

Lutheran Spokesman



*And some of the
Pharisees called to Him
from the crowd, "Teacher,
rebuke Your disciples." But
He answered and said to them,
"I tell you that if these should
keep silent, the stones would
immediately cry out."
Luke 19 : 39 & 40*

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Let Us Go Now, Even Unto Jerusalem . . .

On August 26, 1944 French General Charles De Gaulle led a victory parade of Allied troops down the streets of Paris. It was now clear that Nazi Germany was in its death throes. But the war was not yet won. American soldiers in parade formation marched right from the city streets into combat.

Throughout the season of Lent we have been preparing for the week Christians call "Holy Week." Likewise, in the weeks prior to Holy Week, the Lord Jesus had been preparing His disciples for the events of that week. As they proceeded toward Jerusalem in the days and weeks before, Jesus had said to them on several occasions, more or less in the same word: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day he will rise again."

As Advent marks the coming of Christ's birth and directs our attention to His triumphant return in glory on the Last Day, Lent marks the coming Passion of Christ in Holy Week, preparing us for His suffering, death, and resurrection.

Palm Sunday, the last Sunday in Lent, is the celebration of Christ's triumphant ride into Jerusalem, "...sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Mt. 21:5). That's right, a celebration during Lent! A triumphant celebration no less. Triumphant, for His ride into Jerusalem the Sunday before He suffered and died was a victory parade, in advance of His victory over sin, death, and the devil.

We might liken it to the Allies triumphant parade through Paris during World War II, the war not yet won, but confident in the outcome. Except that Christ was more than confident in the final outcome of His war on sin and death. The outcome of this war had been assured since the LORD God

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had made that first Gospel Promise in the Garden of Eden where it was promised that “the Seed of the woman” would crush the head of the serpent, Satan.

Victory March

On Palm Sunday Christ invites us to come with Him to Jerusalem to view His Passion, that is, His suffering and death. In His victory march through the streets of Jerusalem our resolve is strengthened to stay with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane as He is arrested, tried, and unjustly convicted and punished. Our resolve is strengthened to follow Him through the horrible sufferings we will observe on Good Friday, and to join Him in the victory celebration on Easter, marking His triumphant resurrection from the dead, having conquered His foes and ours, assuring US of final victory—as the Savior Himself has

assured us: “Because I live, you will live also” (Jn. 14:19).

So this Palm Sunday we celebrate Christ’s victory ride—into Jerusalem, into Battle, on to Victory! And, like Parisians celebrating the liberating march of the Allies, we celebrate Christ’s Victory Parade year after year. As in Advent, where we look also for the triumphant coming of our Lord and Savior into this world, so also on Palm Sunday we look ahead to the final Victory Parade when Christ returns on the Last Day.

Then believers also will rise victorious, and the words of the holy writer shall be fulfilled: “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Php. 2:10f).

—Pastor Joel Fleischer



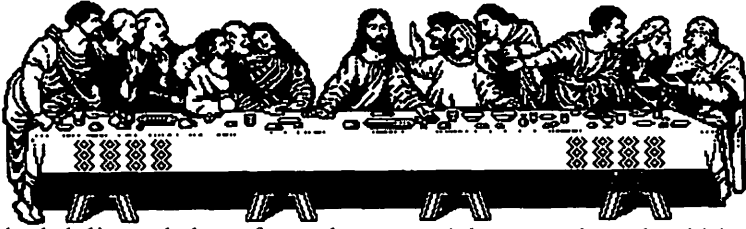
A Maundy Thursday Devotion—

“Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance” (Exodus 12:13-14).

A MEAL OF REMEMBRANCE

Every time we celebrate communion, we hear the familiar words: “After the same manner also Jesus took the cup when He had supped. . . .” This means that after “supper,” Jesus gave to His disciples the cup of wine and the unleavened bread. The supper or meal these words refer to, of

course, is the Passover Meal. On this special night, first of all, Jesus celebrated the Passover Meal with His disciples. The Passover Meal had been celebrated by God’s people for fifteen hundred years. It was designed by God as a memorial feast. Every year His people would be reminded of how



God had delivered them from the bondage and slavery of Egypt.

