

*the*  
*Concordia Lutheran*



"The Scripture cannot be broken." John 10:35.

"Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path" Ps. 119:105.

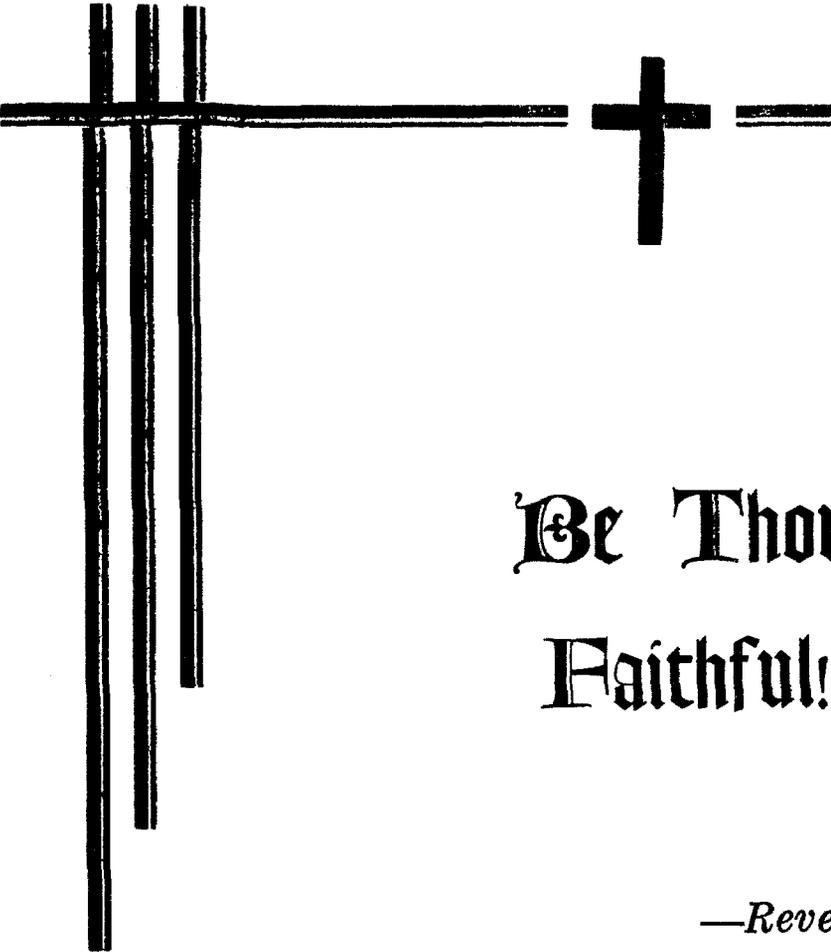
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Be Thou  
Faithful!

—Revelation 2:10.



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**Statement of Purpose:**

To set forth in simple and plain language the pure doctrine of God's Word as taught by the true Lutheran Church in full accordance with the **Book of Concord of 1580**, and the **Brief Statement of 1932**.

To show, on the basis of Scripture what true Christians are to believe and how, out of love for their Savior Jesus Christ, they are to lead godly lives.

To furnish aids for Bible study and articles for Scriptural devotion and meditation.

To demonstrate, by our Scriptural stand, that our **Concordia Lutheran Conference** is not a sect or a false church body but that the congregations which form it confess, teach, and practice the Word of God in its full truth and purity and use the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. All who do this are the true visible church on earth.

To seek out all who truly share our Scriptural position in doctrine and practice, and to urge the mutual public acknowledgment of such God-given unity. Thus we shall be able thereafter to practice a God-pleasing church fellowship with them.

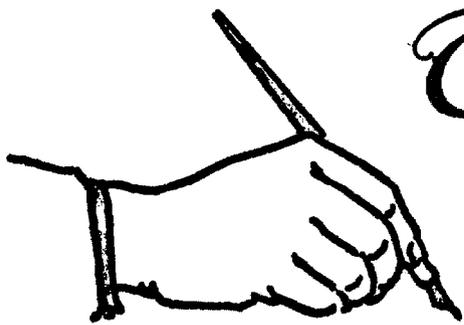
To show that we do not have among us a mixture of divergent teachings but that we are, by God's grace, "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

To expose false teaching and practice wherever it makes its appearance and to keep abreast of the current happenings in the church and among the nations as signs of the times.

