This will be referred to as Curley, *Neumann*.

<sup>4</sup> Rush, *Neumann Autobiography*, 24. The quote in the text is from P. Schmidt's letter of 1837 (n. 3).

<sup>5</sup> ABPR, N, Budweis Gymnasium, Testimonial, April 5, 1823; Rush, *Neumann Autobiography*, 25.

had a *pro* or *contra* effect on his career as a catechist and catechism writer. At the beginning, there was the disappointment of having to begin in the first year at Budweis when he could have entered the third. In his boredom he became an omnivorous reader, reading anything he could get his hands on. This led to desultory habits. Furthermore, he made little progress because of the poor pedagogy of his teacher, a genial easygoing, elderly alcoholic who committed suicide in the middle of Neumann's third year. At this early phase of his schooling he had lost his earlier enthusiasm for religion and catechism because of the teaching method used by the religion teacher. He recalls how dissatisfied he was with the religion professor who was «dullness and dryness personified». He then goes on to say of the professor: «He had an obsession for every word and I did not have a good word-for-word memory. As a result, the two classes in religion were most boring»<sup>6</sup>. At least Neumann learned from this to be more concerned with the substance of truth rather than with verbatim formulation or parrotlike recitations. The importance of this catechetical experience is seen from the fact that Neumann recalled it in such detail in his rather short autobiography.

Little wonder that Neumann was discouraged. In 1827, when he came to the end of his fourth year, he was tempted to give up his studies. Fortunately, he allowed his mother and his sister, Veronica, to talk him into going back<sup>7</sup>. The last two years at the *Gymnasium* (the first two years of college) mark the time when he began to come into his own scholastically. However, religion and religious studies were not his favorite subjects. Those were the years when he found delight in the humanities, a delight that is evident in the many anthologies he made from ancient classics. Along with these, his special love was German literature, especially the writings of Schiller and Herder. Later, in his *Journal*, he berates himself for this and says that, with regard to religion, he «still entertained the most abominable prejudices for the Protestant poets and philosophers like Herder and Schiller»<sup>8</sup>.

Neumann spent his philosophy years (the last two years of college) at the Budweis Philosophical Institute that was conducted by

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* 25.

<sup>7</sup> John Berger, C.S.S.R., *Life of Right Rev. John N. Neumann, C.S.S.R., Fourth Bishop of Philadelphia*, translated by Eugene Grimm, C.S.S.R., Philadelphia 1884, 27-28. This will be referred to as Berger, *Neumann*.

<sup>8</sup> ABPR, N, *Mon. Journal*, April 9, 1835. For more on Neumann's *Journal*, see below, n. 16. See also Curley, *Neumann*, 12.

the Cistercians, the most beloved of all his teachers. Along with philosophy, he studied religion, advanced mathematics and the natural sciences. Although he received the highest grades in all the subjects, including religion, he tells us about his special attraction for the sciences when he writes: « In those two years I avidly followed my bent for natural sciences: botany and biology, geography, physics, geology, astronomy. And I applied myself with the greatest enthusiasm to algebra, geometry and trigonometry, subjects that formerly were not to my liking »<sup>9</sup>. This predilection for the natural sciences created a vocation crisis at the end of his course. The problem was: would he go on to study medicine or theology? He tells us in his *Journal* of 1835 and in his 1852 autobiography that he felt more of an attraction for medicine. It is true that Neumann desired to be a priest. However, he had such an exalted idea of the priesthood that it seemed beyond his reach. Moreover, there was a better chance of being accepted into the medical school. Only twenty out of eighty or ninety applicants would be accepted into theology. Furthermore, although there would be no trouble with the scholastic record — as already noted — he needed letters of recommendation. He expressly says that he « wanted to have nothing to do with them ». In his fourth year of theology he looked back on his outlook when he had completed his study of the humanities and the natural sciences and accused himself of having an excessive love for the sciences. He also says that he always « regarded humanity as the acme of perfection and loathed nothing more than the so-called mystics ». Contrasting theology and medicine, he says that he felt some aversion for the former and more attraction for the latter. In other words, his outlook was that of a typical nineteenth-century scientist, humanist and empiricist. He comforted himself with the thought that he « had not wasted [his] time on trivialities and that [his] mind was better prepared for the serious study of theology »<sup>10</sup>. He was a bit too harsh on himself as he penned that judgment that was somewhat clerical and anti-humanistic. Actually, those studies were more than a preparation for theology. They contributed to the well rounded education of Neumann which, in turn, contributed to his catechetical expertise<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Rush, *Neumann Autobiography*, 25-26.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* 23, 25-26; ABPR, N, *Mon Journal*, April 9, 1835; July 19; 1838.

<sup>11</sup> Alfred C. Rush, C.S.S.R., « Saint John Neumann, C.S.S.R. », *The Priest* 34, May 1978, 23-27.

Even though Neumann pointed out to his mother that he did not know anyone who would back his request to be admitted into the seminary, she thought that he « should give it a try » and write a letter of application. To his surprise he shortly after that received his letter of acceptance. That was the beginning of his four year theology course, 1831-1835, the first two being spent at the Budweis Diocesan Seminary, the last two at the Seminary of the University of Prague. Neumann devoted himself to the sacred sciences with the same ardor that he formerly had for the natural sciences. His favorite subject, one that had such a close bearing on his catechetical career, was Sacred Scripture. Professor Karl Koerner awakened in him an avid enthusiasm for the New Testament, especially St. Paul, and also for the Old Testament. We still have evidence of this in his copious Scripture notes, the manuscript of which we still possess, and in the Bible History that he later published<sup>12</sup>. Neumann tells us how he studied Scripture *con amore*. From his classmates we learn how he read it every day, had his own complete edition of the Vulgate that was broken up into several small volumes, and that he was a member of the Students' Bible Quiz Club and always knew the right answer. It is easy to understand the thrill and joy that he felt in his new studies. He informs us that there were no regrets and that the reading of Sacred Scripture awakened in him religious sentiments hitherto unknown. All this is reflected in his grades, the highest rating in all subjects, except one, for his two years at Budweis<sup>13</sup>. The same cannot be said for his last two years at the University of Prague, two years of frustrations, disappointments and irritations. Here he did well but was not outstanding<sup>14</sup>. He tells us how displeased he was with the professors of dogmatic, moral and pastoral theology. He found that those professors at the Royal State University were more State-minded than Church-minded in their opinions, that they were imbued with the tenets of Josephinism and Febronianism, systems that looked upon the Church as a department of the State. To counteract this, he delved into Catholic tradition and the writings of the Fathers and

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<sup>12</sup> The manuscripts for his Scripture notes are contained in the Archives of the American Catholic Society of Philadelphia at St. Charles Seminary. Copies are found in ABPR. For Neumann and Bible History, see Curley, *Neumann*, 162, 431, nn. 41-44.

<sup>13</sup> Rush, *Neumann Autobiography*, 26-27; ABPR, N, *Mon Journal*, April 9, 1835; Berger Papers, Adalbert Schmidt to John Berger, April 4, 1872, Graz; Anton Laad to John Berger, April 11, 1872, Kotoum; Curley, *Neumann*, 20-23.

<sup>14</sup> Augustinus Kurt Huber « Johann Nep. Neumanns Prager Studienzeit (1833-1835) », *Archiv für Kirchengeschichte von Böhmen-Mähren-Schlesien* 2 (1971) 36-51.

Doctors of the Church, Sts. Augustine, Gregory the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Peter Canisius, Robert Bellarmine and Alphonsus Liguori<sup>15</sup>.

The highlight of Neumann's studies at Prague was the course in catechetics under Professor Francis Czeschik. His enthusiasm for catechetics is seen in the frequency with which he speaks about it in his *Journal*, which he began on October 1, 1834, the beginning of his last year in the seminary<sup>16</sup>. There we learn how he made it a point to make a through study of the classic catechisms of Canisius, Bellarmine and the Council of Trent, that written by Canisius being the one he refers to the most. Shortly after starting the *Journal* he writes about getting back from the bindery some volumes of Canisius. Looking at them he reminds himself that the contents are more important than the cover, and he asks the Lord to make him worthy of the great and holy Saint. We also learn how he resolved to read every day a chapter of Scripture, the Imitation of Christ and one of the official catechisms, e.g., Canisius<sup>17</sup>. Certain entries show how highly Neumann regarded Canisius and how much he was ready to make sacrifices to purchase it. A January entry tells about a visit to the bookstore to purchase the fourth volume of Canisius. One can almost hear his cry of shock as he hears the price that was then far too much for his pocketbook. As the months go by he records his longing to have it and then his joy, in May, of being able to buy it<sup>18</sup>. As is evident, he was buying the set gradually. He is referring to the *Summa of Christian Doctrine* by Canisius that had been recently published at Vienna in four volumes<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Rush, *Neumann Autobiography*, 28; Curley, *Neumann*, 27; Berger, *Neumann*, 45.

<sup>16</sup> On October 1, 1834, the beginning of his last scholastic year in the Seminary at Prague, Neumann began keeping a diary that he entitled *Mon Journal*. He wrote it in French as a means of practicing that language. Beginning March 22, 1835, he started a *Mon Journal* in which the entries were written in German. He did not discontinue the French *Journal*; at times, the same day had an entry in the French and German version. Furthermore, at times Neumann made entries in English. The *Journal* ends on November 29, 1839. For the *Journal*, see Curley, *Neumann*, 29-30, 405, n. 26, 408, n. 31. For the English translation of the French, see William Nayden, C.S.S.R., *Spicilegium Historicum C.S.S.R.*, 25 (1977) 321-418; 26 (1978) 9-74; 27 (1979) 81-152. An abbreviated English translation of the *Journal* is found in ABPR.

<sup>17</sup> *Mon. Journal*, Oct. 9, 15, 1834.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 30, Feb. 2, 26, May 4, 1835.

<sup>19</sup> Canisius, *Summa Doctrinae Christianae*, 4 vols. Vienna, Apud Carolum Kollmann, 1833-1834. This edition that came out in Neumann's seminary days contains four volumes. Neumann (*Mon Journal*, Jan. 30, Feb. 2, 1835) speaks about a second part of the fourth volume (IV/bis) or of volume five. He is probably referring to the treatise, *De hominis lapsu et justificatione secundum sententiam et doctrinam Concilii Tridentini*, an appendix to Vol. IV.

The Journal tells us about Neumann's concern to order a copy of the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*. We also know that, in his daily reading of catechisms, this was one of the ones he used<sup>20</sup>. Anton Laad, one of Neumann's classmates and friends, tells us about his study of Bellarmine<sup>21</sup>. Even without this testimony, there is ample evidence of his esteem for the catechism of Bellarmine in the books we have from Neumann's own library that are preserved in the Neumann Museum at St. Peter's church, Philadelphia, where he is buried. Here we find a copy of the catechism that was printed at Prague in 1747 by Francis Charles Hladky for the archbishop, Johannes Mauritius Manderscheid-Blankenheim<sup>22</sup>. It numbers VIII + 180 pages and contains a preface in the form of a pastoral letter from the archbishop to the clergy of Prague in which he speaks about the Society of Christian Doctrine and the need for sound doctrine as exemplified in Bellarmine<sup>23</sup>. The year, written in Neumann's handwriting, shows that he bought the book in 1835, his last year in the seminary, the year he took catechetics. Along with this, there is the precious evidence found in a Neumann manuscript book. This is a German translation of Bellarmine's catechism done by Neumann and written in his own hand. The books not only give the appearance of age, but also of being well-worn, a sign of the use he must have made of them all during his life.

Neumann not only tells us about his study of the classic catechisms, he also furnishes us with details about the catechetics course that involved writing and delivery of a catechetical instruction. The assignments were given to the class on January 7. Neumann speaks of his eagerness to get down to it. Towards the end of February, he says that his mind is swimming with ideas for the instruction from Scripture and Canisius. As the days wore on he wondered when he would finish it and complained that he could not get down to it because of so many other things to do. The instruction was due on March 8. He tells us that he rose very early on the 7th, worked on it all day long and succeeded in finishing it by staying up until half

<sup>20</sup> *Mon Journal*, Oct. 15, Nov. 4, 1834; Jan. 28, 1835.

<sup>21</sup> ABPR, N, Berger Papers, Anton Laad to John Berger, April 11, 1872, Kotoum.

<sup>22</sup> R. Ritzler-P. Sefrin, *Hierarchia catholica medii et recentioris aevi*, VI, Padua 1958, 347. Joannes Mauritius von Manderscheid-Blankenheim was archbishop of Prague from 1733 to 1763.

<sup>23</sup> *Catechismus seu explicatio doctrinae christianae*. Auctore Roberto Bellarmino Politano ex Soc. Jes. S.R.E. Cardinali. Jussu SS. D. N. Clementis VIII composita. Revisa & a Congregatione Reformationis approbata. Vetere Pragae in aula regia impressum apud Franciscum Carolum Hladky, Archiepiscopo impressum. 1747.

past three in the morning of the 8th<sup>24</sup>. There still remained the public delivery of the instruction. While awaiting his turn, it happened that the student who was due up before him got sick. That left Neumann with a little less time to memorize the talk and with more nervousness. He tells us — in a note of thanks to the Lord — how he « finished the instruction without faltering even though [he] was fairly nervous »<sup>25</sup>.