For four hundred and thirty years God's people had lived in Egypt, longing for that day when they would return to that land promised to Abraham. Things had gotten worse for them when a new dynasty took over in Egypt. The people found themselves slaves in Egypt building the famous pyramids.

God sent Moses to lead His people out of Egypt; however, Moses ran into the hardened-heart opposition of Pharaoh. Pharaoh refused to listen even though God demonstrated His power with nine plagues or signs. Finally, God told Moses that He would smite the firstborn in Egypt.

At the same time God would deliver His chosen people. The Lord told Moses that He would pass over the houses of His people. Their houses would be identified with the blood on the door frames. God told His people to kill a one-year-old male lamb without spot or blemish. They then should take the blood of the lamb and place it around their door frames. The blood of the lamb would protect them from the death that would ravage the land of Egypt.

A New Covenant

God further told His people to roast the lamb and completely eat it in a special meal. They were told to prepare unleavened bread (bread without

yeast) because they should be in a hurry to leave. They also were to eat bitter vegetables (onions and garlic). Over time several cups of wine were added to the celebration of the Passover Meal. God's people were to reenact this meal every year as a "memorial." They were to remember how God had saved them out of Egypt and delivered them from death. When their children asked, "Why are we doing this?", the parents would explain how God had delivered His people out of Egypt and made His covenant with them at Mt. Sinai.

In fulfillment of the Old Covenant, Jesus ate this meal with His disciples on the night He was betrayed—the night which would lead to His death at the cross the next day. Jesus took from the Passover Meal the unleavened bread and cup of wine. Jesus then gave the bread and wine to His puzzled disciples. He told them that "this (bread) is my body" and "this cup is the New Testament in my blood." Jesus would establish a New Covenant of the forgiveness of sins by His death at the cross. The Old Covenant which pointed to the coming of Jesus had served its purpose.

The New Covenant (Testament) is a covenant of blood. God delivered His people through the death of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. By the death of Jesus, God delivered His people from death. We are redeemed by the holy and precious blood of the Lamb

of God. God has given us a New Testament Memorial Meal in the Lord's Supper. Every time we partake of this meal, we remember Jesus' death on the cross for our sins.

Every communion service we hear the words: "Do this in remembrance of Me." We remember how the Lord God redeemed and saved His people

through the death of Jesus Christ. As we receive the bread and wine, we are given the body and blood of Christ. As Luther wrote: "May this feast thereof remind us" (TLH 313:2). We celebrate again this Maundy Thursday God's Memorial Meal for the remission of our sins.

—Pastor John Schierenbeck



A Clean Slate

Have you at any time wished that you could relive a day of your life and do it differently? People express such a wish after a costly mistake. They fantasize erasing guilt by the magic of a rerun. Yet who is to say that such magic would

produce a successful or happy experience? That takes a different mechanism than guilt gained by mistakes; a bigger change than regret will produce.

Certainly a new beginning is the very hope of our life. Does not God tell us that in many ways? We are again coming into the annual miracle of spring, and we all feel the refreshing, uplifting joy of it. Besides, the promises of heaven that the Lord holds before us present a new beginning in every sense, when the old things of this earth and of sin have been forgotten and we awaken.

A Divine, Loving Exchange

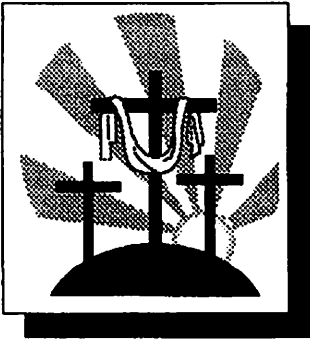
The Lord has a message for you if you want to start all over. The love of Christ must constrain you to do so: "For the love of Christ constrains us, because we judge thus: that if one died for all, then all died: and He died for all that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:14f).

In the verses leading up to this dec-

laration Paul has rehearsed how God wrought His glorious gospel ministry through fragile and unworthy human containers, earthen vessels. Yet they preached and worked with intense emotion. And in the face of all opposition they testified to the Savior. Here we learn how they could do so: the love of Christ constrains us, drives us, compels us.

Let us take note that the apostle, in speaking of the love of Christ, does not mean Paul's love for Christ. It is Christ's love for us. Behind the facts of this Passion season we are brought to focus on the motive of our Savior, and the accomplishments produced by His love.