To be truthful and factual in our reporting and freely to correct any misinformation of which we are not aware and which has been called to our attention. Also to clarify any information or statement of doctrine or practice which may be unclear to our readers or which may create a wrong impression.

To set forth pertinent historical information which has a bearing upon the Church and to expose modern philosophical thought and the so-called scientific theories which contradict the Word of God.

To expose particularly the false teaching and practice of the various so-called "Lutheran" church bodies by comparing their teaching and practices with what is plainly recorded in the Word of God, in the Lutheran Confessions, and in the old orthodox Lutheran writings.



# The President's Column

*"The world is very evil, the times are waring late; be sober and keep vigil, the Judge is at the gate."* Thue we sing in Hymn 605 of our Lutheran Hymnal.

Unless we have spiritually fallen asleep we must surely acknowledge the truth of these words! The world continues to sink ever deeper into moral degeneracy and rottenness. And the world seeks to fasten its tenacles on the members of the Church in an attempt to entice the Christians away from Jesus our only Savior. No wonder the Apostle John warns us, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him"* (1 John 2:15).

We dare not forget that the world is the devil's ally! The devil walks about as a roaring lion seeking its prey, therefore we must be firm in our faith in the Word of God. so that we can resist his attacks successfully (1 Pet. 5:8, 9).

Being the enemy of God and man the devil *"was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his owns for he is a liar, and the father of it"* (John 8:44). Using the minds and mouths of false prophets he brings forth all manner of lies in an attempt to deceive and raise doubt in the minds of believers as he did with Eve in the Garden of Eden.

At the beginning of this year a book entitled *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* was published in England; written by British TV producer Henry Lincoln who was aided by American writer Richard Leigh, and New Zealand photographer and psychologist Michael Baigent. These authors claim that *"Jesus married and fathered a child, staged and survived the Crucifixion, and established a bloodline that survives to modern times. The book further suggests that Jesus' descendants formed a clandestine society—whose members have included Leonardo da Vinci, Isaac Newton and Victor Hugo—that is now preparing to proclaim itself as a political power."* Such are the blasphemous and wicked lies with which the devil seeks to ensnare the gullible.

But look what havoc the "father of lies" has wrought within the church that bears the name "Lutheran." Very gradually over the years the devil has cunningly followed that procedure with his errors which Dr. Charles P. Krauth describes in his book *The Conservative Reformation and its Theology* as first asking *toleration*, then *equal rights*, and finally *supremacy* (pages 195, 196). And who can rightfully deny that this course has and continues to reap a large harvest for the "father of lies!"

In view of all this, we have indeed a very fitting motto for the coming convention of our Concordia Lutheran Conference, June 25-27, "FAITHFULNESS TO THE WORD OF GOD!" Recognizing that "the world is very evil, the times are waxing late," we must certainly admonish and encourage one another to be faithful to that precious Word of our Lord!

*God's Word is our great heritage  
And shall be ours forever;  
To spread its light from age to age  
Shall be our chief endeavor.  
Through life it guides our way,  
In death it is our stay.  
Lord, grant, while worlds endure,  
We keep its teachings pure.  
Throughout all generations.*

(Hymn 283)

—M. L. Natterer, President

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## WELCOME TO LEBANON, OREGON

We, the members of St. John's Lutheran Church, Lebanon, Oregon, extend a most hearty welcome to the pastors, lay-delegates and visitors who are planning to attend the 31st Annual Convention of our Concordia Lutheran Conference, June 25th-27th, 1982.

As the host congregation for the coming convention we, the members of St. John's Lutheran Church, intend, with God's help and guidance, to make this convention a memorable one in hospitality and Christian fellowship.

Our city of Lebanon lies nestled in the Willamette Valley in the northwestern part of the State of Oregon. Lebanon is about 75 miles from the Pacific Ocean and an hour's drive will take you into the scenic Cascade Mountains.

It is our prayer that our dear heavenly Father would grant all

those who travel by land or air the gracious protection of His holy angels and that your trip may be pleasant and safe.

It is also our fervent prayer that the Lord may grant us a blessed convention in which we may be mutually strengthened and encouraged to hold steadfastly to the Word of our Lord even unto death.