As the months went by, it became apparent that there would be no July ordinations for the Budweis seminarians of the class of 1835. In those days, when there was union of Church and State, the means of support for priests was provided by the government. It was unwilling to provide for so many all at once. Some of the class of 1834 were still awaiting ordination<sup>26</sup>. In that crisis and disappointment Neumann speaks about two things that gave him comfort and « warmed his heart ». These were: learning to say Mass and the study of Canisius<sup>27</sup>. The delay in ordination confronted him with a double crisis. Not only did he have to tell his parents and family about the postponement of ordination, he also had to tell them about his carefully-kept secret of two years, namely, his resolve to leave home for missionary work in the United States<sup>28</sup>. It is interesting to note the role that catechism had in his last months at home before leaving for America. In October we learn how each day called for the reading of « the catechism of Canisius »<sup>29</sup>. To guarantee this and other resolutions he took an 1823 French « Rule of Life » and adapted it to his own needs. This schedule called for the study of catechism every day from after the noon meal until two o'clock<sup>30</sup>. Here it is interesting to note that the study of catechism is among the first and the last things to be mentioned in the record of the long years of schooling leading to the priesthood.

## 2. - NEUMANN AS A CATECHIST

All during his life Neumann had the reputation of being an excellent catechist, one who had the knack of being able to accom-

<sup>24</sup> *Mon Journal*, Jan. 7, Feb. 23, 26, March 2, 7, 9, 1835.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* March 13-14, 1835.

<sup>26</sup> ABPR, N, Berger Papers, Laad to Berger, April 11, 1872, Kotoum; Karl Krbecek, *Notizen*, 1872. These *Notizen* are reminiscences about Neumann, written by a close friend and classmate, that were sent to Berger through his mother.

<sup>27</sup> *Mon Journal*, June 11, 1835.

<sup>28</sup> Curley, *Neumann*, 36-41; Berger, *Neumann*, 91-98.

<sup>29</sup> *Mon Journal*, Oct. 8, 1835.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* July 23, Nov. 1, 1835; Curley, *Neumann*, 40.



moderate himself to the ability of his hearers. Actually, his catechetical apostolate began before he was ordained priest. Boarding the boat at Havre, Neumann felt embarrassed when he had to tell German Catholics from Alsace and Baden, anxious to make their Easter duty, that he was not yet ordained a priest. On that very day he « resolved to begin [his] missionary work among the children of the emigrants »<sup>31</sup>. This early catechetical work with children was a foretaste of what was to be one of the characteristics of his ministry. Catechetical work also occupied his first weeks in America while awaiting ordination from Bishop John Dubois of New York on Saturday, June 25, 1836. He worked in the German parish of St. Nicholas under the pastor, Father John Raffener. Besides giving catechetical instructions to adults in the church, he found himself daily in the school teaching the children catechism. Among the children there was a group of thirty who were preparing to receive their First Holy Communion that year. This group was entrusted to Neumann for their instruction and preparation. The joy of the day of his first high Mass on Sunday, June 26, was even greater because that was the day the children received their First Holy Communion. After the Mass the children came up with their parents and each one presented him with a small token of appreciation<sup>32</sup>. Preparing children for First Holy Communion would always occupy a special role in his catechetical ministry.

This was the beginning of Neumann's four years as a diocesan priest<sup>33</sup>. On his way to his Buffalo mission stations, the bishop told him to look in on the Germans in Rochester who were members of an « Irish-German » parish conducted by Father Bernard O'Reilly. There the newly ordained priest from Europe had a very important American catechetical experience. On July 5th, the day after his arrival, he rounded up the children to teach them catechism. To put it mildly, it was a shocking experience. He was shocked to see at what a low catechetical level they were. He was doubly shocked at their language, a mixture of bad German and bad English. To complicate matters,

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<sup>31</sup> *Mon Journal*, April 10, 1836.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* June 20, 22, 1836; ABPR, N, Letters 1836, Neumann to Dean [Endres of Prachatitz], June 27, 1836, New York. This is published in *Berichte der Leopoldinen-Stiftung im Kaiserthume Oesterreich* 10 (1837) 52-55; J. Wuest, C.S.S.R., *Annales Congregationis SS. Redemptoris Provinciae Americanae*, I, Ichester, Md. 1888, 258-260. These will be referred to as *Berichte* and Wuest, *Annales*.

<sup>33</sup> Readers desirous of more information regarding the phases of Neumann's priestly and episcopal career can have recourse to the biographies or autobiography. The references here, except where more is absolutely needed, will be confined to sources and studies bearing on Neumann and catechetics.

there was no thought then of a German school, of a school that could provide for those whose native language was not English<sup>34</sup>. Here he saw the relation between catechetical comprehension and basic education. Little wonder that he became not only an apostle of catechetical instruction but of parish schools that could provide for the needs of varying groups of children<sup>35</sup>.

The long years of education and these early catechetical experiences stood Neumann in good stead when he took over his own parish work in the outlying country districts of Buffalo. Father Alexander Pax, who became his advisor, confidant, confessor and friend, introduced him to his parish. Actually, Neumann's parish was a collection of mission stations that he cared for from his headquarters, first from Williamsville (1836) and later from North Bush (1837). Originally, Neumann had three mission stations. The need for priests was desperate as he found out from his own experience as he travelled around and kept discovering pockets of Catholic immigrants. He tells his parents how he wished that he could multiply himself<sup>36</sup>. That was what he had to do as he multiplied his mission stations and ended up with at least twelve. That is the picture that emerges from his letters back as he pleads for volunteers and describes the pastoral needs of his stations. All this was enough to test the catechetical zeal of any newly-ordained priest<sup>37</sup>.

The catechetical zeal of the newly-ordained is revealed in an entry in his Journal not long after his arrival on the Buffalo scene. He addresses the Lord and says: « For love of Thee, my Jesus, I will also love children and spare nothing to instruct them properly in Thy religion »<sup>38</sup>. To accomplish this, the priest and catechist had to be-

<sup>34</sup> *Mon Journal*, July 6, 1836. For Neumann's account of his early days in New York, Rochester and Buffalo, see Neumann to Canon Andreas Räss, May 30, 1837. This letter is known from its being printed in *Der Katholik* 66 (1837) 275-280. An English translation can be found in *Central-Blatt and Social Justice* 27 (1934-1935) 130-131, 177-178.

<sup>35</sup> Alfred C. Rush, « The Sainly John Neumann », in *The History of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia*, ed. James F. Connelly, Philadelphia 1976, 225-231.

<sup>36</sup> ABPR, N, RP, Neumann to his Parents, Sept. 5, 1837, North Bush. This letter is printed in *Der Katholik* 69 (1838) 61-67; *Berichte* 11 (1838) 56-62; Wuest, *Annales* I, 262-267. An English translation can be found in *Central-Blatt and Social Justice* 17 (1924-1925) 163-164, 179-180.

<sup>37</sup> ABPR, N, RP, Neumann to [Dichtl], June 4, 1837, Cayuga; Neumann to his Parents, Oct. 7, 1838, Tonawanda; Neumann to [Dichtl], May 31, 1839, Tonawanda. This last letter is printed in *Berichte* 13 (1840) 63-68; Wuest, *Annales* I, 278-282. An English translation can be found in *Central-Blatt and Social Justice* 17 (1924-1925) 200-201, 215. See also Rush, *Neumann Autobiography*, 34-35, 99-100, n. 117.

<sup>38</sup> *Mon Journal*, Oct. 30, 1836.

come a school teacher and a builder of schools. Shortly after his arrival at Williamsville he was forced to fire the school teacher because of his drinking habits. He himself took over the school, taught every morning from nine until eleven, supervised the children until twelve and taught again from two to four. He did this until he succeeded in getting a new teacher<sup>39</sup>. Neumann's ideal and boast was a school for each mission; to him this was indispensable for a solid grounding in Christian doctrine. This was quite a hardship, not only on him personally but also on his pocketbook. The immigrants were poor, came from a culture where the churches and schools were supported by the government. They were not used to voluntary contributions and they resented appeals for special collections. Furthermore, the trustees were very slow to approve money for special projects. One can hear Neumann groan at the thought of all the school work, groan over the stinginess of the people, the attitude of the trustees and over his own plight in being forced to pay for all this out of his own skimpy and meager earnings. He comforted himself with the thought that he would do it out of love for Jesus, the Friend of children. He then writes: « Yes, my Jesus, I will teach the children to know and love Thee »<sup>40</sup>. Along with these weekday lessons in the school, he also held a parish catechism class every Sunday afternoon for the older youngsters<sup>41</sup>.

Fortunately, we know something about Neumann's catechetical method and techniques during these years. We have precious testimony, an eyewitness account from one who was taught by him. This was George Pax, the nephew of Father Pax. He gave his testimony in a letter of 1872 to Father John Berger, Neumann's nephew, when he was gathering data for his uncle's biography. From him we learn how Neumann loved to gather the children around himself and how they ran to gather around him when he arrived. He came with a supply of holy pictures and religious articles to reward those who could repeat the principal points from the previous lesson. Note the emphasis not on word-for-word recitation, but on the comprehension of the principal parts. To make his classes more interesting and concrete, Neumann combined Scripture and Bible History with catechism.

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<sup>39</sup> ABPR, N, Berger Papers, George Pax to John Berger, Feb. 16, 1872, Williamsville; *Mon Journal*, Aug. 17, 1836.

<sup>40</sup> *Mon Journal*, Oct. 30, Nov. 21-23, Dec. 7, 1836; Neumann to Dichtl, June 4, 1837; May 31, 1839.

<sup>41</sup> *Mon Journal*, July 22, 1836.

He also illustrated the points of doctrine with anecdotes and stories. In 1872 some still had their medals and holy pictures; they would also recall the stories from his classes. He also combined catechism and liturgy, the proper carrying out of which meant so much in his apostolate<sup>42</sup>. Obviously, a thorough catechesis in the Eucharist helped for a more intelligent participation in the liturgy. Neumann encouraged the congregational singing of hymns. Part of the catechism class was used to teach these hymns as a preparation for the Sunday liturgy. Students who were self-conscious about singing and who developed a convenient « sore throat » were cured by a piece of rock candy that he always had with him. They soon found themselves singing heartily during the catechism classes and the Sunday Masses<sup>43</sup>.

Along with general catechism classes, Neumann conducted classes for special groups to meet their sacramental needs. Different days were assigned for the regular confessions of the girls and the boys. To prepare them he always had a special instruction on the Sacrament of Penance<sup>44</sup>. He paid special attention to the boys and girls who were to receive their first Holy Communion. We are fortunate in having an account of the Williamsville class of 1838. It lasted three months. Neumann sings the praises of these children because many of them had to come five or six miles every day even in bad weather. In a report back to Europe Neumann marvels how much they accomplished in a short time. Not only did they acquire a good grasp of the principal truths of the faith, but they also made great progress in reading and writing as well<sup>45</sup>. Despite the amount of work involved, Neumann admitted that the teaching of children, like visiting « his sick », was good psychotherapy<sup>46</sup>. The drastic need for supplying catechetical instruction to German youth was the theme of a letter home in which he pleaded for more priest volunteers. He first explains how much of the missionary's time is taken up with catechizing children. He then gives an account of his own experience and how eager and hungry they are for religious truth. On this premise he pleads for more helpers to carry on the catechetical work. Without them the Church will suffer the loss of immigrants by the thousands<sup>47</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> See Rush, « The Sainly John Neumann », in *The History of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia*, 234-236.

<sup>43</sup> George Pax to John Berger, Feb. 16, 1872, Williamsville.

<sup>44</sup> *Mon Journal*, Oct. 30, 1836.

<sup>45</sup> Neumann to Dichtl, May 31, 1839, Tonawanda.

<sup>46</sup> *Mon Journal*, Dec. 9, 1836.

<sup>47</sup> Neumann to Dichtl, May 31, 1839.

Work with children, as is evident, is frequently mentioned in the Neumann sources of these New York years. On the other hand we have very little information about his catechetical work with grownups. There was, of course, his regular ministry week in and week out, preparing people for the sacraments, and instructing converts. All this involved catechetics. We get some insight into this aspect of his work if we look to the type of parishioners he had and study a statement he made. For the most part his parishioners were poor, simple, uneducated country people, mainly immigrants from Ireland and Europe, the majority being German-speaking. They were people who had been on their own, without the regular ministrations of a priest for some time, the type that needs solid instruction and indoctrination. In caring for them, Neumann writes about preaching and the important role he must attach to it. He describes it as a process of bringing about conviction « of the truth of our holy religion », a process of replacing error with truth<sup>48</sup>. His preaching, then, was a constant and continual catechesis.

In October 1840, after four zealous years, Neumann left for Pittsburgh to join the Redemptorists who first arrived on the American scene in 1832. This first phase of his new life lasted until January 16, 1842 when he made his vows at St. James', Baltimore. Normally, the novitiate is a year of solitude. The struggling new Order was having a difficult time finding a satisfactory foundation for a religious community; it was also suffering from lack of manpower. As a result, Neumann had very little solitude and was constantly occupied with parochial work. While others were out in the neighboring towns, he was often alone at the home church of St. Philomena, the German parish that took care of 5,000 Germans out of a population of 50,000. This entailed being ready at all times to preach or give catechetical instructions. Furthermore, to fill emergency needs he was called to other Redemptorist foundations or commitments. The result was that he found himself travelling in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio and Maryland<sup>49</sup>.

One with the holiness of a Neumann survived this hectic novitiate occupied with apostolic work and travel. What is more, it became an enriching source of experience. He was able to see with his own eyes the plight of the German immigrants. He was also able

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<sup>48</sup> *Mon Journal*, Oct. 30, 1836.