Surely it was matchless love which moved the holy, spotless Lamb of God to surrender Himself to the curse for us all. The love that our Savior has for sinners urged Him forward, knowing that the verdict of death upon Himself would be sufficient for our life. What a power lies in the truth that Christ died for all—for "if one died, then all died; and He died for all. . . ." This



divine, loving exchange is the most marvelous truth under God's heaven.

If Christ died in place of, instead of, all humanity, then His death took the place of their death, and as far as their sins and punishment are concerned, all have already gotten through that. So the love of Christ has made it possible for every human to say "goodbye" once and for all to that old life that was headed for certain destruction in hell, which is, after all, tied to sin and its consequences.

It Has Been Done FOR YOU!

What an exciting new prospect this has opened to the world! That is why the apostles could not rest. They knew the miracle of love that put sin and death into its grave with Jesus, and as He arose again unto new life, so all humans are given title to a new life, to start a new way. People are spending their days as slaves to sin and regret and guilt and headed for a death that somebody else already died for them. How anxiously the apostles sought to make their fellowmen realize that. Should the love of the Savior go to waste? See the miracle of love that has come to pass! "And He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again."

Who would not like to acquire such a new beginning? We speak not only of the criminal who would like to live his life over; not only of the drunkard or drug addict who wishes he could put the past behind him; not only of the weakling who has sold his soul to the devil for pleasure and grieves that it did not satisfy. We speak of all of us whose lives are befouled by bad attitudes, besmirched by lust and greed and lies and bad temper and self-conceit. Whoever can say, I wish I had it to do over, should know it has been done for you in divine love. Christ lived your life for you, and He lived it perfectly and beautifully. He accepted your sins, imperfections, mistakes, and paid the bill.

That enables each of us to start with a clean slate. But not without Christ. For unless we are found in Christ, everything we do is still a patching of an old garment, a hopeless guilt-powered effort at building our own righteousness. If we are recreating our own lives by the black magic of our own resolve and good intentions, then we are acting as though we had not yet died, and then it is still the old life we are leading even if we use Christ as our example or guide.

The love of Christ must bring us to the new starting place created by God for sinners. When we see ourselves as redeemed by Him, we see that only His work makes us children of God and heirs of heaven. We know that is where we belong, and that is how we want to live. We gladly surrender our mistakes, remorse, and guilt to Jesus, where all needs and our future are divinely cared for in His great redeeming love.

—Paul Koch, Prof. em.

Studies In Galatians

Standing Fast In The Liberty By Which Christ Has Made Us Free (See 5:1)

Galatians 1:1-10

“It Is My Catherine . . .”

There is something about the human nature that prompts a man to honor his favorite mode of transportation by naming it after his greatest love. The yachtsman may sail his *Belinda II* through the San Juan Islands on a second honeymoon with his *Belinda* (the first); the long-haul trucker will glance out the restaurant window of Sapp Bros. near Omaha and cast an approving eye on his *Jasmine*, just washed and shining in all her eighteen-wheel glory.

“The Epistle to the Galatians is my epistle to which I have wedded myself. It is my Catherine von Bora.” Martin Luther shared the same instinct as others, calling his favorite mode of transportation by his wife’s name.

A Fine Vehicle

The Epistle to the Galatians was, for this servant of the Lord, a fine vehicle that transported his attention away from himself, brought him nearer the Cross and, ultimately, to the very gates of heaven. Calling it *“a very clear text and a flash of celestial lightning,”* this Spirit-breathed document earned Luther’s singular devotion because it addressed the central controversy in his life—how is a wretched, sinful man to stand before a

righteous, implacable God?

Catherine von Bora (the woman) came as a late-in-life surprise to a man who had concluded that he would never marry. She was not endowed with any dowry, nor drop-dead looks in the eyes of the world. But Luther was endeared to her for her honesty and directness (after leaving the convent, Luther tried to fix her up with another bachelor; she announced that she would never marry the bachelor, but she was not unreasonable—she would take Dr. Luther!).

Katie, of course, became Luther’s greatest earthly treasure—an honest and unflinching counterpart; a comfort in distress; a companion making his life fruitful beyond all expectations. All of which related well to the spiritual power and wealth Luther found in his *“Catherine von Bora”* (the Epistle).