St. John's Lutheran Church  
Rev. M. L. Natterer  
Lebanon, Oregon 97355



**The 31st Annual Convention**  
**of the**  
**CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE**  
**held at**

**St. John's Lutheran Church**

Rev. M. L. Natterer, Pastor  
6th and Tangent  
Lebanon, Oregon 97355

**JUNE 25, 26, 27, 1982**

**Pastoral Conference on June 23**

**Board of Directors' Meeting on June 24**

**CONVENTION MOTTO**

**"Be Thou Faithful!"**

**CONVENTION ESSAY**

**FAITHFULNESS ON THE PART OF PASTORS AND MEMBERS**

**by**

Rev. O. W. Schaefer  
Orland Park, Illinois



## GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN

On May 9th, our nation again paused in tribute to the mothers of our land. It was a day of special honor for mothers, whether living or dead. Christians, of course, realize that they are to honor both mother and father every day, Deut. 5:16. Affection and obedience are not to be limited to one specific time or occasion, but the love and respect due parents are to be shown them every day of the year.

Much has been said and written on this topic by outstanding scholars of the Bible, by educational leaders, by officials of the government, and by learned students of family life and behavior. However, nothing can compare with the wisdom and the value of the instruction which God gives parents and children in His precious Word of truth. It is well for us all to review this divine advice and encouragement from time to time so that parents and children might walk in the footsteps of their Savior and be blessed now and in eternity.

Let us therefore ponder first some of the instructive passages in Holy Writ for the benefit of *parents*:

Deut. 6:7—*“Thou shalt teach (My words) diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”*

Deut. 31:13—*“And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God.”*

Prov. 13:24—*“He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.”*

Prov. 19:18—*“Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.”*

Prov. 22:6—*“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”*

Prov. 22:15—*“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child: but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”*

Prov. 23:13—*“Withhold not correction from the child; for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.”*

Eph. 6:4—*“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”*

2 Cor. 12:14—*“The children ought not to lay up for the parents,*

*but the parents for the children."*

Titus 2:4—*"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children."*

1 Tim. 3:4—*"One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity."*

Now let us consider what God has to say for the benefit of the children:

Lev. 19:32—*"Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of the old man."*

Deut. 27:16—*"Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother."*

Prov. 10:1—*"A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."*

Prov. 23:22—*"Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old."*

Eph. 6:1-3—*"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."*

Col. 3:20—*"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."*

1 Tim. 5:4—*"Let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God."*

How fitting these words of instruction are in our day! God give us more Christian homes in which parents and children walk in the fear of God and seek to instill in others the same Christlike spirit which motivates and guides their home life!

*Oh, blest that house where faith ye find  
And all within have set their mind  
To trust their God and serve Him still  
And do in all His holy will!*

—O. W. S.



## ASCENSION BLESSINGS

In the month of May the Christian Church marked another festival on its calendar. It is the 40th day after Easter, May 20, which commemorates the last event in our Lord's life here on earth, namely, His Ascension into heaven. This day marks the glorious homecoming of Jesus and His return to the Father after having completed the work of redemption for all mankind. The significance of this event demands that we observe this festival properly and that we be comforted anew by its truth. As we think of our majestic Savior exalted on high, filling all things with His divine majesty, ruling the world with power, and guiding His people to heaven, we say with the poet: "A hymn of glory let us sing!"

After appearing to the disciples in Jerusalem for a farewell message, Jesus led them over the brook Kidron, up the slopes of the Mount of Olives, to the vicinity of Bethany. On this short walk He continued to lead them into the Scripture and showed deep concern for their souls. Then He lifted His hands in benediction and began to rise slowly, higher and higher, until a cloud enveloped Him, and He was gone. Although the disciples could not see Him enter heaven, He had now returned to the glory of His Father and also according to His human nature assumed full use of the power and majesty which He has as the Son of God. Mark writes, "*He was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God!*" Mark 16:19. Peter declares, "*He is gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him!*" 1 Peter 3:22.

What are some of the blessings which come to us from the Ascension? First, there is Christ's pleading for the forgiveness of our sins before His Father in heaven. Paul states, "*Christ is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us!*" Rom. 8:34. John writes, "*We have an ADVOCATE with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous!*" 1 John 2:1. Our exalted Lord speaks for us and defends us before God, and this blessing is ours only by faith in Him and His work of atonement.