<sup>49</sup> ABPR, N, RP, Neumann to his Parents, Oct. 12, 1842, Baltimore.

to diagnose their condition and recommend remedies. It is here that he has so much to say about the need and importance of catechetical instruction as he reports the results of his wide travels to the archbishop of Vienna. The serious threat to the German immigrant church, he writes, is the lack of instruction coupled with the lack of priests. This is the source of wholesale defections, of countless being lost to the Church. He speaks of German Catholic communities that receive instruction only once or twice a year, the only times they see a priest. He also speaks of Catholics who had not been able to get to confession for years. What is worse, there were some — fifteen to twenty years old — who had not received a sacrament or any instruction since their baptism as infants. The report also mentions the need of German orphanages. Here, again, one of the underlying motives was the need of ongoing religious instruction from childhood years as a means of safeguarding the faith of these immigrant children <sup>50</sup>.

Neumann's profession as a Redemptorist on January 16, 1842 at St. James' marks the beginning of his first Baltimore assignment. This lasted until his departure for Pittsburgh in 1844. He was among the early pioneers in the Baltimore apostolate of the Redemptorists who came there in 1840 <sup>51</sup>. His parochial ministry involved a tremendous amount of catechetical instruction. This is so because of the lack of manpower; only two priests, Fathers Joseph Fey and Neumann, had to carry the burden of caring for the 4,000 Germans spread throughout the entire city of Baltimore. Furthermore, the condition of these Germans called for constant instruction. They were uprooted immigrants; many had lost contact with a priest or parish; many were ignorant or had grown spiritually careless. For the ongoing instruction of these Catholics, Neumann speaks of the Sunday morning instruction, the Sunday afternoon catechism class, the instruction from the liturgy by « the orderly and beautiful carrying out of the divine services ». He singles out the role that sodalities and confraternities played in the ongoing catechetical life of these Baltimore Germans. Associations were formed for the various groups in a parish, divided according to age, sex and marital status. A conference on some point of Christian doctrine was a part of each meeting. Furthermore, along with their regular Sunday Mass, they gathered once a month to participate

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<sup>50</sup> Neumann to the Archbishop of Vienna, Dec. 6, 1843, Baltimore. This letter is printed in *Berichte* 17 (1844) 43-52, and also in Wuest, *Annales*, 302-309.

<sup>51</sup> For the early Redemptorists and Baltimore, see John Byrne, C.S.S.R., *Redemptorist Centenaries* (Philadelphia 1932), 93-104; Wuest, *Annales*, 71-85, 113-115, 122-125, 135-136, 147-148.

in the liturgy as a group. He mentions the Confraternity of a Happy Death, of the Blessed Sacrament, of the Sacred Heart. In his view the social, devotional, doctrinal and liturgical aspects of these gatherings were an antidote to the proselitizing associated with the political and literary societies that the Germans were so partial to. Even the children were not forgotten in these confraternities. He speaks of the children's Society of the Living Rosary. This was a complement to the instruction they received every Sunday at Mass and every day in their grammar school, something that won acclaim because it was a free school. Constant catechetics was also involved in the work with converts. In a letter of December 12, 1842, Neumann tells his folks how this work keeps them busy, that they have one or more received every Sunday. He also informs them that he then had twenty under instruction and that they would be ready in three or four weeks. The result of all this work was a parish at once united and pious. Neumann is happy to tell the archbishop of Vienna that the archbishop of Baltimore often said that he never saw a church with such devotion and edification<sup>52</sup>.

In those pioneer days the Redemptorists had the care not only of the German Catholics in the city of Baltimore, but of all in the entire State of Maryland. From their Maryland outmissions they went up into southern Pennsylvania to care for scattered groups there. At the request of the bishop of Richmond they made the long trips to visit German settlements in Virginia, that then included present West Virginia. In Neumann's reckoning, Richmond in Virginia was 170 miles from Baltimore, Cumberland in Maryland 178, and Kingswood in West Virginia 250. We are told that this mission station work very often devolved on Neumann because « he was used to it from his New York mission stations ». The missions were visited at least once every three months. Neumann says of this work: « This constant travelling about in America is expensive and dangerous. Despite this, the missions in the country often furnish much more consolation than those in the cities ». The work in these country stations consisted in confession, Mass and solid instruction to encourage the people to persevere until they had a parish of their own. For the Virginia mission stations the bishop of Richmond supplied money. For travelling to the other stations it was the German Catholics who supplied the travelling expenses. This shows the sacrifices they were willing to make to hear the word of God and to be enriched with the sacra-

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<sup>52</sup> Neumann to his Parents, Oct. 12, 1842; Neumann to the Archbishop of Vienna, Dec. 6, 1843. See also Wuest, *Annales*, 122-125.

ments and Christian doctrine. Fortunately, Neumann himself furnishes us with a specific concrete illustration, the visit to Cumberland, Maryland. He writes to the archbishop of Vienna: « Whenever a priest comes, practically all (150 to 200) come to confession and Holy Communion. Among these are many families who come here thirty to forty miles by foot from the adjacent territory of the Alleghany Mountains in Virginia and Pennsylvania. They come to see a German priest again, to hear him, to have their children baptized and instructed by him, and to receive the holy sacraments themselves »<sup>53</sup>. Undoubtedly, the experience of the work in these country settlements must have strengthened even more Neumann's convictions about the necessity and importance of catechetical instruction.

Neumann began his Pittsburgh years in March 1844, when he was appointed Rector of St. Philomena's which the Redemptorists conducted since 1839. The setup was very similar to that at Baltimore, an urban parish of 5,000 with many scattered outmissions caring for German immigrants<sup>54</sup>. Although he worked in these mission stations, for the most part he had to confine himself to the home parish, principally to supervise the ongoing construction of the new church and rectory<sup>55</sup>. His appointment as pastor was an opportunity for him to carry out his ideals of the role that instruction in Christian doctrine should play in a well-regulated parish. Such instruction was to be part and parcel of every age of life, beginning with childhood. Some evidence of this is seen in the fact that this was the period — as will be seen later — when his catechisms were appearing in print. For the role of catechism in the lives of the children at St. Philomena's we have to rely on the testimony of his nephew. Besides his general solicitude for the parish school and the education of the children, he was particularly concerned about their catechetical instruction. He himself gave the instructions. We are told that the faces of the children would light up when they heard him approaching the classroom. He won them over by his personal kindness and by the simplicity and clarity of his lessons. This classroom spirit was carried over into the streets where he was always surrounded by children. The high points in the

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> For the early Redemptorists and Pittsburgh, see B. Beck, C.S.S.R., *Goldenes Jubiläum des Wirkens der Redemptoristenväter an der St. Philomena Kirche in Pittsburgh und Umgegend* (Pittsburgh 1889), 101-164; Byrne, *Redemptorist Centenaries*, 80-91; Wuest, *Annales*, 65-70, 93-97, 125-126.

<sup>55</sup> ABPR, N, Pittsburgh Years 1844-1847. Here one finds a record of his pastoral activity. See also Wuest, *Annales*, 149-159.



catechetical lives of the children were the reception of the sacraments: Penance at nine, Confirmation at eleven, and the Eucharist, popularly referred to as First Holy Communion, at twelve. Neumann provided a thorough preparation for each Sacrament and made the days as festive and joyous as possible, events that would leave a lasting impression and be a memorable experience<sup>56</sup>. By the time they received the Eucharist, they had a good acquaintance with the basics of Christian doctrine. No doubt he wanted to see in them the ideal he realized in his own boyhood when he was « thoroughly familiar with the Large Catechism » before making [his] own First Holy Communion<sup>57</sup>.

With that foundation, parishioners could go on to grow in the knowledge of the faith with the passing of the years. Aside from work on their own, the principal means used to impart religious instruction to the people was the sermon at the Sunday liturgy. Neumann took pains to make sure that the people received solid instruction in all the topics of Christian doctrine with no needless or constant repetition of the same themes. To guarantee this, he arranged for the priests of St. Philomena's to write out an outline of the Sunday sermons in a special book to be kept as a record<sup>58</sup>. Beside the Sunday sermon, the members of the many confraternities and sodalities received specialized instructions in their regular monthly meetings<sup>59</sup>. Finally, Neumann's time was taken up with Christian doctrine in the catechetical instructions he gave to converts. Unfortunately, all we can mention is the bare fact, with the added detail that there were many converts in Pittsburgh in those days<sup>60</sup>.

In January 1847, Neumann was back in Baltimore at St. Alphonsus'. That was the beginning of his second stay in Baltimore, a stay that lasted until 1852. Although he filled important posts, he was at heart a parish priest and he used every opportunity to devote himself to catechetical instruction. This was the time when Neumann was instrumental in helping the School Sisters of Notre Dame to get established in the United States. They, in turn, were most helpful to Neumann and the apostolate of the Redemptorists by agreeing to teach

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<sup>56</sup> Berger, *Neumann*, 264-265; Beck, *Goldenes Jubiläum*, 154.

<sup>57</sup> Rush, *Neumann Autobiography*, 23.

<sup>58</sup> ABPR, N, *Themata Sermonum*; Curley, *Neumann*, 101-102.

<sup>59</sup> ABPR, N, Pittsburgh, *Items from the Announcement Book*.

<sup>60</sup> Wuest, *Annales*, 182.

in their newly-found parishes, of which Baltimore had three in 1847<sup>61</sup>. This happy combination of circumstances resulted in a precious testimony regarding Neumann's work as catechist at St. Alphonsus'. From her own experience Mother Caroline writes: « He was an accomplished catechist and a great lover of children. His gentleness, meekness and perseverance in communicating religious knowledge to the children often awoke my astonishment »<sup>62</sup>.

By this time the Redemptorists had succeeded in bringing the ministry at St. Alphonsus' up to the ideals for which they were noted. It was more than a mere local parish; it was a vast religious center, with its school system, well-ordered church services, preaching, instruction, convert work and active societies. All this is described enthusiastically in a contemporary editorial<sup>63</sup>. Fortunately, all this is confirmed by Neumann who marvelled at the changes he saw when he returned to Baltimore. Previously, two priests carried on the work; now, seven were hardly enough and were all kept busy. As an indication of growth he mentions that in 1847, from January to September, there were 552 baptisms<sup>64</sup>.

In this apostolate, catechism classes and instruction in Christian doctrine occupied a very prominent part. Furthermore, we learn from his nephew that Neumann often chose these humble assignments for himself<sup>65</sup>. Beginning with the morning sermon, the entire day on Sunday was taken up with instruction of some kind. The early afternoon (2 P.M.) was the time assigned for Neumann's catechism class. His instructions were so interesting and clear that they drew not only the young but also the old<sup>66</sup>. Later in the afternoon they had Vespers, Confraternity devotions and instruction, followed by Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. The last service took place at seven o'clock in the evening when they had Marian devotions, a short sermon on the Blessed Mother and prayers for the conversion

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<sup>61</sup> M.T. Flynn, SSND. *Mother Caroline and the School Sisters of Notre Dame* (St. Louis 1928), I, 32-37; Byrne, *Redemptorist Centenaries*, 98-99.

<sup>62</sup> ABPR, N, Berger Papers, Mother Caroline to John Berger, April 21, 1874, Milwaukee.

<sup>63</sup> *United States Catholic Magazine* 6 (1847) 554. See also Wuest, *Annales*, 169-170. Father Helmprecht (see below n. 71) mentions how the Americans marvelled at the enthusiastic congregational singing heard during the services. Neumann (n. 52) also mentions this.

<sup>64</sup> ABPR, N, RP, Neumann to his Parents and Sisters, Sept. 26, 1847, Baltimore.

<sup>65</sup> Berger, *Neumann*, 296.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

of sinners<sup>67</sup>. A special occasion for instruction was the vigorous Solidarities and Confraternities at St. Alphonsus'. These were a source of admiration to other contemporaries who marvelled to see men, women and children so well organized, to see them gather for a special monthly instruction. Most of all, people marvelled to see how the parishioners, even large numbers of men, gathered as a group to receive the Eucharist once every month<sup>68</sup>. To appreciate this admiration we have to bear in mind that this was a half century before the Eucharistic renewal of Pope St. Pius X (1903-1914). This practice, however, was part of Neumann's catechetical apostolate and ideal. To him, theory was not to lie dormant, but was to be put into practice. The knowledge and theory of Eucharistic catechesis was to lead to the practice of participation in the liturgy and receiving the sacrament.

Neumann's catechetical expertise was put to good and frequent use in the instruction of converts. Fortunately, we know much more about this phase of his work in these Baltimore years. His nephew tells us that he went out of his way to choose this work for himself, disregarding the inconvenience of instructions in the late evening hours<sup>69</sup>. Neumann himself leaves us many precious details about this phase of his apostolate. All this is contained in a letter to his folks back home in Prachatitz. He tells them of the number of Protestants who ask to become Catholics. Many of these, though nominally Protestants, had never been baptized before. He mentions that in 1846, the year before his arrival, eighty-six adult converts became Catholics. He then adds the extremely interesting detail that one third of those converts were Blacks<sup>70</sup>. Readers in the late twentieth century will obviously be interested in this detail and would like more information about this aspect of the apostolate in Baltimore. The relation of the Fathers with the Black Catholics undoubtedly accounts for the Black converts. In this regard, a most intriguing piece of information is supplied by Father Joseph Helmprecht who was then stationed with Neumann at St. Alphonsus'. After mentioning the care of the Fathers for the English, Irish and Negro children, he goes on to say: « The Catholic Negroes are a very good-natured people. They attach themselves more readily to the Germans, particularly since the

<sup>67</sup> See the richly detailed account in ABPR, N, RP, Neumann to his Father and Sisters, Sept. 10, 1851, Baltimore. A good digest is found in Wuest, *Annales*, 196.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* See also *United States Catholic Magazine* 6 (1847) 554.