The apostle Paul, in his epistles to churches and associates of the New Testament era, reveals quite a range of emotion and temperament. But none of the others approaches the level of urgent concern and incisive logic evident in his address to the Galatians. Just as Luther had no need to wonder where he stood with Katie at any given time, so Paul let the Galatians know exactly what was on his mind: “I mar-



vel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel . . .” (1:6).

Perhaps Paul shouldn’t have been quite so surprised. He had reason to believe that the Galatians were somewhat fickle. The churches addressed were most likely comprised of those of central Asia Minor, a region called Galatia, where Paul carried out his first missionary work under the auspices of the church at Antioch. These cities included Lystra, where Paul was at first mistaken for a god, but later stoned and left for dead. But the power of the Gospel had been evident in his ministry in this region, and the churches of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe were places Paul returned to again and again.

The Unadulterated Gospel

Because Paul was such a prominent personage in the planting of these churches, he himself became a point of controversy there, when other teachers arrived claiming to have better credentials than Paul. They attacked his per-

son so that they could undermine his teaching. So we find in Paul’s answer not only a vigorous defense of the correct doctrine, but also a reminder of his own apostolic credentials: “Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead)” (1:1). It was on the basis of his apostolic calling that he had come to Galatia in the first place, preaching the striking gospel message: “Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (1:3-5).

What Paul had told them, face to face, regarding the salutary work of Jesus Christ and the perfect salvation one finds through repentance and faith in Him, was so sufficient, so inviolable, that he now stood ready to pronounce a curse on any soul, whether man or angel or even himself, if such a one should try to supplant or supplement the doctrine he had originally

preached to them in Christ's name and by His authority. His words were aimed directly at those who were at that moment "troubling" them (5:12).

The "troublers" are known to us as "Judaizers"—Jewish traditionalists who taught that salvation by Christ alone was an incomplete "gospel" (1:8). But their "improvements" were, in Paul's view, no true gospel at all.

Rather than revise his message to please men, Paul contends that his sole interest is in pleasing God: "For if I still pleased men, I would not be a

servant of Christ" (1:10).

That devotion to the unadulterated Gospel was a jewel in the crown of Scripture for Luther, in an era when many of the church's battles were won or lost on the field of "justification through faith in Christ, alone." Because Satan is ever looking for ways to deny or pervert this teaching, the epistle to the Galatians merits our devout attention, even now.

May it also become your *Catherine von Bora!*

—Pastor Peter E. Reim



(A final devotion by the chaplain of last summer's CLC Convention at ILC, Eau Claire. The general theme asked the question: "Who Are We?")

We Are People Who Care

When my family and I moved to Phoenix in the late '80's, we opened an account with a little bank on the street corner near our home. It was a nice place to do business. But then our friendly little bank was swallowed up by a bigger bank, and shortly afterwards by a still larger one. Things began to change. Employees were laid off and ATMs took their place. We were encouraged to conduct our business outside at the ATM rather than speak to a real person inside the lobby. Finally, we were told that if we carried out too many transactions inside, we would be charged an extra fee.

Some say it's symptomatic of a bigger societal problem—an uncaring, impersonal attitude toward the individual. No one cares. People see their jobs only in terms of what they can get out of them. Marriages, families,

and friendships are spoiled because there is no concern for the other person, only what's in it for "me."

It's easy for us to fall into that kind of mindset as individuals and as a church. We get caught up in our own personal wants and give the impression that we don't care about anyone else.

But is that really who the Lord calls us to be: intolerant people concerned first and foremost with self? We get a much different picture when we look at St. Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 9:19: "Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible."

Free To Be A Slave

Paul was a free man. He enjoyed the freedoms of a Roman citizen. But more than that, he reveled in the free-

dom which Christ gave him. Paul was free from the requirements and condemnation of the Law. He did not have to lug a heavy burden of guilt around while trying to earn God's favor by keeping the commandments. He was free from all that because Christ fulfilled the Law for all and washed away guilt with His blood. Paul was free from the fear of death, for Christ crushed death by His own death and resurrection. The apostle was a free man in the best sense of the word!

He was so *free* through faith in Christ that he became a *slave* to everyone. Christ had given him forgiveness and life, and had set him free from selfish concerns. Now there was someone more important than self—the Lord Jesus. Christ's will became Paul's will. "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:20). And so Paul

became a "people person." He was genuinely interested in the lives of others. His life's goal became ministering to the spiritual needs of people wherever he went.