Another blessing is the assurance that our Savior rules heaven and earth with absolute authority and guides all events so as to benefit the Christians. Everything is subject to Him, but best of all He is the Head of the Church, and "*all things work together for good to them that love God.*" Rom. 8:28.

Still another blessing is the guarantee that on the Last Day we also shall ascend into heaven with body and soul united. Of this our Lord speaks when He says, "*In My Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you!*" John 14:2. Yes, the Savior has gone to prepare a place for us through His suffering, death, burial, resurrection and ascension into heaven. As He has gone into heaven, so one day, being faithful unto death, we shall join Him in Paradise. In all these blessings there is great reason for Ascension joy and comfort.

As the disciples returned to Jerusalem with joy in their hearts and publicly praised their Master, so we ought to worship our Lord with greater conviction than ever, confess His name before friend or foe, and with our lives give glory to Him alone. If we appreciate the Ascension blessings, there will also be greater mission work on our part in the form of fervent prayers, diligent testimony, and generous gifts. There is no greater service than bringing a soul to the knowledge of the risen and ascended Lord. Let us work while it is day and look forward to the time when we shall be with Him in all His glory!

*O when my days shall cease,  
Let me depart in peace,  
Adorning Thy redemption,  
Recalling Thine ascension!*

—O.W.S.

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## ***Pentecost and the Gift of the Holy Ghost***

The Festival of Pentecost is one of the three chief festivals of the Christian church calendar. *Pentecost* is a Greek word meaning *fiftieth*, so called because it is observed approximately fifty days or seven weeks after passover or Easter. This year it falls on Sunday, May 30. Pentecost was observed already in the Old Testament as a feast of thanksgiving for harvest and called also the *Feast of First fruits* (Ex. 23:6) or the *Feast of Weeks* (Lev. 23:15-21).

In the New Testament Pentecost became a *harvest of souls*, as, by the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost in older English) upon the apostles, and through them upon all flesh according to the prophecy in Joel 2:28-29 and the promises of Jesus, in Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; three thousand souls were added to the believers in Christ (Acts 2: especially verse 41).

For this reason some speak of Pentecost as “the birthday of the Christian Church.” But this is not really so. It is rather the wonderful *extension* of the church; for the Holy Christian Church was already in the Old Testament, as we note from God's Word regarding the faith in the promised Savior of such “fathers” as Adam and Eve, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, the Prophets, and many others. The Holy Ghost was the one who brought also those fathers to the saving faith; for “*No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.*” (1 Cor. 12:3)

But *who* is the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit? He is *true God* with the Father and the Son, the third person of the Holy Trinity. Note how the Scriptures plainly call him *God*. “*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*” (1 Cor. 3:16) “*Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the HOLY GHOST? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto GOD.*” (Acts 5:3-4) We also speak of him as the *third* person of the Trinity, not only because he is mentioned third in Matt. 28:19, but also because he is sent to us, or proceeds from, the Father and the Son. (John 14:26; 15:26) The designation “third” does not however detract from his deity and his being co-equally God with the Father and the Son, as shown by the previously quoted passages (1 Cor. 3:16; Acts 5:3-4).

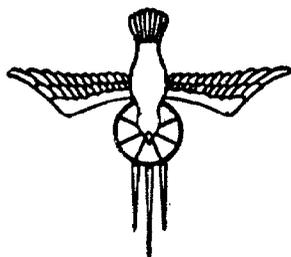
And what is the *work* of the Holy Ghost? That is, what does he do for you and me and many others? Holy Scripture teaches that he does three things for us, which are called “*sanctification* in the wider sense.” 1) He has *made us* Christians by bringing us to the saving faith in Jesus Christ; or, as our Catechism puts it: The Holy Ghost sanctifies me, that is, He makes me holy, by bringing me to faith in Christ and by imparting to me the blessings of redemption. (Question & Answer 163) “*But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*” (1 Cor. 6:11) 2) He makes us *live* as Christians; or as the Catechism states: He has by faith in Christ renewed my heart, so that I can now overcome sin and do good works. (Sanctification in the narrower sense) (Ques. & Ans. 169) “*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.*” Ps. 51:10-11) 3) He has *kept us* in the true faith and promises to *keep us* to the end, through the Means of Grace. Compare Cat. Q&A 171.) “*He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ.*” (Phil. 1:6)