<sup>69</sup> Berger, *Neumann*, 296.

<sup>70</sup> Neumann to Parents and Sisters, Sept. 26, 1847, Baltimore.

Americans do not want any association with them, and even in church provide them seats apart from the white people. It is difficult to persuade an American that the Negro also descended from Adam<sup>71</sup>. One can readily understand the tendency for minorities to identify with each other. At the same time, this intriguing statement that indicates a practice so much in advance of its time needs to be integrated with the general history of the Catholic Church and the Blacks<sup>72</sup>. At all events, these Baltimore letters of the later 1840s give us new insight into Neumann's catechetical apostolate.

Neumann's appointment as bishop of Philadelphia in 1852 gave him a much wider sphere in which to put his talents for catechetical instruction to use. As bishop he was the official teacher of the diocese; catechetical instruction was his responsibility personally, given in pastoral letters, canonical visitation of the parishes and confirmation tours. Furthermore, as bishop he had to see that religious instruction was imparted to all in every phase of life from childhood on. He provided for this on a diocesan basis in synodal legislation and extra-synodal regulations. His pastoral letter of 1852, issued immediately after arriving, was an occasion to instruct his people on the nature of a Holy Year and the indulgences attached to it by the Holy Father. He used the pastorals of 1854 and 1855 to give an instruction on the newly-defined dogma of the Immaculate Conception and on the role of Mary in Christian life. His pastoral of 1859, issued shortly before his untimely death in 1860, dealt with the nature of priestly vocations and the means of fostering them, and also with the nature of a preparatory seminary, his means of increasing native vocations that proved so successful<sup>73</sup>.

Neumann's zeal in making the rounds of canonical visitations

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<sup>71</sup> [Joseph Helmprecht] to Friend, Feast of St. George [April 23], 1846, Baltimore. This was published at Regensburg in the fourth fascicle of *Der katholische Hausfreund* of 1847, pp. 55-58. The English can be found in *Social Justice Review* 37 (1944-1945) 23. The editor of the Review says that the author of this letter was «almost certainly a Redemptorist». The present writer can say with certainty that it was written by the Redemptorist, Father Helmprecht. In the course of the letter he says that he was ordained, together with Father S., at St. Alphonsus' on Dec. 21, 1845 by Archbishop Eccleston. Father S. stands for Father Anthony Schmidt. They were the only Redemptorists ordained that day. He also mentions that he was then stationed at St. Alphonsus'. Later he became Provincial (1865-1877). See Wuest, *Annales*, 454, 456; M. Curley, *The Provincial Story*, New York 1963, 152-180.

<sup>72</sup> J.T. Ellis, «United States of America», *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 14 (1967) 434, 436.

<sup>73</sup> Berger, *Neumann*, 327-333, 351-357, 387-392. Fortunately, Berger gives practically the entire texts of these pastorals. See also Rush, *Neumann*, 231-233.

and confirmation tours was truly heroic. Although there was a canonical aspect to this work, it was principally pastoral, a chance for a pastor to get close to his people and impart Christian instruction. Actually, the lion's share of the time on these visitations was taken up with catechetical instruction. He gave a talk the evening before administering Confirmation and on the day itself. If it were given in connection with a Mass, there was a third sermon. He was insistent in having candidates who were well instructed in Christian doctrine. He knew that, for many, that would be their last formal schooling. Consequently, if he found some who were not sufficiently instructed, he would postpone their reception of Confirmation until later; often he stayed on to give the instruction. If Confirmation were not to be given, he would have the people gather in church at stated times and give them catechetical attention. Special attention was always given the children in school. If there were none, he always arranged for the children to gather around him so that he could once again be a country pastor giving a catechism lesson to children. It is certainly true under Neumann each visitation became a parish mission, a parish renewal<sup>74</sup>.

There is a close connection between catechetical instruction, synodal legislation and the extra-synodal regulations of Neumann. Scarcely after entering the diocese in 1852 — and prior to holding a synod — he launched his historic campaign for a diocesan parochial school system, for a school in every parish, a move that proved him to be a man of vision. In making this move he was not unmindful of the fact that intellectual education works for the growth and enrichment of the individual person and prepares him to become an intelligent member of society. At the same time he wanted a system of education that included religion as part and parcel of the curriculum. He wanted a Catholic School System where children would receive catechetical instruction from their earliest years and become good members not only of society but also of the Church, where they would be both good citizens and Christians<sup>75</sup>. The theme of religious instruction obviously makes its way into his synodal legislation. Despite the many items treated in his three synods of 1853, 1855 and 1857, it is surprising to see how frequently the theme of catechetical instruction keeps reappearing. In the earlier periods of Neumann's apostolate we saw his emphasis on the relation between catechetics, liturgy

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<sup>74</sup> Curley, *Neumann*, 217-219, 341-345. Rush, *Neumann*, 214-216.

<sup>75</sup> Curley, *Neumann*, 207-212, 263-265, 378-379.

and the sacramental life of the Church. The same association is found in his ministry as bishop, beginning with his very first synod. The first synod looked to the solid and uniform instruction of children given them in church or in the parochial schools. To guarantee this, he ordered that all were to use the catechisms approved by the First Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1852. Incidentally, this involved Neumann's German catechism that won the approval of the Council<sup>76</sup>. The Synod also takes up the relation between catechetics and the reception of the sacraments. Pastors are reminded of preparing children of seven or eight years for the sacrament of Penance, and children of ten for the reception of the Eucharist. The preparation is to consist not only of pious exercises or a retreat but also of special instructions<sup>77</sup>.

The 1855 Synod again highlights the importance of catechetics in its enactment on parochial schools. Here Neumann stresses that students, while advancing in human science, should also grow in their knowledge and love of God. To accomplish this goal he urges that the parish priests themselves take over this religious instruction and not leave it to the teachers. Furthermore, in carrying out this work the priests are to provide for the older students and those who are more intelligent. These students are to be given a richer and fuller instruction in Christian doctrine in keeping with their age and intelligence. These regulations apply to parishes where there was a parochial school. In parishes that did not have a school, Neumann provided for the introduction of the Society of Christian Doctrine. Every Sunday the men would teach the boys and the women would teach the girls. The points to be covered were the customary prayers, the articles of the Creed and the method of receiving the sacraments fruitfully. Furthermore, time allowing, the pastor was to visit the classes and encourage both the teachers and the students to carry on their important work. Finally, the importance of religious instruction is seen from the provision that Neumann made for those with a special need. In those days, by reason of immigration or out-of-the-way places, there were some who reached their fifteenth year and who never learned to read. Moreover, they never received First Holy Communion or Confirmation. Obviously, they felt embarrassed in being grouped with young children who were being prepared to receive the sacraments. With regard to these, he gave « strict orders to all to whom he

<sup>76</sup> P. Guilday, *A History of the Councils of Baltimore*, New York, 1932, 176.

<sup>77</sup> *Constitutiones Dioecesanæ in Synodis Philadelphiensibus annis 1832, 1842, 1847, 1853, 1855 et 1857 latae et promulgatae*, Philadelphia 1881, 24-25.

committed the care of souls ». They were to gather these special cases separately and teach them the necessary truths, in keeping with their capacity, until they received the sacraments<sup>78</sup>.

The Synod of 1857 links liturgy and catechetics. As previously seen, Neumann saw growth in religious instruction as a preparation for an active and intelligent participation in the liturgy. The liturgy in turn was a source of instruction both to the participants and to the observers who might be present. One of Neumann's ideals was to have Vespers sung in every parish on Sundays and feasts. These were never to be omitted for other exercises of piety. The reason for this is that the solemn and approved cult of the Church is judged more pleasing to God. If this cannot be carried out, the priest has three possible options: 1) he can teach the children the rudiments of their faith; 2) he can give an instructive sermon to the people; 3) he can conduct devout exercises with prayers taken from the liturgy or approved by the bishop or the pope. If we look to the options and their sequence, we see that instruction is the first thing mentioned and that two out of the three choices deal with catechism and Christian doctrine<sup>79</sup>. As is obvious, Neumann's zeal for catechetics was remarkable in every place of his ministry. This is the zeal of a dedicated priest and bishop, of one who was himself a writer of catechisms.

### 3. - NEUMANN AS A WRITER OF CATECHISMS

As we take up the topic of Neumann as a writer of catechisms, we find that we must speak not only of his published catechisms but also of his catechism in manuscript form that he never published. The archives contain a manuscript, entitled, *Synopsis Catechismi ad Parachos* = *A Synopsis of the Catechism for Parish Priests*<sup>80</sup>. As is obvious, this is written in Latin and meant for parish priests. The published catechisms, on the other hand, are written in German and are meant for the laity, for the children and grownups according to their ability and education. This manuscript is not without its problems, problems that the writer will attempt to solve or about which he will furnish some data that will be a step on the way to a possible or probable solution.

As background for these problems it is necessary to give an

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* 27-28.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* 41.

<sup>80</sup> ABPR, N, Catechisms.

outline of the catechism manuscript. The sixty pages comprise three parts: 1) An Explanation of the Apostles' Creed; 2) The Sacraments; 3) The Precepts of the Decalogue. In a word, the sequence is: creed, cult, code or faith, worship, conduct. The problem here is to try and determine the origin and roots of this sequence, a sequence that he does not follow in his German catechisms. As previously seen, Neumann was well acquainted with the classical catechisms of the Council of Trent and of Saints Robert Bellarmine and Peter Canisius<sup>81</sup>. On which of these is this catechism more dependent? Curley speaks of the Latin catechism as « a resume of the great catechism of St. Peter Canisius »<sup>82</sup>. This is a remark made almost in passing; it seems to be something he simply takes for granted. Furthermore, he was probably influenced by an 1842 catechism with the name of Canisius in the title, a catechism that has a link to Neumann and of which more will be said later. Recent catechetical scholarship shows that Curley's opinion needs modification. Mary Charles Bryce, O.S.B., admits that Neumann's work has a « certain tone and unction similar to that of Canisius ». However, his sequence here is not that of Canisius whose order was creed, code, cult. She goes on to say: « Neumann followed the sequence of Trent's manual, namely creed, cult, code or faith in the context of the Apostles' Creed, a study of the sacraments as Christ-events in human history, followed by a treatment of the commandments as Christian response »<sup>83</sup>. Trent's triad of creed, cult, code is followed by a section on prayer, especially the Lord's prayer<sup>84</sup>. This too will be a strong and prominent feature in Neumann's catechisms. The very title that he chose for his Latin catechism also indicates that he is modeling the work not on Canisius but on Trent. His aim is to furnish a synopsis « of the Catechism for Parish Priests », words that are part of the title of the work decreed by Trent, namely, *A Catechism for Parish Priests, decreed by the Council of Trent and issued by the command of Pope Pius V*<sup>85</sup>.

The second problem centers about the time when Neumann wrote his Latin catechism. Unfortunately, there is not a single word

<sup>81</sup> See above, nn. 17-23.

<sup>82</sup> Curley, *Neumann*, 162.

<sup>83</sup> Mary Charles Bryce, « An Accomplished Catechist: John Nepomucene Neumann », *The Living Light* 14 (1977) 329-330.

<sup>84</sup> P. De Letter, « Catechism of the Council of Trent », *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 3 (1967) 231-232.

<sup>85</sup> See John A. McHugh-Charles T. Callan, *Catechism of the Council of Trent for Parish Priests*, New York 1947.



about this in the Neumann archival sources. This is strange because there were occasions when he had an opportunity to mention it. One opportunity — as will be seen — was the First Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1852. Curley mentions that it was written long before the German catechisms were published<sup>86</sup>. These — as we know — go back to the 1840s. However, he gives no reason to back up his assertion. The present writer would like to propose the theory that this catechism was written before 1836, the year Neumann left for New York. He would like to go on further and suggest that it was written in the summer and fall of 1835.

Here we can first mention that the Latin catechism is not of the same period and catechetical approach as the German catechisms. They are of the period before Neumann had adopted the sequence of creed, code, cult<sup>87</sup>. Language is another factor that forms a basis for ascribing the catechism to his European years. It was written at a time when Neumann did not yet know about the canonical status of the Church in the United States and the terminology corresponding to that status. He knew only of the setup of the Church in Europe, where the Church had been established for centuries, where there was a union of Church and State, where the government had a religious fund from which one acquired a benefice as a title of ordination, where there were parishes and parish priests in the full canonical sense.

In those days — and until 1908 — the canonical status of the Catholic Church in the United States was completely different. As a young church, the entire territory was regarded as a mission. It was a missionary church that was under the jurisdiction of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith<sup>88</sup>. With no union of Church and State, with no help coming from the Government, the Church was on its own and had to provide for its own needs. In that setup the title of ordination for a priest, whereby his support was guaranteed, was the title of the mission, with the corresponding obligation of taking the oath of serving the mission perpetually<sup>89</sup>. In a letter of June 27, 1836, only two days after his priestly ordination by Bishop Dubois of New York, Neumann had to explain to the priests back home the title of his own ordination in a land with no union of

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<sup>86</sup> Curley, *Neumann*, 161-162.

<sup>87</sup> See below, n. 97.

<sup>88</sup> R. Song, *The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith*, Washington, D.C. 1961, 58-62.

<sup>89</sup> P. Guilday, *A History of the Councils of Baltimore*, 115, 209, 259.