God has made us the same kind of people. We have been called out of the world to be God's own special creation, people who reflect His love in their relationships with everyone around them. Christ gives us the power and motivation to live as people who care.

My bank may never go back to its old personalized, friendly way of doing business. Our world may grow increasingly cold and uncaring. But the Lord has transformed us into different people, people who love and care because He first loved us.

May that love powerfully move us to put aside self in order to reach out to every single precious soul with the saving Gospel of Christ. May we always be people who care! Amen.

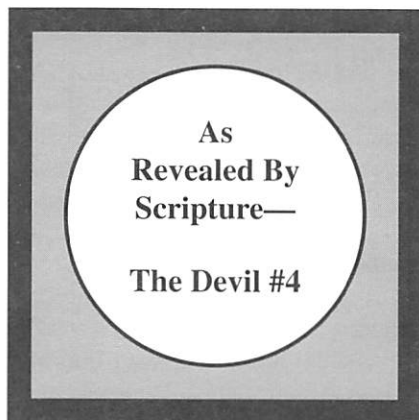
—Pastor Michael Eichstadt



The Devil Works To Deceive

Deception is the operative word here, then the concept behind the word, then the malignant spirit behind that.

Speaking of the Devil as we are, today's theme centers on his infernal successes by deception of humans. Being a liar from the beginning and the procreator of deceptivity (Jn. 8:44), Satan succeeds in his machinations simply by making sin seem attractive. In Eden, for example, Satan wormed his way into Eve's heart so deceitfully that she was turned into a different person—from being God's loving child into being Satan's cold-



hearted puppet.

To use an analogy, Satan got into Eve's spiritual programming and reprogrammed her emoting, her imagining, and her reasoning. Once the virus of sinfulness got into her hard drive, her heart became compatible with any and all software of sinning: pride, selfishness, ego etc.

A Study In Craftiness

The record of Eve's fall—and Adam's too—presents us with a case-book study in Satan's craftiness (Genesis 3:1-5). Observe: first he approached her with what appeared to be a harmless request for information. "Pardon me, but did I hear correctly that God has put a restriction on you, to forbid you to eat from every tree of the garden?" The implication, of course, was that God was less generous than one would like to think He was, limiting their "freedom of choice."

Her response seems to reflect a suspicion that God was, indeed, unnecessarily narrow in not allowing her so much as a caressing touch of the fruit on the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Eve just didn't catch on that Satan was already reprogramming her attitude toward God. He implanted the suspicion that God is not as generous and sharing as befits a deity who should respond warmly to her human appetites.

So when Satan flatly contradicted God's "you shall surely die," she presented no defense of God's will or words. By then Satan knew he could progress to the next step. Satan's rationale for God's negative attitude is that God is selfish: God does not want his eminence undercut by sharing any of His wisdom with humankind. So

Eve was deceived about God and about herself in God's heart and world.

Herein lies the warning: when God speaks, also when withholding from us what our human appetite desires, we need to beware of any rational and emotional pressures that would lead us to dishonor God in our hearts and disobey His will in our lives.

When Eve sidled over to the forbidden tree for another closer look, she discovered that her eyes were not hurt by admiring, nor were her fingers burned by the touching, and it even tasted wonderful! Besides, her heart craved its delicious promise—"a tree desirable to make one wise. . . ." Satan had so appealed to her stomach (physical pleasure!) to her feeling for esthetics (emotional pleasure!) and to her mind (intellectual pleasure!), that the deceitfulness of her cravings stifled God's Word in her heart.

Reclaimed By God

What does the child of God learn from this? Quite simply, Satan makes sin seem attractive by using our selfish appetites for pleasure to work against our soul's welfare. When we find attractions in our lives that appeal to our senses, our emotions, or our ego, the alarm bell should be clanging: "This looks like a deceitful ploy from the old, experienced, wily, evil foe."

Let's face it. If superman (Adam) and superwoman (Eve) were outwitted by Satan, what chance do we, their weakened descendants, have of outmaneuvering him on our own? The truth about humans is that we are no match for his infernal Lowness. Thus, God found it necessary to reclaim sin-

ners by the second, superior Adam, Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:45). When He finished that job, successfully and decisively, God reclaimed us from the power of Satan, reprogramming us to conform to the image of His Son

(Rom. 9:29), whereby we function in love to Him and our fellow humans.