And *how* does the Holy Spirit do this work? As just noted, he performs and accomplishes all this through the *Means of Grace*, by the means or instrument of God's Word and Sacraments. Indeed, we are also to *pray* for the gift of the Holy Spirit (See Luke 11:13), but prayer is not a means of grace; it is the means by which we *ask* for the gift. Then God *answers* our prayer and gives us the Holy Spirit with his blessings through the Word (respectively the Gospel) and the Sacraments. (Cat. Q&A 165, 166, 171). "*He called you by our Gospel.*" (2 Thess. 2:14) "*So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.*" (Romans 10:17) "*He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*" (Titus 3:5)

As to *extraordinary* gifts such as miraculous healing, speaking in tongues, etc., which modern "Pentecostalists" claim are the *norma*, (CPH, 1943, p. 804), we cannot here speak at length because *mal* experience of every truly converted believer (Lutheran Cyclo- of limited space in our periodical. We would only briefly remark: 1) These miraculous gifts were limited chiefly to the Apostles (Acts 2:43 in context). 2) The Bible does not promise the same gifts to all the Christians. (Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 12:4, 11, 29-30) 3) Our Savior warns against seeking special signs. (Matt. 12:38-40) 4) Signs and lying wonders are done also by false teachers, even the Antichrist. (2 Thess. 2:9)

If we truly desire the promised gifts of the Holy Spirit, if we truly value our salvation, then, my brethren, let us continue always faithfully and diligently to use God's Word and Sacraments! And, that our faith may not be polluted by false doctrine, let us constantly be on our guard against those many in our day who indeed use the Word of God but who use it deceitfully and pervert the doctrine which it truly teaches! (Jer. 48:10; 2 Cor. 4:2; Matt. 7:15; Rom. 16:17-18)

—H.D.M.



## The Trinity – A Necessary Doctrine

This is life eternal that they might know Thee the only true God,  
and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. John 17:3.

On a mission canvass recently I spoke with a man who believed he was a Christian, but who saw no need to attend the services of a “traditional church.” He and his close friends, he said, gathered for Bible study regularly but informally in their homes. What I recall most, however, of that brief conversation was his response when, in answer to his question prompted by the name of our congregation I briefly outlined the Bible’s teaching of the Trinity; namely, that the Father, the Son—Jesus, and the Holy Ghost are the three distinct persons in the one divine being and essence of God. He wanted no part of such a Triune God.

There are many non-Christians who claim, “It’s all one god; only the names are different. It makes no difference.” There is also an alarmingly large number of people who, like Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Christian Scientists, Quakers, Unitarians, and others, claim to be Christians but who reject the doctrine of the Trinity. This raises an important question. Can one be a Christian and not believe in the Trinity; or, more pointedly, can one be saved and look forward to everlasting life with God when the god he believes in is not the Triune God:

If we are to base our answer on the words of Scripture—and for Christians there is no alternative—we must answer that acceptance and belief of the Triune God *is* necessary to true faith and for salvation. Consider Jesus’ words in John 17:3, in the context of which the Savior addresses God in prayer as “Father” and clearly refers to Himself as “Son”. Notice how Jesus here identifies eternal life with the knowledge of this Father and adds the phrase, “the only true God”.

Immediately it should be obvious that it *does* make a difference who or what is looked to as God, for from this little phrase we know that all but one are no real God at all, but mere idols and products of men’s imaginations; and unless one knows the one true God, there is no hope of eternal life. This is because only this true God sent anyone or anything to be the chosen and appointed Savior of the world—which is just what the name Jesus Christ means. Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12)

This knowledge, furthermore, of which Jesus speaks is no mere

head knowledge, no mere acquaintance with the facts. In the original Greek language it is the word which denotes close intimate knowledge, a knowledge grounded in personal experience. Can one so know God and not even know His true name? But this knowledge is more. It is the knowledge which includes faith in our Lord Jesus Christ sent to be the Savior, the intimate happy knowledge of the true God's infinite love, "to give His only-begotten Son into death and for the sake of that offering to forgive all sin"—the knowledge gained and wrought by the Scriptures.