Church and State. He tells them that there is no Government Religious Fund and no benefices that would constitute a title for ordination. He then explains how he was ordained « on the title of the American Mission »<sup>90</sup>. Technically and juridically, in a setup like this, there were no canonical parishes in the strict sense of the word; one spoke either of a congregation, mission or quasi parish. Similarly, there were no parish priests; one spoke rather of priests, missionaries or rectors; missionary-rector, rector of a church, of souls, etc. Instead of speaking of parish priests and curates, one spoke of rectors and vicars<sup>91</sup>.

Once Neumann arrived in America in 1836, from his first explanation of the « title of mission », he conformed to the proper canonical terminology. He does not speak of a parish (*parocchia*), but of a mission (*missio*) or a congregation (*congregatio*). Likewise, he does not use the word parish priest (*parochus*); he uses instead the words: priest (*sacerdos*); missionary (*missionarius*), pastor (*pastor*). These terms are constantly recurring in the following three classes of documents. For the sake of emphasis the specific words in the selected passages from these documents will be italicized. In his letters to Rome, to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith and to Pope Pius IX, he speaks of obtaining faculties and privileges for *his missionaries* or the *missionaries of his diocese*. He mentions the School Sisters of Notre Dame who teach *in the missions entrusted to the care of the Redemptorists*. He gives a report about the Societies that were inaugurated *in every mission of the diocese of Philadelphia*<sup>92</sup>. His legislation, as reflected in the Synods of 1853, 1855 and 1857, speaks of *pastors of souls in their missions*, of the *teaching obligation of the missionaries* with regard to their faithful, and of *the congregations and missions of the diocese*. The offerings of the faithful are not described as means of support for parish priests but for *the clergy*<sup>93</sup>. The same terminology is found in his correspondence with the archbishop, Francis Patrick Kenrick of Baltimore, where he expressly says in discussing

<sup>90</sup> ABPR, N, Letters 1836, Neumann to Dean [Endres], June 27, 1836. See above, n. 32.

<sup>91</sup> S. Woywod-C. Smith, *A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, 2 vols. New York 1948, I, 96-97, II, 656-657.

<sup>92</sup> Neumann to Propaganda, June 7, 1852; Sept. 3, 1852; Dec. 16, 1854; April 11, 1858. Neumann to Pius IX, Sept. 9, 1852; April 5, 1858. For the letters, see A. Sampers, C.S.S.R., *Bischof Neumanns Briefwechsel mit dem Hl. Stuhl 1852-1859*, in *Spicilegium Historicum C.S.S.R.* 24 (1976) 256, 259, 262, 268, 280, 289.

<sup>93</sup> *Constitutiones dioecesanæ in synodis Philadelphiensibus annis 1832, 1842, 1847, 1853, 1855 et 1857 latae et promulgatae*, Philadelphia 1881, 24, 28, 35.

a point of Canon Law: « We have no canonical parishes »<sup>94</sup>. Here he speaks of « *the clergy and missions through the whole diocese* », about making the visitation « *of the missions of the diocese* ». He mentions the setting up of committees « *in every congregation to assist pastors* ». He also mentions the justifiable complaints of « *our missionaries* »<sup>95</sup>.

It is constant terminology like this that argues for a pre-1836 composition of the Latin catechism. Were it written in Neumann's United States years, it would have been designated as a catechism for priests or missionaries or pastors, but not for parish priests. The ascribing of the catechism to the period of the summer and fall of 1835 is a workable hypothesis. That was the time when Neumann, along with the other Budweis students, finished their seminary studies but did not receive ordination. He was trying to make arrangements to be received by an American bishop in the hope of realizing his missionary plans. In the interests of order and discipline during these months he made up a daily schedule for himself. Every day for the two hours from noon to two were taken up with the noon meal and the study of catechism<sup>96</sup>. It is for these reasons that we make the suggestion that this was the time when he wrote the Latin catechism.

As we turn to the printed German catechisms, we will be dealing with the *Kleiner Katechismus* (Small Catechism) and with the *Katholischer Katechismus* (Catholic Catechism). These were popularly referred to, even by Neumann himself, as the smaller and bigger catechisms. These catechisms more closely follow the sequence of creed, code, cult or faith, conduct, worship. In a skeletal way this can be traced to Canisius whose neater summaries and clarifications prevailed over Trent. This skeletal influence of Canisius was fleshed out by Edmund Auger in France and Robert Bellarmine in Italy. This approach had become sort of traditional in nineteenth-century catechisms<sup>97</sup>.

Neumann's German catechisms are not without their own problems. Here one thinks of the time, place and sequence of the

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<sup>94</sup> Neumann to Kenrick, August 23, 1855, Easton. The letters are housed in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Baltimore where they are designated 30-U-1-28. The writer's edition of these letters, *Spicilegium Historicum*, 28 (1980) 47-123, resulted at times in a different numbering and chronology.

<sup>95</sup> Neumann to Kenrick, Sept. 3, 1852; Nov. 16, 1852; [Early Jan. 1853]; Oct. 23, 1855; Dec. 11, 1859.

<sup>96</sup> See above, nn. 26-30.

<sup>97</sup> Bryce, in *The Living Light* 14 (1978) 331; Sloyan, « Catechisms », *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 3 (1967) 229.

publication of the two catechisms. One also thinks about the sequence and numbering of the many editions or printings. These problems are further complicated by the fact that originally the catechisms were published anonymously. It was only in 1853, after the First Plenary Council of Baltimore, that Neumann's name began to appear on the catechisms. Furthermore, there is no trace of some of the earliest editions and printings. There is no entry for most of them in the *National Union Catalog* of the Library of Congress. Incidentally, because copies of these catechisms are rare, the writer will indicate where they can be found when known from the Union Catalog. Further, the writer's research will enable him to list depositories not included in the Union Catalog. It seems, then, that the easiest way to approach the problem connected with the earliest history of the catechisms is to begin with the certainties of 1852-1853, work back to the problem of their original publication in the 1840s, and then carry their history on chronologically through the 1800s.

At the request of Rome, Neumann's episcopal ordination was arranged in such a way as to enable him to participate as a bishop in the First Plenary Council of Baltimore that was held in May 1852<sup>98</sup>. Neumann there was a member of the Committee on Catholic Education of Youth and Allied Matters. The Council took up the vexing problem of a uniform catechism, a perennial problem since the days of our first bishop, John Carroll (1789-1815). For the sake of uniformity the bishops desired a uniform catechism<sup>99</sup>. The confusion grew greater with the influx of immigrants who brought their diversified local customs and catechisms. This was a feature of German Catholicism, where immigrants from various localities had not only their own catechisms, but also their own local tunes or words to hymns, things that they tended to cling to tenaciously. A report of 1853 mentions that forty-seven children all had different catechisms. It also speaks of a settler who changed his abode seventeen times and found that each place had its own catechism<sup>100</sup>. Anxious to do away with such confusion, the Council commissioned Neumann to write a German catechism on his own or to choose one already in print. He was then to make a report to the other German-speaking bishops and to Archbishop Kenrick. This would then be the uniform and standard

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<sup>98</sup> Archives of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, C-I-13 Cardinal Fransoni to Francis Patrick Kenrick, Feb. 21, 1852, Rome.

<sup>99</sup> Guilday, *History of the Councils of Baltimore*, 174, 176.

<sup>100</sup> *Katholische Kirchenzeitung* 8 (June 21, 1853) 78.

catechism in German parishes<sup>101</sup>. Evidently, Neumann selected his own catechisms and the bishops gave their approval. These, along with the acts of the Council, were brought to Rome by the bishop of Chicago, James O. Van de Velde, S.J., at the end of June. On July 7 Propaganda sent the catechisms to Father Jan Roothaan, the General of the Jesuits, with the request that he assign them to be read by one of his subjects. On September 26, Propaganda informed Kenrick that the catechisms were approved<sup>102</sup>. The following year, 1853, both catechisms were reissued, bearing Neumann's name for the first time and carrying the statement that they were published with the approval of the Plenary Council.

As we go back from 1853 to the 1840s to search out the beginnings of these catechisms we are fortunate in having a very valuable statement from Neumann. In a letter to Pope Pius IX, in which he explains how his catechisms were being sent to Rome, he says: « The Fathers of the Council were of the opinion that the larger and smaller catechisms that I wrote in 1844 for the Germans in these United States should be sent to Rome, so that backed by apostolic approval they might be used exclusively in all the German schools. They have already been introduced in almost all the dioceses where Germans live and they have met with the approval of the bishops and missionaries »<sup>103</sup>. We are given a date, a date that we must hold fast to in dealing with the problems connected with the catechisms. The year 1844 is the year when they were written. The next questions deal with when and where they were published. These presuppose a knowledge of Neumann's whereabouts and assignments during these years. The year 1844 offers special problems because he was both in Baltimore and Pittsburgh. Here it will be helpful to list his assignments:

Baltimore I = 1842 — March 1844  
 Pittsburgh = March 1844 — Jan. 1847  
 Baltimore II = 1847-1852  
 Philadelphia = 1852-1860

We will begin with Neumann's *Kleiner Katechismus* (Small Catechism). When this was reissued in 1853 it was entitled (in

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<sup>101</sup> *Concilium Plenarium totius Americae Septentrionalis Baltimori habitum anno 1852*, Baltimore 1853, 10, 30.

<sup>102</sup> Sampers, in *Spicilegium Historicum* 24 (1976) 257, n. 26.

<sup>103</sup> Archivio della S. Congregazione de Propaganda Fide, *Acta*, vol. 16 (1852-1854), f. 114r-115r, Neumann to the Prefect of Propaganda, June 7, 1852, Philadelphia.

English translation) *Small Catechism. Composed by John Nep. Neumann, Bishop of Philadelphia, with the approval of the National Council of Baltimore*<sup>104</sup>. The only known existent forerunner of this (in English translation) is *Small Catechism. Edited by the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer with the Approval of the Most Reverend Bishop of Pittsburgh, Dr. Michael O'Connor*. This sixteen page catechism, which carries no data regarding the date and place of publication, can be found in the Redemptorist Provincial archives in Brooklyn, New York<sup>105</sup>. The mention of Bishop O'Connor indicates that the place of publication was Pittsburgh. Furthermore, a Neumann letter that will be cited briefly states that it was printed in Pittsburgh. The place of publication furnishes some indication regarding the time. It would have been printed before 1847 when Neumann returned to Baltimore and continued publication there. It is certain that this is not the first but the second edition of the *Kleiner Katechismus*, as Neumann's letter will indicate. This would place the publication ca. 1845.

A Neumann letter of 1848 that deals with the third edition sheds light on the earliest history of the *Kleiner Katechismus* and on the first and second editions. It also raises problems. In March 1848, after being back in Baltimore for over a year, Neumann was getting ready to publish the third edition of his small German catechism. In a letter to Archbishop Eccleston he writes: « I would most humbly beg the [*sic*] permission to publish the 3rd edition of our small German catechism. The first ed[ition] of it has already been approved by Your Grace. The second has already been printed in Pittsburgh with the permission of Rt. Rev. Dr. O'Connor »<sup>106</sup>. The letter opens up various possibilities. While living in Baltimore in the first two months of 1844, Neumann got the approval of the archbishop for his small German catechism and had it printed there. On the other hand, when he saw himself unexpectedly appointed Rector at Pittsburgh (March 5)<sup>107</sup>, he could have brought the arch-

<sup>104</sup> *Kleiner Katechismus. Verfasst von Johann Nep. Neumann, Bischof von Philadelphia. Zehnte Auflage. Mit Genehmigung des National-Conciliums von Baltimore*, Baltimore: John Murphy & Company, 1853. See M. De Meulemeester, C.S.S.R., *Bibliographie générale des écrivains rédemptoristes*, 3 vols., Louvain 1933-1939, II, 295. This will be referred to as *Bibliographie*.

<sup>105</sup> *Kleiner Katechismus. Herausgegeben von der Versammlung des allerheiligsten Erlösers. Mit Gutheissung des hochwürdigsten Bischofs von Pittsburg*, Dr. Michael O'Connor, n.p., n.d. See ABPR, N, Catechisms.

<sup>106</sup> Archives of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, 27A-F-3, Neumann to Most Reverend Sir [Eccleston], March 27, 1848, Baltimore.

<sup>107</sup> Wuest, *Annales*, 136 gives the date.

bishop's approval with him and had the printing done there. The explicit mention of the approval from Baltimore and the almost self-conscious reticence about Baltimore as the place of publication points to the probability that it first appeared in Pittsburgh. This would place the first edition in 1844. In its original form the *Kleiner Katechismus* was a small, paper-bound brochure of sixteen pages containing one hundred and thirteen questions and answers. The numbering went consecutively from one to the end. In other words, each topic did not have a separate numbering. The catechism treated the following topics: God, Angels, Man, Redemption, Church, the Commandments of God and the Precepts of the Church<sup>108</sup>.

