

August 30, 1959

New Orleans Seminary
Appoints First Deans

NEW ORLEANS--(BP)--New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary here has announced the appointment of deans in the schools of theology, religious education, and sacred music.

President H. Leo Eddleman said J. Hardee Kennedy, professor of Old Testament and Hebrew, will serve as the first dean of the school of theology in the history of the seminary. Previously the president of the seminary has held the responsibilities of dean in this area.

Newly-appointed dean of the school of religious education is John M. Price, Jr. W. Plunkett Martin will assume deanship of the school of sacred music. Both professors had formerly served as directors in their respective areas, and their appointment as deans will modify slightly their duties, Eddleman said.

Two of the promoted professors are alumni of New Orleans Seminary. "The promotions are part of an overall plan of reorganization now underway at the seminary," according to Eddleman.

Kennedy, new dean of the school of theology, has been a member of the New Orleans Seminary Faculty since 1947. He is an alumnus of Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary, receiving the Th. D. in 1947. He has served as chairman of the graduate council in the school of theology for the past six years.

A native of Quitman, Miss., Kennedy has done post-graduate study at Yale University and Union Theological Seminary.

Kennedy is a frequent contributor to denominational periodicals, and the author of *Studies in the Book of Jonah*, a Broadman Press release.

The dean of the school of religious education, John M. Price, Jr., is also an alumnus of New Orleans Seminary, receiving the Th. D. in 1948. He has been a member of the seminary faculty since that time.

For the past seven years, he has served as director of the school of religious education and professor of psychology, counseling, and clinical education.

A native of Fort Worth, Tex., and a graduate of Baylor University, Price has done additional study in pastoral counseling and psycho-therapy at the University of Chicago. He is currently chairman of the Southern Baptist Association for Clinical Pastoral Education.

W. Plunkett Martin, newly-appointed dean of the school of sacred music, joined the seminary faculty in 1942. When the seminary moved to its Gentilly Blvd. campus in 1953, Martin, who then headed the music department of the seminary, became director of the school of sacred music. He received the doctor of sacred music from Central Conservatory in Chicago.

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1959 Annuals In Mail
To Convention Leaders

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Copies of the 1959 Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention were being mailed here to active pastors and denominational agents, as specified in Convention procedure.

More than 30,000 copies were printed. While free distribution is limited to those specified, other Baptists may obtain copies by writing Executive Committee, 127 Ninth Ave. No., Nashville. Paperback copies cost \$2.50 and cloth-bound editions \$3.

The 1959 Annual contains reports of all agencies to the session at Louisville, lists of Convention agency members, minutes of the 1959 session, and rosters of pastors and other denominational workers.

Blue Mountain Director

BLUE MOUNTAIN, Miss.--(BP)--Miss Rita Duke is new student director at Blue Mountain College here. A graduate of this Baptist school for women, Miss Duke will have charge of the entire student program of religion on campus, college officials reported.

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Alabama Convention
Produces Radio News

MONTGOMERY, Ala.--(BP)--"Alabama Baptist News" is the title of a new weekly radio program being produced here by the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

David K. Morris, convention public relations director, produces the program. Stations in 26 Alabama cities have been signed up to carry it, with times and days of the week varying from station to station.

Convention leaders said this program will make possible "on-the spot" coverage of outstanding conventions, meetings, and conferences. In the spotlight each week will be outstanding Baptists "who deserve special recognition."

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Seminary To Dedicate
New 1700-Seat Chapel

NEW ORLEANS--(BP)--Two dedication services have been scheduled here by New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary to mark opening of its new 1700-seat chapel.

Ramsey Pollard of Knoxville, Tenn., president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will bring the principal address at one of the dedicatory services. This is set Sept. 13.

The first dedication service will be held Sept. 10. Students, faculty, alumni, and trustees will participate in this "Appreciation Day" ceremony. Grady C. Cothen, pastor of Olivet Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, and a seminary alumnus, will speak.

Others taking part in the service Sept. 13 include Mayor deLesseps S. Morrison of New Orleans; J. D. Grey, pastor of the city's First Baptist Church, who was chairman of the chapel fund-raising campaign, and T. O. Winn, New Orleans, president of seminary trustees.

The chapel, whose architecture is in keeping with early Louisiana style prevalent on the campus, will have a seating capacity of 1140 on the main floor and 560 in the balcony. This will permit the seminary to hold its commencement programs and many other activities on the campus.