Note also that the true God is called *Father*, a name which implies the offspring which Scripture reveals as the Son. Indeed, so necessary are both to the Godhead that one can know neither one without the other. (See Matt. 11:27) Both must be included in the one and only true God. And concerning the Holy Ghost, note how the Lord mentions the Holy Ghost as being equal with the Father and the Son in Matt. 28:19. Consider also 1 Cor. 12:3, "*No man can say Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.*"

Yes, such an intimate knowledge of the Triune God, Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, is necessary for salvation—for no other "god" sent a Savior. Yea, though one use the name of Jesus Christ and yet does not include Him in the Godhead with the Father and the Spirit, he has but imagined yet another no-God. It may sound Christian on the outside, but it has an empty ring. Therefore treasure the precious doctrine of the Trinity. Rejoice in it on Trinity Sunday, throughout the Trinity season, and all your life long through to life eternal.

—R.D.S.

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## **Some Words Worth Reconsidering. . .**

### **. . .Regarding The Office of the Ministry**

"...as far as the teachers of the Word of God are concerned, they are of all men, most despised and even hated by the world. Nevertheless their estate and office is the most glorious of all, for the following reasons:

1. The work of their office centers about man's spiritual welfare, his immortal soul.
2. They employ salutary means and instrument in their work, namely, the Word of the living God.
3. They aim likewise at the most salutary and glorious end, namely, to make man truly happy in the present life and to lead him to the life of eternal bliss.

4. They are most wholesomely engaged in an occupation which entirely satisfies their spirits and advances their own selves in the way of salvation.

5. Their labor yields the most precious result, namely, the salvation of man.

6. Their labors have the most glorious promise of the co-operation of the Lord, so that they are never entirely futile and in vain.

7. Their labors have the promise of a gracious reward, which consists in a glory in the world to come that is unutterably great, exceeding abundantly above all they ever could have asked and prayed for in this life.

“If men would stop to consider these points, they would come crowding into the sacred office of the ministry and that of teachers of religion, as they are crowding into great state offices, which yield them honor and great emoluments. Parents would deem it a high honor and a special grace of God if they could have their sons trained for this sacred office. Young theologians would feel constrained every day to go down on their knees and praise and magnify God’s holy name for having done such great things for them, predestinating them from eternity to this exalted and sacred office. Yea, I am forced to say that, if the holy angels, who have been confirmed in eternal bliss, were capable of envy, they would, even in their state of celestial glory, unquestionably envy every teacher of the Gospel. For all that is recorded concerning them in Scripture does not equal the greatness of the office of teachers and preachers, in which men become helpers in the task of bringing fallen creatures back to their Creator. Without doubt these rescued people will forever and ever thank those by whose ministry they were saved from perdition and brought into life everlasting.”

These words were given by C.F.W. Walther in an evening lecture on May 8, 1885, (as recorded in *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, page 285, translation by W.H.T. Dau). They are valid today as well. If you are unable under any and all circumstances to prepare for the office of the ministry, actively encourage your brethren! If you are a parent, encourage your sons seriously to consider the office of the ministry as their life’s occupation. If you are one of our Christian men, especially if you are young and are considering your career during your pilgrimage here on earth, be encouraged to consult your pastor and talk with him at length about this important topic, this office so specially blessed by God.

the Rev. Randall D. Styx, Chairman  
Committee on Theological Education

# Report on Our Seminary

For the first time in the history of our beloved Seminary at Tingley Park the usual school term from September to June has seen no regular classes because of the special circumstances affecting our part-time student. Because of this situation your professors have been on a work "Sabbatical" as directed by the 1981 convention. Various projects were assigned to them, and, God willing, these should be completed by the time of the 1982 convention. We are grateful that the Conference resolved to keep our Seminary open and ready to welcome qualified students for the vital work of the Christian ministry.

On the subject of students and their recruitment for theological study and eventual service in our midst, we call your attention to the soul-searching article which appears in this issue from the Committee on Theological Education.

Your President will give a more complete Seminary report at our annual convention in Lebanon, Oregon June 25-27, 1982. Delegates and visitors will hear it firsthand, and all our Conference members will find the report in the 1982 Proceedings, to be published later this year, and thus be able to read and study it at home.

As to the future of our Seminary, all matters pertaining to its continuation, possible students, professors' activities, and other important considerations will be discussed in detail and acted upon by the delegates in convention assembled. This will require much fervent prayer by all together with thorough Christian analysis and sound and wise decisions. With regard to all our discussions and resolutions may the Word of the Lord be our sole Guide!