The third edition of 1848, the first of many to be published in Baltimore, the edition about which Neumann wrote to Eccleston, is intriguing in many ways. We will hear about it again when we deal with the English translation of the *Kleiner Katechismus* in the 1880s. There is not a trace of this printing; the same applies to the other editions up until the editions of 1853. There are two reasons for postulating Baltimore reprints of the catechism that were put out by J. Murphy & Company from 1848 to 1853. The first is the parallel (as will be seen) with the publishing of the large catechism (*Katholischer Katechismus*). These years, then, would have seen editions with the title (in English translation), *Small Catechism. Edited by the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. With the Approval of the Most Reverend Archbishop of Baltimore*<sup>109</sup>. The second reason centers around the edition of 1853, the edition that brought the Neumann catechisms into national prominence by bearing the explicit backing of the First Plenary Council of Baltimore and by being known as catechisms written by a United States bishop. Written by one of their own, the Neumann catechisms became very popular with the German immigrants. The publisher, John Murphy & Company, designated this 1853 catechism as the tenth edition, an obvious reference to the fact that it was issued ten times since its appearance in 1844. This conciliar edition became the definitive and standard text through the years. The original sixteen page brochure grew to thirty-two pages. Even allowing for a larger print, this does not mean a great increase in catechetical material. Actually, only three extra questions and answers are added. These one hundred questions and answers

<sup>108</sup> See above, n. 105.

<sup>109</sup> *Kleiner Katechismus. Herausgegeben von der Versammlung des allerheiligsten Erlösers. Mit Guttheissung des hochwürdigsten Erzbischofs von Baltimore.*

take up twenty-one pages. The remaining pages are taken up with prayers and pious exercises. Neumann took advantage of the conciliar edition to add prayers and devotions, things on which he laid great stress and which were always an integral part of the larger catechisms. The prayers and devotions selected for the small catechism include: 1) the Sign of the Cross, 2) the Our Father, 3) the Hail Mary, 4) the Apostles' Creed, 5) the Ten Commandments, 6) the Precepts of the Church, 7) Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, 8) Act of Sorrow, 9) Prayers for Confession, 10) the Mysteries of the Rosary, 11) List of Feasts and Holy Days of Obligation, 12) Fast Days, 13) Marian Prayers. The three Marian Prayers listed are the *Sub tuum*, the *Salve Regina* and a short prayer in honor of Mary's Immaculate Conception, the dogma that was solemnly defined by the Church the following year, 1854<sup>110</sup>.

All in all, from 1844 to 1889 (the last-known printing), the *Kleiner Katechismus* saw thirty-eight editions<sup>111</sup>. One notes certain peculiarities in this enumeration. As already seen, the third edition of 1848 continued to be printed as the third edition until 1853. The edition of that year, the conciliar edition, based on the number of the previous printings, was published as the tenth edition. The edition of 1853, in turn, continued to be published as the tenth edition through the 1850s and into the 1860s, certainly into 1863<sup>112</sup>. Help in coming to a knowledge of these printings has been found in the advertisements in the annual *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac and Laity's Directory*. When this was published at Baltimore by Lucas and later by Murphy, the advertisements by the Murphy publication were regular and complete. When it began to be published by Sadlier in New York in 1864, and known as *Sadlier's Catholic Directory, Almanac and Ordo*, the advertisements of Murphy books became infrequent, sporadic and very selective<sup>113</sup>. Another problem

<sup>110</sup> See below, p. 32.

<sup>111</sup> De Meulemeester, *Bibliographie* II, 295.

<sup>112</sup> See below, n. 117.

<sup>113</sup> For information regarding the publishing of the almanacs in the nineteenth century, see R. C. Healey, *A Catholic Book Chronicle. The Story of P.J. Kennedy and Son, 1826-1951*, New York 1951, 45-48. In the 1950s a series of Masters' dissertations was produced at Catholic University, dealing with nineteenth-century imprints from 1831. The series, which is also on microfilm, is entitled: *A Survey of Catholic Americana and Catholic Book Publishing in the United States*. The writer did not find them helpful for the Neumann imprints. See E. Willging, «Catholic Press, World Survey, d. 18th through 20th-century Books and Pamphlets», *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 3 (1967) 321.



of these years is when the *Kleiner Katechismus* was no longer published by Murphy and was taken over by Kreuzer. As the publication of the Catechism continued in the 1880s we know that Kreuzer published the thirtieth edition in 1882, the thirty-second in 1884 and the thirty-eighth in 1889.<sup>114</sup> Prior to this — as will be seen when dealing with the large catechism — there is evidence of a Kreuzer imprint from the 1870s.

Those small catechisms are fragile paperbound brochures. To many who are still alive they are like the « Penny Catechisms » of their youth, catechisms that wear out and are thrown out. On the other hand, when one considers the thousands of copies printed and the total number of editions, it is somewhat surprising to see that more were not set aside and preserved. It is surprising to see how few have survived, how few can be traced and located. Because these nineteenth-century catechisms are so rare, the writer will indicate — as previously noted — the location of them as known from the Union Catalog or from personal research. The first mention of a location, when known from the Union Catalog, will note in parenthesis the symbol used to designate that institution.

The earliest extant copy of the *Kleiner Katechismus* is that of the second edition that appeared at Pittsburgh ca. 1845-1846. As indicated earlier, this is located in the Redemptorist Provincial Archives in Brooklyn. We are very fortunate in having this extremely rare edition, the only known copy of the *Kleiner Katechismus* in its original form prior to the changes and additions in the edition of 1853 when it became the German conciliar catechism. There is a problem about the survival of the edition of 1853 in its 1853 printing. Obviously, the Union Catalog can only furnish the date that is supplied to it by its corresponding institutions. Here we learn that there is a copy of the 1860 Baltimore reprint of the 1853 edition in the library of the German Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia (PPG)<sup>115</sup>. Personal handling of this copy raises a doubt about this bibliographical data. Because there is no date on the title page and because the copyright date is 1853, one is led to wonder whether this is not rather a copy of the original tenth edition of 1853.

While Neumann was living and publishing his German catechisms, there came into existence a Benedictine foundation at Latrobe, Pennsylvania, in 1846. The work of the celebrated Boniface Wimmer,

<sup>114</sup> De Meulemeester, *Bibliographie* II, 295.

<sup>115</sup> *The National Union Catalog. Pre-1956 Imprints*, 411 (1975) 555, nr. NN 0133581. The number refers to the entry number for each separate card in the catalog.

O.S.B., it became a center where great concern was shown for the spiritual needs of the German immigrants. It is now known as St. Vincent Archabbey and College<sup>116</sup>. The library there possesses a copy of the Baltimore reprint of the tenth edition that was put out in 1863 (PLatS)<sup>117</sup>. Another copy of this is housed in the Redemptorist Provincial Archives in Brooklyn<sup>118</sup>. It is from these copies that we know that the tenth edition of 1853 continued to be numbered as the tenth edition in its later printings, at least until 1863. The same Redemptorist archives contain a copy of the thirty-second edition that was issued by the Baltimore firm of Kreuzer Brothers in 1884<sup>119</sup>. As far as can be ascertained, this is the only surviving copy of a Kreuzer imprint of the *Kleiner Katechismus*.

The large catechism is entitled *Katholischer Katechismus — Catholic Catechism*. As we investigate this we will start with the certainties of the 1853 edition when it appeared bearing Neumann's name for the first time and published with the explicit approbation of the First Plenary Council of Baltimore. After that we will trace it to its beginnings and then follow its course through the 1800s. The edition of 1853, designated as the tenth edition, was published at Baltimore by John Murphy and Company. This 180 page catechism bore the title (in English translation): *Catholic Catechism. Written by John Nep. Neumann, Bishop of Philadelphia. With the Approbation of the National Council of Baltimore*<sup>120</sup>. For all practical purposes the 1853 edition is the same as Neumann's original opus. Therefore, the description of the component parts will be given when treating the earlier edition.

Fortunately, it is easier to trace the beginnings of this *Katholischer Katechismus*. The title of the original (in English translation) reads: *Catholic Catechism. Edited by the Congregation of the Most*

<sup>116</sup> R.J. Murtha, « St. Vincent Archabbey, « *New Catholic Encyclopedia* », 12 (1967) 955-956.

<sup>117</sup> *The National Union Catalog. Pre-1956 Imprints*, 411 (1975) 555, nr. NN 0133580. See *Kleiner Katechismus*. Zehnte Auflage, Baltimore: J. Murphy & Co. 1863.

<sup>118</sup> ABPR, N, Catechisms.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.* The title page gives the right date of 1884; the date on the paper cover reads 1888. It is hardly possible that the thirty-second edition would appear in 1888 and the thirty-ninth in 1889. See *Kleiner Katechismus*, 32 ed. Baltimore: Kreuzer, 1884.

<sup>120</sup> *Katholischer Katechismus. Verfasst von Johann Nep. Neumann, Bischof von Philadelphia*. Zehnte Auflage. Mit Genehmigung des National Conciliums von Baltimore, Baltimore: John Murphy & Co. 1853. See below, n. 131.

*Holy Redeemer. With the Approval of the Most Reverend Bishop of Pittsburgh, Dr. Michael O'Connor.* This Catechism was published at Pittsburgh by the firm of Victor Scriba. De Meulemeester's bibliography lists this as an imprint of 1845<sup>121</sup>. The very next year, 1846, Scriba brought out the same work and makes express mention in the title that that was the second edition. The 1846 title is (in English translation): *Catholic Catechism. Edited by the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. Second Edition. With the approval of the Most Reverend Bishop of Pittsburgh, Dr. Michael O'Connor*<sup>122</sup>. This 1846 imprint looms very large in reconstructing the history of the Neumann catechisms. This is the only surviving copy of the large catechism before it became the German conciliar catechism in 1852-1853. From this we see that the later editions, with the exception of one slight modification to be mentioned briefly, were reprints of the Neumann original. The original make-up includes: 1) a short introduction, 2) the catechism questions and answers, 3) twenty-nine prayers and devout exercises, 4) the manner of serving Mass. The one slight modification made in the editions from 1853 is the insertion of a fifth heading, namely, a list of the holy days and fast days. In the earlier editions they were given in footnotes, printed in very fine print in the section on the precepts of the Church. In the later editions they were made a separate section and printed on two pages in large print towards the end of the book. This explains the two page difference in pagination between the editions from 1853 and the earlier editions.

The very brief Introduction — only half a page — explains what catechism is and lists its fivefold division. As Neumann treats it the five parts or topics are: I, Faith; II, Hope; III, Love; IV, The Sacraments; V, Christian Holiness together with an appendix on the Four Last Things. In the first section of Faith Neumann treats faith, revelation, scripture and tradition. He then goes into the Apostles' Creed and develops the catechetical material in each of its twelve articles. The second section on Hope takes up the virtue of hope and its expression in the practice of prayer. This leads to the Our Father

<sup>121</sup> *Katholischer Katechismus. Herausgegeben mit Genehmigung des Hochw. Bischofs von Pittsburgh, Dr. Mich. O'Connor, von der Versammlung des allerheiligsten Erlösers*, Pittsburgh: Scriba, 1845. See De Meulemeester, *Bibliographie* III, 358.

<sup>122</sup> *Katholischer Katechismus. Herausgegeben von der Versammlung des allerheiligsten Erlösers. Zweite Auflage. Mit Genehmigung des Hochw. Bischofs von Pittsburgh, Dr. Michael O'Connor*, Pittsburgh: Victor Scriba, 1846. Before he learned of the 1845 edition and before he had the full title of the present edition, De Meulemeester thought that the 1846 edition was the first. See *Bibliographie* II, 295.

and Hail Mary and the catechetical material in their every phrase or petition. The theme of the love of God and neighbor is the material of the third section on Love. This leads him to the Commandments of God and the Precepts of the Church. Each commandment or precept is the occasion for further instruction. The fourth section is given over to a study of the sacraments in general and of each of the seven sacraments. In the last section on Christian Holiness, Neumann takes up two themes, namely, the avoidance of evil and the various kinds of virtue, together with the beatitudes and the various kinds of sin. In the second he treats of virtue in general and the various kinds of virtue, together with the beatitudes and the evangelical counsels. The Four Last Things, treated in the appendix, are: death, judgment, hell and heaven.

The twenty-nine prayers and devout exercises that follow the questions and answers are: 1) the Sign of the Cross, 2) the Our Father, 3) the Hail Mary, 4) the Apostles' Creed, 5) the Ten Commandments, 6) the Precepts of the Church, 7) Acts of Faith, Hope and Love, 8) Act of Contrition and Sorrow, 9) Adoration of the Blessed Trinity, 10) Prayers before the Blessed Sacrament, 11) Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, 12) Marian Prayers: the *Sub tuum*, *Salve Regina*, *Memorare* and a short prayer in honor of Mary's Immaculate Conception, 13) the Angelus, 14) Prayer to the Guardian Angel, 15) the Mysteries of the Rosary, 16) Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory, 17) Morning Prayer, 18) Night Prayer (concluding with the « Most Holy », the prayer of St. Alphonsus to Mary), 19) Meal Prayers, 20) Prayer before and after School, 21) the Good Intention, 22) Prayer in Time of Temptation, 23) Prayers for Confession, 24) the Confiteor, 25) Avowal of one's sinfulness, 26) Prayers before and after Communion, 27) Spiritual Communion, 28) Prayer while blessing oneself with holy water, 29) the Christian Greeting: « Praised be Jesus Christ and Mary », together with the answer, « Forever. Amen ».

These prayers, part of the catechism from the beginning, are important for revealing Neumann ideals. They look to the sanctification of each day by associating prayers with the daily routine and duties; they also look to the living of a life of holiness. They are more than mere formulas to be memorized, to be said; rather, they are helps towards realizing Christian ideals day by day and throughout a lifetime. In living this life of holiness it is easy to discover in these prayers and devout exercises a healthy balance in the roles played by personal devotion and sacramental spirituality. The last thing in the catechism are the prayers for serving Mass. Included

here are the specific prayers said at weddings, churchings, and funerals of adults and children.

