

For the

LIFE of the WORLD

October 1999. Volume Three, Number Four



Called and Ordained - p.5

The Gospel Ministry—In the Lutheran Confessions - p.8

Confessing the Name of the Triune God - p.10

The Keys: Christ's Word of Law and Gospel - p.12

Living by Faith - p.14

In the Field - p.16



CONCORDIA
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY
P R E S S

CONTENTS



page 6

page 10

page 8

page 12

page 14

page 16

For the **LIFE** of the **WORLD**

PRESIDENT
Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe

PUBLISHER
Rev. Scott Klemsz

MANAGING EDITOR
Pam Knepper

ART DIRECTOR
Steve Blakey

For the Life of the World is published quarterly by Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 6600 North Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825. No portion of this publication may be reproduced without the written consent of the publisher of *For the Life of the World*. Copyright 1999. Printed in the United States. Postage paid at Fort Wayne, Indiana. To be added to our mailing list please call 219/452-2150 or e-mail Rev. Scott Klemsz at CTSNews. *For the Life of the World* is mailed to all pastors and congregations of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in the United States and Canada and to anyone interested in the work of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.

FEATURES

3 From the President

4 Letters to the Editor

5 Called & Ordained
by the Rev. Chad L. Bird
Pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church
Wellston, Okla.

Those who, in the stead and by the mandate of Christ, absolve, preach, catechize, and celebrate the Sacrament are His priestly ministers.

8 The Gospel Ministry
—In the Lutheran Confessions
by the Rev. Prof. Kurt Marquart
Assoc. Professor Systematic Theology
Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Ind.

The Lutheran Confessions maintain the full integrity of the public ministry of the New Testament.

10 Confessing the Name of the Triune God
by Elizabeth A. Fluegel
Research Director
LCMS Office of Government Information
Washington, D.C.

The task of handling eternal things is that of the Christian pastor. He is called to preserve and preach unspoiled, undisturbed and undistorted the image of the Eternal One: the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

12 The Keys: Christ's Word of Law & Gospel
by the Rev. Prof. Lawrence Rast
Asst. Professor Historical Theology
Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Ind.

The keys carry the Gospel, in the broad sense, forward, condemning self-assured people of their sin and assuring the contrite of their forgiveness.

14 Living by Faith
by the Rev. Scott Klemsz
Publisher, *For the Life of the World* and
Director of Admission & Public Relations
Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Ind.

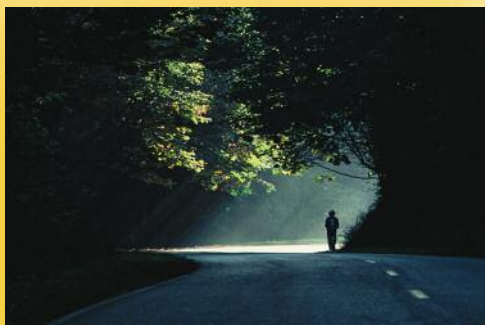
For the men and women of the former Soviet Union, living by faith is more than an act of personal devotion or piety—it is the reality of their lives.

16 In the Field
by Pam Knepper
Managing Editor
For the Life of the World

Features the Rev. David Mumme,
Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church,
Marseilles, Ill.

The Gospel In the Lutheran Confession

By the



Our Lutheran Confessions maintain the full integrity of the public ministry of the New Testament, and guard this evangelical highway, as it were, against the ditches of Roman priest-craft and hierarchicalism on the one hand, and of popular Protestant mob-rule and secular democratism on the other.