For the many prayers and generous gifts in the past we again thank most sincerely all our congregations, their pastors and members. May the Lord bless us all as we continue praying and giving for this vital work so that, as the Preface of the Book of Concord states, "the pure doctrine and the profession of our faith may, by the help of the Holy Ghost, be preserved and propagated also to our posterity until the glorious advent of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Savior!"

—O.W.S.

# AROUND THE WORLD

. . . with editorial comment

The world's largest cathedral is St. John the Divine in New York. It has a vaulted ceiling 12 stories high and a set of towers rising 300 feet above the western portal, with chapels and altars, tapestries and stained glass. This Episcopal cathedral is longer than two football fields and is bigger than any church in the world except St. Peters in Rome. And St. Peters, as large as it is, is not a cathedral. The pope, as bishop of Rome, maintains his seat—his “cathedra—at the Church of St. John, the Latern, which is outside the Vatican's walls. The Episcopal cathedral's trustees have approved a year's study of the proposal by architect David Sellers, who also wants to put solar collectors on the roof and use laser beams to create a tower of light in place of the planned central stone tower. The cathedral has a yearly heating bill of \$200,000 to \$300,000. Seller's plan is to encase the as-yet unbuilt south transept in an envelope of glass and steel that would admit sunlight and magnify the natural heat-retaining properties of the stone. However new-fangled Sellers' ideas are not likely to seem overly jarring at a liberal church with Jews on its board of trustees, a jazz group in residence and windows depicting modern sports, including bowling and auto racing.

*The purpose for which a CHRISTIAN church building exists is to glorify the Triune God! And this is done when the members of the congregation gather for their divine services in which they listen to the pure preaching of God's Word, receive the Sacraments, offer to the Lord their petitions and praises in hymns and prayers. Where this is not done in a church building, then such a building reminds us of “whited sepulchres which indeed appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness” (Matt. 23:27). Alas, many a church building standing today has become nothing more than a secular meeting place for all manner of political and social causes instead of the place where the Lord's honor dwells (Ps. 26:8).*

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A team of scholars is winding up a \$3.5-million effort to update the 370-year-old English in the world's best-selling book. The New King James Bible is the biggest publishing venture ever undertaken by Thomas Nelson Inc., the world's largest Bible publisher, based in Nashville. “We don't like the term ‘revised’” said Ed Liden, advertising director for Thomas Nelson. “We're calling it the New King

James. It's not a translation, it's not a paraphrase. The goal was to maintain the majesty, the rhythm—all of the intangible quality of it, but still have it updated,” Liden said. The 27 New Testament books of the New King James already have been published, but the hardcover edition of the entire 66-book Protestant Bible will be out in August 1982, Liden said. Supervising the New Testament scholars and assisting with Old Testament work was Dr. Arthur Farsted of Dallas, who taught Greek at Dallas Theological Seminary before resigning to work full time on the King James project. Farsted said a guiding rule for scholars was to change the most famous passages the least. “There are millions of people who love the King James version, and want their kids to use it, but they get turned off to some of the archaic words,” Farsted said.

*It is to be noted that this is not a new translation, but rather an “updating” of the King James Bible which came off the press in 1611. This is not the first attempt to update the King James Bible. During the last century there have been repeated attempts to put the Bible into modern English. Efforts were made back in 1870 already to produce a Revised Version to replace the King James Bible. And in 1901 there appeared the American Standard Version which was also published by Thomas Nelson and Sons. Such versions, however, did not succeed in weaning the people away from the King James Bible. Now we have another attempt being made. Obviously, we cannot pass any kind of judgment upon this New King James Bible until it makes its appearance this August in its completed form, and we have opportunity for a careful evaluation.*

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In Buenos Aires, Argentina, a civil court granted a father custody of his 2 young daughters because their mother tried to convert them to the Jehovah's Witnesses religion. The couple was married in the Catholic Church and the daughters baptized in the Catholic faith. When the mother later became a Jehovah's Witness she initiated a divorce suit, seeking custody of the 2 girls, aged 11 and 12, on the grounds that the mother's change of religion violated the original marriage contract. The mother contested the suit, petitioning the court for custody of her daughters whom she wished to bring up in her new faith. Ruling against the mother, the court concluded: “The wife's attitude is a grave enough cause to grant custody (of the 2 daughters) to the husband. And this is the case, not because the Catholic religion is the true one—that is not the question at issue—but precisely because Catholicism was the religion of both parents, and the children were educated in it until a short time ago.”