Thanks be to God for His superior wisdom, love, power, and mercies — and all for sinners like me!!

—Paul Koch, Prof. em.



SMORGASBORD

● **ANN LANDERS IS WRONG** (*an article in the Sleepy Eye [Minn.] Herald-Dispatch, January 23, 1997, by Pastor Paul Fleischer*)

Did you happen to see the Ann Landers column which appeared last November in which she passed along something she apparently found somewhere on the subject of the “Origins of World’s Religions”? A subsequent “letter to the editor” of our local paper called attention to at least one of the mistakes in the article: “Jesus Christ did not start the Roman Catholic Church. He started the Catholic Church. There is a difference. . . .”

We agree. Jesus Christ did not start the Roman Catholic Church with its myriad of teachings which clash with the Scriptures, God’s Word of Truth. The Church or “religion” which Jesus “started” and which is truly catholic (that is, universal and world-wide) is the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, composed of all those, and only those, who believe and trust in Him alone as Savior. This Church is based on the teachings of the apostles and prophets (Eph. 2:19-20). The foundation of this Church is Jesus Christ and Him alone (1 Cor. 3:11). This Church spans the whole course of time, antedating even Abra-

ham and other Old Testament patriarchs. This Church goes back to Adam and Eve who believed in the first Promise of the coming Savior given in the Garden of Eden (cf. Gen. 3:15).

In fact, the events and/or tenets undergirding the true Christian religion go back before the beginning of time. According to Scripture, God in eternity 1) decreed that His only-begotten Son would be offered as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world (2 Tim. 1:9, Eph. 3:11); and 2) predestinated to eternal life those who trust in Christ as their Savior, having called them by the Gospel (Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13-14).

We put the words “started” and “religion” in quotes above. Why? Because when the eternal Son of God became incarnate and walked on this earth, He didn’t start or begin any religion! “The Word became flesh” (the Christmas miracle) not to start a new religion but that He, the eternal Son, might carry out His earthly mission of rescuing and redeeming sinners with His holy life and substitutionary, atoning sacrifice.

The article Ann Landers endorsed is also wrong in suggesting that Abraham founded the Jewish faith. He did not. Abraham was a “Christian” for he

believed in the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, whom the adherents of the Jewish faith have always rejected. Jesus had much to say to the unbelieving Jews about this (cf. John 8:37ff).

Finally, the article was at best misleading when it said that “if you are a Lutheran, your religion was founded by Martin Luther, an ex-monk in the Catholic Church, in 1517.” When Luther undertook the Lutheran Reformation he himself argued against the idea that he was starting a new church. He wrote: “This message (of the Gospel) is not a novel invention of ours but the very ancient, approved teaching of the apostles brought to light again. Neither have we invented a new Baptism, Sacrament of the Altar, Lord’s Prayer, and Creed; nor do we desire to know or to have anything new in Christendom. We only contend for, and hold to, the ancient: that which Christ and the apostles have left behind them and have given to us.”

What Ann Landers writes is “bible” for many Americans. Unfortunately and sadly much of her advice or counsel is godless and humanistic, flies into the face of the Holy Bible, and is thus anti-christian. With such views she has, as much as anyone in American society, contributed to the erosion of biblical standards and absolutes, as

well as to the breakdown of the traditional home and family.

The bottom line? Since, as is often the case, she doesn’t know what she is writing about, it would be best not to read the Ann Landers’ “bible” and/or heed her advice. Rather, let the genuinely distressed and troubled or those otherwise yearning for helpful advice, seek a Bible-believing counselor. Such will be able to guide the seeker in the divinely-inspired counsel of God’s Word and His Holy Spirit in the Sacred Scriptures.

● **THE DIRECTION OF LUTHERANISM** (*From the bulletin of Grace Lutheran, Fridley, Minn.*
Daniel Fleischer is pastor)

The direction of Lutheranism is manifested by a continuing move toward unionism (unionism: the joint church work and/or worship between or among such as are not agreed in doctrine). The most recent edition of The Lutheran News NETWORK (a joint endeavor of the ELCA and the LC-MS which comes out of Florida) gives evidence of how the Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) fosters unionism between various synods.