Other features will be a choir loft which will seat 90, choir room, counseling room, modern audio-visual facilities, and a prayer room modeled after the one on the seminary's old campus in the garden district of New Orleans.

Although the completely air-conditioned structure will be used for worship services on the campus following the dedication it is still without one of its most attractive features--the 185-foot solid white spire.

The spire will be patterned after the one atop the old Baptist Meeting House in Providence, Rhode Island, the oldest Baptist church in America built in 1638 by Roger Williams and his followers.

A gift designated for spotlights to illuminate the 185-foot spire already has been received by the seminary.

Capital funds from the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention and gifts from generous friends of the seminary have accounted for all but \$60,000 of the construction cost of the Chapel as it now stands. Outstanding pledges could take care of most of this balance.

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BAPTIST FEATURES

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Theo Sommerkamp, *Assistant Director*

August 30, 1959

Missions Volunteer
Predicts Future News

By Theo Sommerkamp

LOUISVILLE--(BP)--When the earthquake occurred in West Yellowstone, Mont., the event bore out one of the most recent predictions of Dr. Spencer P. Thornton, 29-year-old surgeon and theology student.

A candidate for medical missions in the Orient, Dr. Thornton is attending Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for a year as recommended by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

In case you tuned in late, Dr. Thornton hit the papers and air waves last spring when he called the 1-2-3 finish in the Kentucky Derby, even to Tomy Lee's winning in a photo-finish. Consult your sports pages to see that this is precisely what happened.

With steel workers threatening to strike, Dr. Thornton predicted the headline for the Nashville Tennessean, morning newspaper, for a given day. His prediction, locked in a bank vault as was his Derby forecast, read: "Steel Threatens to Close." It was just word for word what the Tennessean's headline writer had spelled out for the day's issue.

The West Yellowstone, Mont., earthquake was a prediction that "hit." Dr. Thornton didn't localize the earthquake in his prediction but he predicted the time which one would occur in one of the Western states.

Occasionally he has missed, to his embarrassment. Such as his prediction that wife Ginnie would present them with a girl last June, but that she'd have time to attend Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly before the stork called. The stork spoiled things, arriving during assembly week and bringing a son.

However, it should be said that Dr. Thornton does not claim infallibility. He freely admits that he will miss some, but the uncanny regularity with which he hits makes you forget the misses.

"There is nothing supernatural about this," the surgeon repeats to all the civic clubs, church groups, and others whom he entertains with both physical and mental feats of magic. "I'm using highly developed natural abilities."

He is not content to rest on his laurels. He has already forecast, on his appearances as guest with Jack Paar on TV, that Lyndon Johnson vs. Richard Nixon will be the 1960 presidential match. Nixon, Dr. Thornton says, will win.

The national--even international--fame has brought with it a deluge of mail and telephone calls. After the Derby "hit" vaulted him into national headlines, he had to have his telephone disconnected. Mail surges in, much of it from people who want him to forecast lotteries and the like. This he ignores.

A race track on the eastern seaboard wanted him to predict a race for it after the Derby success, but he declined. No ties with gambling, he said, for this is just a hobby to him. (The Derby prediction was done in such a manner that no one could have bet on it. It was under guard from the time he wrote the names of the horses down until the paper was read aloud.)

Dr. Thornton leaves audiences agape at this mental magic. Whatever may be the secret of his headline forecasting, he is keeping it a secret in the tradition of all entertainers. But there's no question about his mind being highly-developed and his having a superior memory.

As a Junior-age boy in North Carolina, Dr. Thornton had already conducted his first magic show---dissolving knots, reconstructing cut ropes, and making scarves vanish and reappear---when he launched into mental magic.

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At 16, he was deeply engrossed in mental magic and entertaining. But God was calling, and young Spencer got the message that he was to become a doctor and a medical missionary. He attended Wake Forest College and its Bowman-Gray School of Medicine.

On a speaking engagement at Baylor University, he met attractive Ginnie (pronounced as Guinea) Cooper, daughter of Southern Baptist missionaries to Argentina, the W. L. Coopers. Their romance ensued. She had already dedicated her life to missions.

Forecasting, and other feats of entertainment, are his hobby. They have no tie-in to medicine or religion, except as he uses his magic and forecasting to gain attention, then tells his own Christian testimony. This he does regularly.

Accomplishing God's will for his life is interest No. 1 to Spencer P. Thornton. He tells his audiences that the only definite thing about the future is that God holds it.