*The above news item (LIBERTY magazine, Jan. Feb. 1982) is very interesting in light of the Roman Catholic Church's position concerning divorce. The Roman Catholic Church boasts that it is the defender of marriage by forbidding divorce and not recognizing divorces acknowledged by other churches or by the law. In the encyclical of Pius XI, dated Jan. 8, 1931, the Catholic doctrine is restated, declaring that marriage carries with it "perpetual and indissoluble bond, which cannot be dissolved by civil law." In view of this, one wonders if the Roman hierarchy forbade the father to initiate a divorce suit against his wife, and, if he refused to obey, excommunicate him, or, if they conveniently made use of their so-called "annulment" process. We know from the Word of God (Matt. 5:32; 19:9) that adultery is the only cause for divorce for which the innocent party may secure a divorce. When one spouse forsakes the Christian faith, that does not constitute a justifiable cause for divorce according to the Word of God (1 Cor. 7:13f.).*

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**"POPE JOHN PAUL CONSECRATES ALL PEOPLES TO MARY."** Kneeling before the image of our Lady 'Selus Populi Romani,' at the end of the Mass he celebrated in the Basilica of St. Mary Major on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Holy Father renewed the act of consecration of the Church and the world to Mary." (The National Catholic Weekly, Dec. 31, 1981, THE WANDERER). The article in the Roman Catholic paper goes on to give the text of the Roman Pope's prayer to the Virgin Mary. Here are a few excerpts from his prayer. "O you, who more than any other human being have been consecrated to the Holy Spirit, help your Son's Church" . . . "O you, who were with the Church at the beginning of her mission, intercede for her" . . . "Be the Mother of all our earthly lives" . . . "O you, who are the first handmaid of the unity of Body of Christ, help us, help all the faithful" . . . "O Mother of men and peoples, you know all their sufferings and their hopes . . . accept our cry" . . . The Pope then closes his prayer with the words, "Thus we repeat today: 'Come,' trusting in your motherly intercession, O clement O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary."

*Now and then we are told by some Roman Catholics, "We do not worship the Virgin Mary." While some theologians in the Roman Church have attempted to make a distinction between the honor given to God and the Virgin Mary, in actual practice there is none! Note the prayer above. Prayer is an act of worship and his prayer is directed to the Virgin Mary! That is a sin against the First Com-*

*mandment! Look at the divine honor given to Mary when Pope IX decreed in 1854 that Mary was born without original sin. At that time the Pope stated, "Let the children of the Catholic Church... proceed to worship, invoke, and pray to, the most blessed Virgin Mary." Roman Catholic literature literally abounds with such expressions as, "Queen of the Universe," "Our Mother of Perpetual Help," etc. She is pictured as the one who hears and answers the prayers offered to her. The Lord Jesus says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by ME" (John 14:6). And the Apostle writes also, "There is ONE Mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5)*

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With the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's birth coming up next year, the Rev. Lee Roy Brandes thinks the Roman Catholic Church eventually may make the Protestant founder a saint. Brandes, a Lutheran minister, has put the life of Luther into a 55-minute film. "A Man Named Luther," produced, paid for, and starring only Brandes, was premiered at Lutheran colleges throughout the country April 30th. One of those premiers will be at California Lutheran College in Thousand Oaks, near Brandes' private organization to promote Lutheranism, Encounter, Inc. Brandes says he's arranging to have the film shown on television which covers 41 years of Luther's life, from the time he goes into the monastery to his death. Roman Catholics who have seen the live performances "say it is historically correct and they come to appreciate Martin Luther for what he did," says Brandes. "It's not anti-Catholic at all." In fact, the Lutheran minister's next project is to film the life of Pope John XXIII.

*There is certainly nothing objectionable in making a film on the life of Martin Luther as long as the film is factual and historically correct. The purpose of such a film must never be to glorify the man, Luther, but rather serve to awaken within the viewer a greater appreciation of what the LORD accomplished through Luther who restored the great principles to their rightful place: **THE BIBLE ALONE! BY GRACE ALONE! THROUGH FAITH ALONE!** In emphasizing these great truths Luther also minced no words in denouncing the terrible errors in the Roman Church which contradicted these truths. While we have not as yet seen the above film, the reviews that have come to our attention indicate that conservative Lutherans may be sorely disappointed with the film!*

—M. L. N.

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