It is just for this reason that the CLC is NOT involved with the AAL, and works at informing its members why they should leave the AAL. AAL



In December 1996 we told the story of the new building at St. Paul’s, Austin, Minnesota, and showed a picture of the interior. This shows the exterior of the new church and school facility.

claims that it is not a church. It is correct in that assertion. However, it is involved in doing church work and promoting unionism through its fraternal activity which involves Lutherans of different confessions, most notably, ELCA, LC-MS, WELS, and ELS. The aforementioned newspaper reports how an inter-Lutheran group from the ELCA and the LC-MS will be engaged in what is called "Cooperative Parish Planning Committee" meetings next April. This effort is funded by the AAL.

Interestingly, training events "will include members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod" (whether officials or lay-members is not indicated). The purpose of such training events will be to teach how to implement strategy for "preparing adults for baptism and daily ministry." The strategy involves lay leaders and "uses prayer, congregational worship, small Bible Study, and social ministry to help new converts develop a strong faith and to spiritually energize both returning members and the whole congregation."

This is another illustration of the influence of what is known as the Church Growth Movement. Plans, strategies, and social ministry supplant the Means of Grace, the Gospel in Word and Sacrament, as the focus and foundation of the witness of the church. We confess that it is only the Means of Grace that creates faith, strengthens faith, and energizes faith.

As we read this we ask ourselves, "What does the CLC have in common with ELCA, for example, that would move us to send members to sit at the feet of the ELCA to be taught by it?" The answer is that we have nothing in

common with the ELCA, and for that reason we would not participate if we had been asked. We weren't! But had we been, we would have pointed to John 8:31-32, 1 Corinthians 1:10, Romans 16:17-18 as reasons why we could not and would not.

What this whole thing points out again is why we have not been in fellowship with the WELS for 36 years. It also makes crystal clear what still stands between, regardless at what level or to what extent the WELS is involved! We still hear it said that there is no difference between the WELS and the CLC. But contemporary history destroys that contention.

The doctrine of church fellowship and its practice based on Scripture is essential to the life of a confessional church. Because this doctrine is interpreted by many as being of another age is no reason to give it up. Because it is so contrary to the modern ecumenical movement is not reason for giving it up, but rather of practicing it the more strenuously. The fact is that if one wants to understand why the Lutheran Church is in the deteriorating condition it is today, one only needs to look at the lack of understanding of this doctrine and its importance.

Finally, let it be said, the CLC is not interested in preserving and practicing this doctrine because it is against something, but rather because it stands for something! God help us to be evangelical in our teaching, and firm in our confession. Only then is God glorified, and only then do we have a reason to exist, and a message that gives the troubled heart confidence. ●

In Our CLC Classrooms—

Meet: Beth Sydow

Elizabeth Sydow is a teacher at Grace Lutheran Church in Fridley, Minnesota. Beth attended Immanuel Lutheran High School and College. She accepted a call to teach at Immanuel, Mankato in 1966. She taught there for three years, during which time she also received a BS degree in Elementary Education from Mankato State University.

In 1969 Beth interrupted her teaching career in order to raise a family. She and her husband James have four children: Jennifer (26), Jay (24), Stephen (22), and Daniel (18). She returned to teaching in 1985 at Grace, Fridley.

Beth chose teaching as a career because she enjoys working with young people in preparing them for



this life and the life to come. Her favorite subjects are religion and math. At recess she enjoys kickball. For Beth the most rewarding part of teaching is seeing students apply the Word of God in life situations.

Outside of school Beth's interests include reading, running, and attending the sporting events of her children.

We'd like to thank Beth for her many years of service to our synod schools.

Announcements

Minnesota Teachers' Conference

Date: February 17, 1997

Place: Grace Lutheran School

Fridley, Minnesota

Agenda:

- * 9:30 a.m. Opening Devotion and other preliminaries
- * 10:00 Teaching Sex Education in our Grade Schools From a Christian Perspective—Mrs. Laila Fleischer
- * 11:00 Round Table Discussions
- * 11:40 Lunch Break
- * 1:00-3:00 "Introduction to the Internet"—We have reserved a computer lab with windows-based computers. Each computer has access to the Internet. The computer lab is located at TIES in Roseville.