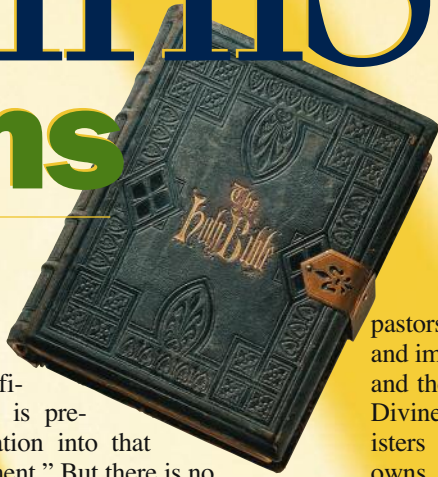
The topic of the Gospel Ministry is unfolded in the progression from Article V through Article XIV to Article XXVIII of the Augsburg Confession. Many people think that Article V of the Preaching Office deals only with Gospel-functions, not with the Gospel-proclaiming office. But this is a mistake. What is divinely instituted here is the one office of “ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments” (Latin). The office exists for the Gospel. That is its sole purpose. This is the glorious evangelical distinctiveness of the church of the Augsburg Confession. In both Rome and Geneva, the ministry is heavily Law-dominated. By contrast, it is typical of our Confession to see the pastor as the personal representative of Jesus the friend of sinners—come to seek and to save the lost. This means that the Gospel (including the sacraments) does not receive its power or validity from the office holders, from church bureaucracies, or from proper transmission or ordination rites. Quite the contrary—the ministry receives all of its power from the Gospel itself, which alone is the power of God for salvation.

Article XIV tells us very tersely how one gets into that Gospel-preaching office, namely, by way of a proper call, that is, by a call from God through the church. Since the church consists of hearers and preachers together—not one set without the other—hearers and preachers act together in calling a qualified man into the office. Is ordination divine or human? That depends on whether one means theological substance or ritual form. Since the office is divine, putting a man into it is part of the divine institution. This is the theological substance of the act, which is normally a process that includes several facets. These can include the candidate’s fitness, his selection, and his investiture for his field of service in a public service of the church. In this sense “call” and “ordination” are synonyms. And to underscore the divinity of the Gospel-preaching office—

Ministry

Confessions

Rev. Prof. Kurt Marquart



as opposed to the humanly invented order of mass-sacrificers—Apology XIII is prepared to call ordination into that holy office a “sacrament.” But there is no divinely prescribed ritual by which such entry into the ministry is accomplished. The laying on of hands is an apostolic custom with rich Old Testament background, and should on no account be omitted; but it is not as such a divine institution or a sacrament.

Finally, Article XXVIII spells out the proper work of pastors or bishops. The power of the keys or of the church or of bishops (these terms are used interchangeably) is exercised only by preaching, teaching, absolving and retaining, and administering the sacraments. There is no divinely established chain of command or pecking order here. Christ rules His church by the Gospel, and His and His church’s ministers are the divinely appointed bearers of that Gospel. That bishops “may make regulations” for good order, which ought to be kept for the sake of peace and unity, must be understood in contrast to the princely pretensions of the Roman bishops. In the evangelical context there is no place for a lordly imposition of decisions by the pastor, from on high, as it were, on a purely passive flock. Neither, of course, may the flock tyrannize the pastor. In matters neither commanded nor forbidden in the Word of God, both pastor and people are free, and neither has any right to command or prescribe anything to the other. Everything here must be done in mutual love, consent, and accommodation. “Love is empress in ceremonies,” said Luther.

The most detailed discussion of the ministry in the Confessions is that of the Treatise of the Power and Primacy of the Pope. Two important truths are enshrined here. One is that the Keys of the Kingdom belong not to particular persons or to

pastors only, but to the church as such, “originally and immediately.” The church is the Bride of Christ, and therefore the rightful owner, together with Her Divine Husband, of all spiritual treasures. The ministers administer the treasures, which the church owns. The second corresponding truth is that Christ builds His church on this Gospel and these sacraments preached and administered by His appointed ministers. This Gospel-preaching-and-confessing, not St. Peter as a person, is the Rock (Par. 25). The next paragraph interprets the “ministry” of Ephesians 4:12 as belonging to the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—not as in modern translations where pastors are supposed to “equip” the laity for “ministry.”

All in all, our Lutheran Confessions maintain the full integrity of the public ministry of the New Testament, and guard this evangelical highway, as it were, against the ditches of Roman priest-craft and hierarchicalism on the one hand, and of popular Protestant mob-rule and secular democratism on the other.

The Rev. Prof. Kurt Marquart is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.