The question can be asked here, whether Neumann's catechetical publications can be traced back beyond 1844. The question is occasioned by an earlier publication, a German Catechism with the title (in English): *Christian-Catholic Catechism modelled on the Larger Work of Venerable Father Canisius. Newly published by the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer in Baltimore*. This 184 pages work was published in Baltimore in 1842 by the firm of W. Raine<sup>123</sup>. In 1935 M. De Meulemeester said that it is believed that Neumann is the author or compiler of this catechism. At present one can bring forth strong reasons for a Neumann authorship<sup>124</sup>.

To begin with the obvious, one can point to Neumann's thorough acquaintance with Canisius. A Neumann authorship is also an added reason for stressing the sequence: Neumann, catechisms, the Redemptorists, Baltimore, 1840's. The anonymity of the catechism is no obstacle to a Neumann authorship. As already seen, the earlier editions of the catechism that came to be known as Neumann's were anonymous until after the Plenary Council of 1852. Of the 1842 Baltimore Redemptorists, Neumann is the only one known as a writer of catechisms. Looking at the catechism itself, the whole spirit and psychology of the Preface points to Neumann's catechetical training and convictions. Lastly, one notes the almost identical wording between the catechism of 1842 and the « Neumann Catechism » of the later 1840's as seen in the definitions. An obvious question is this: when he began to publish anew in 1844 why did he not simply republish the catechism of 1842? The answer to this seems obvious too: with his catechetical training, talents and experience it was only normal for him to want to write his own catechism, one adapted to his own times and experience and to the level of the people he taught. He would write his own and do for his people and times what Canisius did for his. Incidentally, this catechism of 1842 is a very rare book. It is not found in the Library of Congress. Also it is not listed in the *National Union Catalog*. This means that there is

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<sup>123</sup> *Kristkatholischer Katechismus nach dem grösseren Werke des Ehrw. Pater Kanisius. Neuaufgelegt durch die Versammlung des allerheiligsten Erlösers in Baltimore*, Baltimore: W. Raine, 1842.

<sup>124</sup> De Meulemeester, *Bibliographie II*, 294; Alfred C. Rush, « The Earliest Redemptorist Publication in the United States: An Early Neumann Catechism », *The Province Story* (Baltimore Province) 6 (1983) 2-6.

not a single library that has reported it as included in its holdings. The copy before me is among the holdings of the Redemptorists Theologate, Mt. St. Alphonsus, at Esopus, New York.

Neumann's return to Baltimore in the early days of 1847 was the occasion for him to continue his publications there. His catechisms were taken over by the firm of John Murphy & Company, the firm that produced the lion's share of the catechisms of the 1800s<sup>125</sup>. We do not know when the third edition appeared, the first to be published in Baltimore. It could be in 1848, the year that saw — as already noted — the publication of the third edition of his small catechism. Despite the fact that not a single copy has survived of these early Baltimore imprints, we know that it was being published during the years until 1853 as the third edition. We know this from the issues of the *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac and Laity's Guide* that carries the Murphy advertisements<sup>126</sup>. We know it from the celebrated edition of 1853 when Murphy, obviously counting the previous printings, reissued the catechism and designated it as the tenth edition<sup>127</sup>. This tenth edition of 1853, in turn, continued to be printed for years and still designated as the tenth edition. This practice continued at least until 1866, the year of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore. Certainly, after 1853, we have evidence of reprints of the tenth edition from 1855, 1859, 1860, 1861 and 1866<sup>128</sup>.

It comes as a pleasant surprise to discover the number of these catechisms that have survived in library and archival collections. The oldest extant copy is the second Pittsburgh edition of 1846<sup>129</sup>. We are very fortunate in having this, the only surviving copy of the *Katholischer Katechismus* as it was issued before it bore Neumann's name. This can be found in Washington, D.C., among the hold-

<sup>125</sup> For this publisher, see R. Purcell, « Murphy, John », *Dictionary of American Biography* 13 (1934) 352-353. See also L. Schlegel, O.S.B., *The Publishing House of John Murphy of Baltimore: The First Forty Years, with a list of the Publications*, Washington, D.C. 1961. This is a Master's Dissertation from Catholic University. The amount of material on the Neumann catechisms is very disappointing.

<sup>126</sup> Advertisements for this third edition are found in the issues of 1851 and 1853. The advertisements of each issue, dated January 1, represent holdings printed by the end of the previous year.

<sup>127</sup> For the copy, see below, n. 131. For the advertisement, see *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac and Laity's Directory for 1854*. This is found on page 13 of the Murphy advertisements.

<sup>128</sup> See below, nn. 132-137.

<sup>129</sup> See above, n. 122.

ings of Catholic University (DCU)<sup>130</sup>. We are also very fortunate in having a copy of the first edition to carry his name, the conciliar edition of 1853. St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota (MnCS), is the depository for this edition<sup>131</sup>. The other copies, to be treated here, are all reprints of this tenth edition that cover the years from 1855 to 1866. A copy of the 1855 printing can be found in the New York Public Library<sup>132</sup>. Catholic University can now be added to the list of locations for the 1855 catechism<sup>133</sup>. The Neumann Museum in Philadelphia has a copy of the 1859 printing. The Museum is located at St. Peter's church, the place where Neumann lies buried<sup>134</sup>. A copy of the 1860 printing is among the holdings of the library of the German Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia<sup>135</sup>. We learn that a copy of the 1861 printing is listed among the holdings of St. Vincent's College and Archabbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania<sup>136</sup>. The Capuchin Monastery of St. Augustine in Pittsburgh is reported to have a copy of the 1866 printing<sup>137</sup>.

Thirteen years go by before we come upon the next surviving copy of the catechism. This is the edition of 1879 that was designated as the seventeenth edition and was published at Baltimore by the firm of Kreuzer Brothers. The Neumann Museum in Philadelphia contains a copy of this<sup>138</sup>. These historical facts, while informative, occasion questions and problems. As just seen, the catechisms from 1853 to at least 1866 were all listed as printings of the tenth edition. We do not know when this practice was discontinued and when the publisher began to carry on the numbering of the editions, beginning with the eleventh. From the seventeenth edition of 1879 it is obvious that, at least from 1866 to 1879, the catechism saw

<sup>130</sup> *National Union Catalog, Pre-1956 Imprints*, 290 (1973) 403, nr. NK 0051669. The call number at the University is: BT/3161/K22/1846. In his 1952 biography of Neumann Curley mentions (p. 431; n. 33) that a copy of this edition was in the Redemptorist archives (ABPR). The writer was unable to locate it.

<sup>131</sup> *National Union Catalog, Pre-1956 Imprints*, 411 (1975) 555, nr. NN 0133577.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, nr. NN 0133578.

<sup>133</sup> The call number is: 268.4/N.489.

<sup>134</sup> The address is: 1019 North Fifth St., Philadelphia, PA. 19123.

<sup>135</sup> *National Union Catalog, Pre-1956 Imprints*, 411 (1975) 555, nr. NN 0133581.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.* nr. NN 0133579.

<sup>137</sup> T.M. Lenhart, « Bishop Neumann's German Catechism », *Social Justice Review* 39 (1946-1947) 131. The address is: St. Augustine Monastery, 220 — 37 St., Pittsburgh, PA 15201.

<sup>138</sup> *Kathölicher Katechismus*, 17. Ausgabe, Baltimore: Kreuzer, 1879.

seven editions. Of these seven editions there is no trace of the first six. The 1879 edition shows us that the firm of Kreuzer Brothers had taken over the publishing of the Neumann catechism. We do not know when this took place. It could well be that they took them over that year and adjusted the numbering of the editions. Furthermore, there are some modifications and changes in the 1879 catechism. These changes could well point to a new publisher. This is suggested as a possibility.

The 1879 catechism has 184 pages, four above the customary 180 pages. On page 25, questions 25 and 26 are added, dealing with the infallibility of the Church. The first question on page 92 deals with the Mass. The answer is changed to emphasize that Christ Himself is the principal Offerer of the Mass. In the section on Christian Holiness on page 129 some questions and answers have been added that deal with sacramental and actual grace and with the grace of perseverance. The last change, on page 150, deals with the listing of the Precepts of the Church. Here we find that six precepts are listed. The previous editions listed only five. The extra precept in the sixfold enumeration deals with the support of the church, of one's pastor. The fivefold enumeration goes back to St. Peter Canisius and was a feature of German catechisms. The sixfold enumeration is traced to St. Robert Bellarmine and was followed by French and Italian catechisms. In the United States, where the church had to rely on voluntary offerings, support was a crucial problem. The sixfold enumeration was being stressed. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore (1884), basing itself on a popular nineteenth-century catechism used in Great Britain, prescribed that the sixfold listing of six found in that catechism was to be used in United States catechisms<sup>139</sup>. The change in the German catechism of 1879 is an anticipation of this conciliar legislation.

The last surviving copy of the *Katholischer Katechismus* is from the edition of 1891, published at Baltimore by Kreuzer. This can be located in the Neumann Museum in Philadelphia<sup>140</sup>. The title page designates this as the seventeenth edition. This piece of information obviously raises a problem. The issue of 1879 had been published as the seventeenth edition. In 1882 the Redemptorist Provincial, Father Elias Schauer, spoke of the large catechism as having reached

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<sup>139</sup> P.F. Mulhern, « Commandments of the Church », *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 4 (1967) 8.

<sup>140</sup> *Katholischer Katechismus*, 17. Ausgabe, Baltimore: Kreuzer, 1891.



the eighteenth edition<sup>141</sup>. In 1889 Father Bernhard Beck declared that the large catechism had reached its twenty-first edition<sup>142</sup>. It is difficult to reconcile these statements with the fact that the printing of 1891 is the seventeenth edition. Apparently, the edition of 1879 must have been reissued as the seventeenth as happened with earlier editions, e.g., the tenth of 1853. Both Fathers Schauer and Beck must have calculated these printings in their enumeration of the number of editions that the catechism saw. In his bibliographical study, De Meulemeester lists the number of editions as twenty-one<sup>143</sup>.

The preceding historical reconstruction deals with the Neumann catechism that had a very definite lineage. It was the catechism that was first published at Pittsburgh and was then published at Baltimore, first by Murphy and then by Kreuzer. It was the catechism that was published as the German conciliar catechism in 1853 and that continued to be published into the early 1890s. For the record, mention should be made of an independent Buffalo edition that goes back to 1852, the year before it came out bearing Neumann's name. The title of this (in English translation) reads: *Catholic Catechism. Published by the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, with the Approval of the Most Reverend Bishop of Buffalo, Dr. John Timon*. A copy of this, that was published by the firm of Anton Schmidt, can be seen in the Neumann Museum in Philadelphia<sup>144</sup>. There are certain distinctive features about the Buffalo edition. Besides the prayers and devout exercises and the prayers for serving Mass, it also contains eight hymns. Along with *Te Deum*, there are hymns for school, Pentecost, the Blessed Sacrament, First Holy Communion and Marian devotions. There is also a blank page between every printed page, a very handy device for taking class or study notes. Mention can be made here of a third edition of a Buffalo *Katholischer Katechismus*, a copy of which can be found in the library of St. Vincent's Archabbey and College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. The title (in English translation) reads: *Catholic Catechism. With the approbation of the Bishop of Buffalo*<sup>145</sup>. This is not the third edition of Neumann's

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<sup>141</sup> See below, n. 147, the reference to Schauer's «Approbation» of the Catechisms.

<sup>142</sup> B. Beck, *Goldenes Jubiläum*, 154.

<sup>143</sup> M. De Meulemeester, *Bibliographie* II, 295.

<sup>144</sup> *Katholischer Katechismus. Herausgegeben von der Versammlung des allerheiligsten Erlösers. Mit Genehmigung des Hochw. Bischofs von Buffalo, Dr. Johannes Timon*, Buffalo: Anton Schmidt, 1852.

<sup>145</sup> *National Union Catalog. Pre-1956 Imprints*, 290 (1973) 403, nr. NK 0051670;

Buffalo *Katholischer Katechismus*. By that time Neumann's catechism was appearing under his own name. No mention is made in the title of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. Furthermore, this comes out under a different publisher. Lastly, there is a slight difference in the title. The German word, *Genehmigung* = Approval, becomes the German loan word, *Approbation* = Approbation.

In the 1880s the Baltimore Redemptorists were engaged in a catechetical project that involved Neumann's catechism and that resulted in new productions. For the sake of the record, something should be said of these catechisms which, strictly speaking, are not Neumann's, even though they bear his name. The moving spirit behind this projects was the genial and energetic Provincial, Father Elias Schauer. This is another manifestation of his remarkable zeal in promoting the apostolate of the pen which he engaged in personally and encouraged in others<sup>146</sup>. It was Schauer himself who personally undertook the catechism project; he associated with himself Father Francis Van Emstede, the then Rector of St. Michael's, Baltimore.

Schauer and Van Emstede took Neumann's catechism as their basic text. They divided it up into three parts, a small, intermediate and large catechism. This division was better suited for the various grades of the schools. Obviously, such a division would also be helpful for the varying needs of grownups with differing levels of education. The plan was to adhere to the original Neumann as closely as possible. This applied both to the content and the wording of the material. Some questions that were too long or difficult for young minds or not easily understood were broken up into two or three. The first German edition, divided into the three separate parts, appeared at Baltimore in 1882 and was published by Kreuzer Brothers<sup>147</sup>. After that, they continued to be reprinted, at least into the early 1890s. Their ultimate fate will be discussed shortly.