—James D. Lau

The CLC In The Chicago Area

Immanuel Lutheran Church, which serves the greater Chicago area, has begun conducting off-site exploratory worship services on a regular weekly basis. These services are in place of the regular services at the Addison location. The

congregation is excited about this new venture by which the Lord appears to be opening new doors for its witness to the Gospel.

The new site is at the "Overseas Club," a dining hall in Batavia, which is about 20 miles west of the previous location. The worship service begins at 9:30 a.m. with Bible Class at 10:45. Pastor David Schmidt and his family continue to live in the parsonage at Addison. For more information the pastor may be reached by calling (708) 629-2688.

Ministry By Mail

Rev. Paul F. Nolting has resigned as editor of the Ministry By Mail, effective May 31, 1997. Rev. Paul Naumann has been appointed as the new editor.

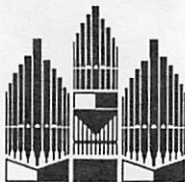
—Daniel Fleischer, President

Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council meets at Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin on April 9-10, 1997.

—Pastor James Albrecht, Secretary

**1997 Itinerary
Immanuel Lutheran College
Tour Choir**



March 16,	Trinity, Millston, Wis.	10:15 a.m.
March 21,	Grace, Sleepy Eye, Minn.	7:30 p.m.
March 22,	St. Paul's, White River, S.Dak.	7:30 p.m.
March 23,	Redeemer, Cheyenne, Wyo.	4:00 p.m.
March 23,	Prince of Peace, Loveland, Colo.	7:30 p.m.
March 24,	St. Paul, Golden, Colo.	7:30 p.m.
March 26,	Holy Cross, Phoenix, Ariz.	7:30 p.m.
March 27,	St. Matthew,	
	Colorado Springs, Colo.	2:00 p.m.
March 27,	Mt. Olive, Lamar, Colo.	7:30 p.m.
March 28,	Grace, Valentine, Nebr.	7:30 p.m.
March 29,	Immanuel, Mankato, Minn.	7:30 p.m.
March 30,	St. Paul's, Austin, Minn.	9:30 a.m.
April 6,	Our Redeemer's,	
	Red Wing, Minn.	10:30 a.m.
April 6,	Messiah, Eau Claire, Wis.	7:00 p.m.
	Please confirm concert times with hosting congregations.	

— John Reim, Director

**CLC DIRECTORY:
CHANGES AND CORRECTIONS**

Please note the following in your 1997-1998 CLC Directory:

- + Page 3—the year for uniting as CLC should be 1960, not 1959
- + Page 4—Add the Rev. Walter Schaller (2000) as a member of the Board of Missions
- + Page 4—Add Mr. Tom Beekman's address: 8410 Rambal Road, Eau Claire, WI 54703; (715) 834-6736

- + Page 5—Prof. David Lau added to the list of Journal of Theology contributors. Prof. Paul Schaller is not on the staff
- + Page 5—Prof. David Lau has replaced Prof. John Lau as Archivist
- + Page 15—Robert McDonald is pastor of St. Peter's, Stambaugh, MI
- + Page 16—Delete "Interim Pastor" reference in listing of Grace, Sleepy Eye, MN
- + Page 20—E-mail address of Pastor/Editor Paul Fleischer: pgfleis@prairie.lakes.com
- + Page 22—The street address of Prof. John Lau after June 30 is 2035 E. Lexington Blvd.

On The Internet

You may access the CLC Home Page at this address:

<http://primenet.com/~mpkelly/clc/clc.html>

The *Spokesman* is also on the Internet. To access it you can either 1) Go to the CLC Home Page; in the section titled "CLC Literature and Information" are links to the current *Spokesman* and to the *Spokesman* Archives. Or 2) Go directly to the *Spokesman* link:

<http://www.primenet.com/~mpkelly/clc/spokesman.html> (NOTE: spokesman is not hyphenated)

Call Committee on Graduates

Congregations submitting a call for a pastor or a teacher candidate to the Call Committee on Graduates should have such call in the hands of the president by April 4. The Committee will meet on Wednesday, April 9, at 7:00 p.m. at ILC. The Call form and accompanying letter should be complete, with the exception of a candidate's name.

—Daniel Fleischer, President