Something more needs to be said about the *Mittlerer Katechismus* or the *Intermediate Catechism*. This is the most innovative fea-

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*Katholischer Katechismus. Mit Approbation des Hochwürdigsten Bischofs von Buffalo.* 3. Ausgabe. Buffalo: Franz Häfner, 1864.

<sup>146</sup> M. Curley, *The Provincial Story. A History of the Baltimore Province of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer*, New York 1963, 203-210, 412, n. 162.

<sup>147</sup> General Archives of the Redemptorists, Rome (= AGR), Baltimore Province, vij, 2, E.F. Schauer to N. Mauron, Nov. 27, 1883, Buffalo; AGR, Neumann, Writings, Catechism, E.F. Schauer to J. Wissel, March 16, 1911, New York; J. Wissel to F. Speidel, March 24, 1911, Philadelphia. See also the «Approbation» of Schauer found in the German editions and then in the English translations. It is dated, Feast of St. Philomena [Aug. 11], 1882, Baltimore.

ture of the program of Schauer and Van Emstede. Furthermore, it plays an important role in understanding the later history of these catechisms. This was first published in German by Kreuzer in 1882. The title of this Baltimore production (in English translation) reads: *No. 2. Intermediate Catechism of the Roman Catholic Religion. An Abridgement from the Larger Catechism of John Nep. Neumann, C.S.S.R., and Former Bishop of Philadelphia.* First Edition. *Published by the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer with Ecclesiastical Approval.* The catechism contains 212 pages. Of these, 178 pages are taken up with questions and answers that follow the same sequence of topics as found in the larger catechism. The following thirty-four pages, numbered in Roman numerals, are taken up with a list of prayers and devout exercises, along with the holy days and fast days. There are twenty-one prayers and devout exercises, modified somewhat from those in the large catechism. These are: 1) the Sign of the Cross; 2) the Our Father; 3) the Hail Mary; 4) the Creed; 5) the Ten Commandments; 6) the Six Precepts of the Church; 7) Prayers at Mass for School Children; 8) the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary; 9) Prayers before and after School and Sunday School; 10) Prayer in honor of the Trinity; 11) Prayer in honor of the Immaculate Conception; 12) the Angelus; 13) Prayer to the Guardian Angel; 14) Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory; 15) Morning Prayer; 16) Evening Prayer; 17) Meal Prayers; 18) the Good Intention; 19) Prayer in Time of Temptation; 20) Prayer for Confession; 21) Communion Prayers. Special attention should be directed to the seventh item, the Prayers at Mass for School Children. These include prayers at the Offertory, Consecration, Communion, after Mass and the concluding prayer. Each day a different prayer is recited after Mass, immediately before leaving. Beginning with Monday and continuing through Sunday, these prayers are: the Divine Praises, the Anima Christi, the Salve Regina, the Act of Sorrow, the Offering to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Memorare, and the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity. Two copies of the first edition of this catechism can be found in the Redemptorist Provincial Archives in Brooklyn, New York. One of the copies is missing four pages, sixty-seven through seventy<sup>148</sup>.

Presumably, the second edition of this German Intermediate Catechism appeared the following year, 1883. It is certain that the third edition came out in 1884. A copy of this is reported to be among

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<sup>148</sup> *Mittlerer Katechismus der römisch-katholischen Religion. Ein Auszug aus dem grösseren Katechismus des Johann Nep. Neumann.* Erste Ausgabe. Baltimore: Kreuzer, 1882; ABPR, N. Catechisms.

the holdings of the Capuchin Monastery in Pittsburgh<sup>149</sup>. It is evident that there was a great line of Redemptorist catechetical publishing at this time. These years saw an annual edition of this *Mittlerer Katechismus* from 1882 to 1886. The last recorded edition, designated as « a new edition », dates from 1893<sup>150</sup>.

The project called not only for German catechisms but also for English ones. It was at this time that a catechism bearing Neumann's name first appeared in English. We will first say something about the appearance in English of Neumann's small catechism. This is because it has deep roots in the past, going back over thirty years to Neumann's own lifetime. It will be recalled that Neumann arranged to have the third edition of his *Kleiner Katechismus* printed in 1848 during his second Baltimore stay. At the same time he was preparing an English version of it in an enlarged form. The manuscript of the English catechism is housed in the Redemptorist Provincial Archives in Brooklyn. It is a very interesting document. The questions and answers are written on the small pages from a pad that was used by church debt collectors. Each collector had so many people to contact. Lines were provided for the name of each contributor and the amount given. The collector would sign his name at the bottom. At times Neumann wrote on the blank reverse side of the pages; at other times on the front side with the lines for the contributors<sup>151</sup>. Nothing ever came of this in 1848.

It was not until 1884 that the small catechism appeared in English. It was an enlarged version of the original sixteen-page pamphlet put out by Neumann's confreres. It is made up of fifty-one pages of questions and answers, and thirty-eight pages, numbered in Roman numerals, containing twenty-one prayers and devout exercises, the list of holydays and days of fast and abstinence. At the end are added the prayers for serving Mass. The material, printed in large print, follows the same sequence as that mentioned in connection with the *Kleiner Katechismus*<sup>152</sup>. The Union Catalog contains no infor-

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<sup>149</sup> *Mittlerer Katechismus der römisch-katholischen Religion. Ein Auszug aus dem grösseren Katechismus des Joannes Nep. Neumann aus der Congregation des allerheiligsten Erlösers und weiland Bischof von Philadelphia. Dritte Ausgabe.* Baltimore: Kreuzer, 1884. For the monastery, see above, n. 137.

<sup>150</sup> M. De Meulemeester, *Bibliographie* II, 295.

<sup>151</sup> ABPR, N, Catechisms. See Curley, *Neumann*, 161.

<sup>152</sup> *Small Catechism of the Catholic Religion. By the Rt. Rev. John Nepomucene Neumann, D.D., C.S.S.R., Fourth Bishop of Philadelphia. Translated from the Third*

mation regarding this edition. However, the writer knows of two copies. One is found in the library of Catholic University. It is among the books that are still in the Dewey classification<sup>153</sup>. The second copy is located in the Neumann Museum in Philadelphia. Although this is the first Neumann catechism in English, it is not the first English catechism to appear with his name on it. In his years as bishop, the Philadelphia firm of H. & C. McGrath put out a thirty-two page catechism. This is an interesting publication. It is an abridgment of the catechism of the First Plenary Council of Baltimore designed especially « for persons who may not be able to learn the larger one ». No date is given. Nor is there any indication of the editor. However, express mention is made of the fact that it is published with the approbation of Bishop Neumann. A copy of this is located in the library of Catholic University<sup>154</sup>.

The same year that saw the publication of the small catechism in English, also saw the appearance of the intermediate. The title of the work is: *Intermediate Catechism of the Catholic Religion*. By the Rt. Rev. John Nepomucene Neumann, D.D., C.S.S.R. Translated from the 3rd German Edition, rearranged and enlarged by a Member of the C.S.S.R. With the Approbation of the Most Reverend James Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore. This 1884 publication contains 232 pages. Of these, 194 are given over to questions and answers; the other thirty-eight, marked in Roman numerals, contain the customary prayers and devotions, the list of the feast days and fast days, and the prayers for serving Mass<sup>155</sup>. A copy of this is among the holdings of the library of St. Vincent Archabbey and College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania<sup>156</sup>. One can now report that a copy can also be found in the Neumann Museum in Philadelphia.

Schauer was very anxious to get this catechism through the press and to the public. This was because of his hopes and plans, the hopes and plans of a man of vision who could read the signs of the times. As is evident, these catechisms came out in 1884, the same year that saw the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. Schauer's plan

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*German Edition. Rearranged and enlarged by a member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. With the Approbation of the Most Rev. James Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, Baltimore: Kreuzer, 1884.*

<sup>153</sup> The call number is: 2684/N.492.

<sup>154</sup> *An Abridged Catechism of the National Council. For Persons who may not be able to learn the larger one.* Philadelphia: H. & C. McGrath, n.d. The call number is the same as above.

<sup>155</sup> Baltimore: Kreuzer, 1884.

<sup>156</sup> *National Union Catalog, Pre-1956 Imprints*, 411 (1975) 553, nr. NN 0133576.

centers around this council. He had hopes of seeing the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore give its approval to these reworked Neumann catechisms in the 1880s just as the First Plenary Council gave its official approval to the original Neumann catechisms in the 1850s. This would apply to the three parts brought out in German in 1882 and to the English brought out in 1884. This explains why he was so anxious to get the *Intermediate Catechism* in print and have it ready for the Council that met during most of November and the first week of December. To anticipate somewhat, Schauer's plan never materialized<sup>157</sup>.

Catechism loomed large at the Council that took up once again the endemic problem of a uniform catechism. The episcopal committee on the catechism was one of the three episcopal committees set up by Archbishop Gibbons before the Council and he presented its members with specific questions and problems<sup>158</sup>. The Council produced the well-known Baltimore Catechism that first appeared in 1885. The Council legislated that the Baltimore Catechism was to be in uniform use. People who understood English, along with French or German, were to learn their catechism in English. The catechism was to be translated into French and German for those who were not up to English<sup>159</sup>.

Schauer was well aware of the catechetical developments that transpired at the Council. He himself was a participant in the Council, as one of Gibbons' theologians and as a member of the theological commission on Clerical Education<sup>160</sup>. When he saw the catechetical plan of the Council, he did nothing about getting the conciliar approval upon his reworked Neumann catechisms. Also, he ceased doing any more work on an English publication. This is how it happened that the third part of his proposal, the large part, never appeared in English<sup>161</sup>. There was no use doing this because of the Baltimore Catechism.

Schauer was happy in seeing the English *Intermediate Catechism* through the press. He had a model which, according to his

<sup>157</sup> See above, n. 147, Schauer to Wissel; Wissel to Speidel.

<sup>158</sup> John Tracy Ellis, *The Life of James Cardinal Gibbons* (2 vols. Milwaukee 1952), I, 235-236.

<sup>159</sup> *Acta et decreta Concilii Plenarii Baltimorensis Tertia, A.D. 1884* (Baltimore 1886) pp. 118-120.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.* xxvi, xxxiv.

<sup>161</sup> See above, n. 147, Schauer to Wissel and Wissel to Speidel.

original plan, he could submit to the Council. Furthermore, his English version contained most of the material to be found in Neumann's original catechism<sup>162</sup>. What is more, this English catechism is a testimony to Schauer's farseeing vision and his ability to read the signs of the times. The stand of the Council on an English catechism and on learning catechism in English has already been seen. This measure was an outgrowth of reading the signs of the times. By the 1880s the peak of German immigration had been reached; the immigrants were coming more from eastern and southern Europe<sup>163</sup>. Schauer realized that, with the passage of time, the German-speaking parishes would be English-speaking parishes. Two years after the Council he expressed this general conviction, a conviction that was supported by the Baltimore Redemptorist experience. He writes: « In the course of time some if not all the German churches where immigration ceases, as is already the case in St. Alphonsus' Church and St. James' [Baltimore], the language of the land will have to be used because the people of the parish will be second, third and fourth generations of American-born and will not have the parish of their forefathers »<sup>164</sup>. With such an outlook, one is not surprised to see that Schauer had an English version of the Neumann catechism ready in 1884, a catechism that would be ready for the schools in parishes established as German parishes. Along with the Council, Schauer was reading the signs of the times. Even though he was never able to carry it through, one can also marvel at Neumann's own vision in 1848 of seeing his catechism in English.

Judged as a publication venture, Schauer's plans for reediting the Neumann catechisms in German and English labored under the drawback of being launched at an inopportune time, the time of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. That was the Council that ushered in a new catechetical era, the era of the Baltimore Catechism,

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<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> P.L. Johnson, « Germans in the U.S. », *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 6 (1967) 426; John Tracy Ellis, « United States of America », *Ibid.* 13 (1967) 429, 434-435.

<sup>164</sup> Archives of the Baltimore Province of the Redemptorists, Schauer Papers, Schauer to Father Rector, September 30, 1886, Philadelphia. See Curley, *Provincial Story*, 414, n. 180. On this problem, notice the farseeing attitude of Father Joseph Prost, one of the early pioneer Redemptorists in the United States. Of the Redemptorist apostolate to the Germans he wrote: « We are apostles to bring the people to Christ, to bring all into one fold, not for the maintaining or implanting a nationality or for maintaining or spreading of a language ». See Joseph Prost, *Die Geschichte der Gründung unserer Congregation in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika vom Jahre 1832 bis zum Anfang des Jahres 1843*, in Joseph Wuest, *Annales Congregationis SS. Redemptoris, Provinciae Americanae*, Supplementum ad Volumina I, II, III (Ilchester, Md. 1903) 228. See Curley, *Neumann*, 440, n. 67.

an era of mandated uniformity. By that time the Neumann catechisms had seen their day. In their day, from the 1840s through the 1880s, they had filled a definite need. Two Redemptorists in the 1880s made judicious evaluations of the Neumann catechisms. After pointing out how the catechisms ran so many editions through the years, Father Beck goes on to say that they were regarded as one of the best and most practical in the country<sup>165</sup>. Father Schauer notes how « the catechisms have exercised a salutary influence not only over the schools but also over the religious life of Catholic America »<sup>166</sup>. The entire life of this immigrant Saint exercised a salutary influence over the religious life of Catholics in the United States. Certainly, Neumann's catechetical apostolate ranks high among the ways in which he molded American Catholicism.

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<sup>165</sup> B. Beck, *Goldenes Jubiläum*, 154.

<sup>166</sup> See above, n. 164.