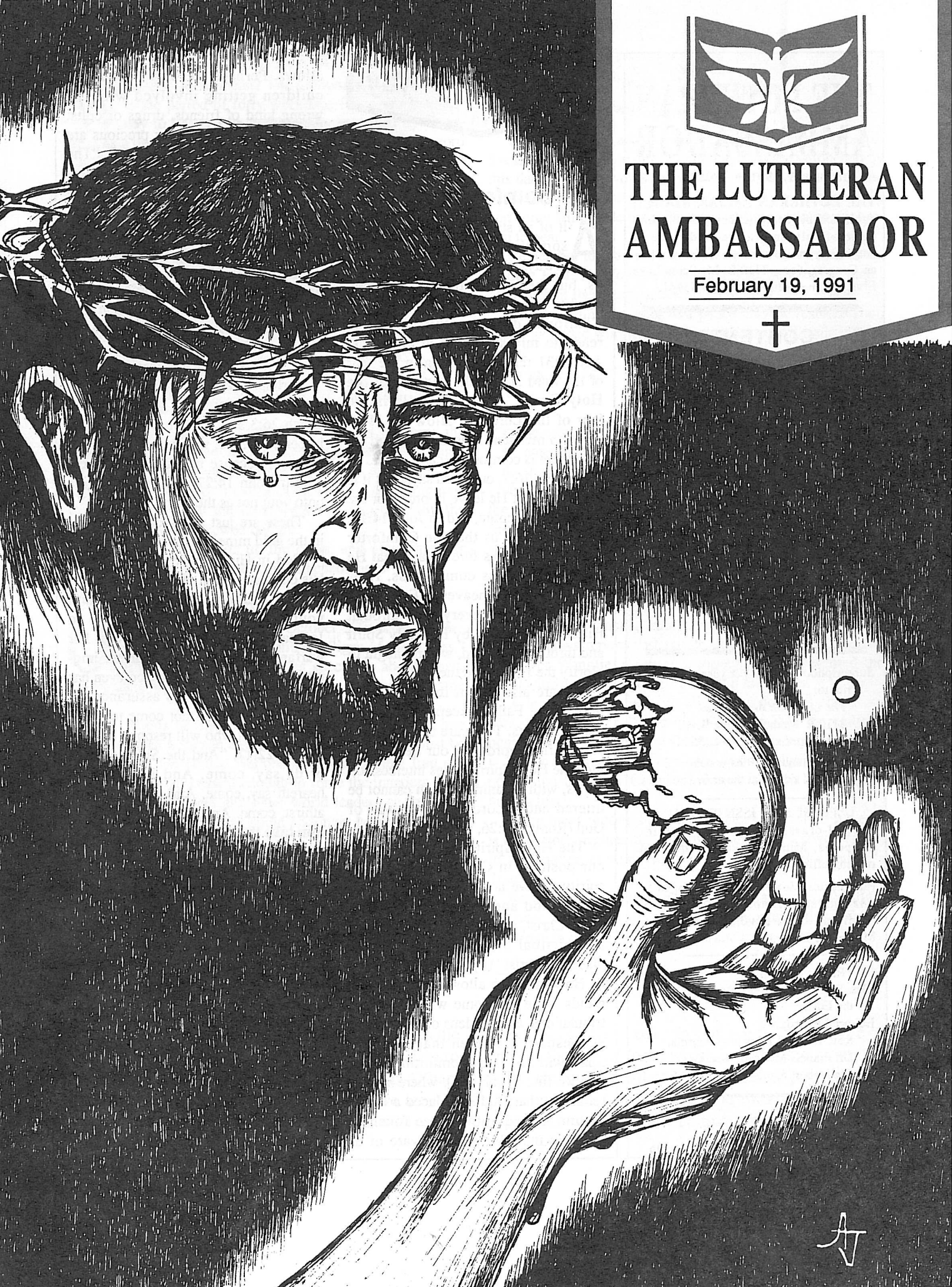


THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

February 19, 1991



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THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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CONTENTS

- 3 Seven Last Words
- 7 Tenebrae
- 8 Capital Investments
- 8 Pastors' Conference Review
- 9 Our President Writes
- 10 Books for You
- 11 Campus
- 12 The Counselor's Study
- 13 Youth
- 14 Letters
- 15 Editorials
- 16 World Watch

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Light on the Way

The Comforter

All of us stand in need of comfort sometime or another. It is not always evident to those around us, but the need is there. Then how good to know, for a Christian, that the Comforter dwells within us and is ready to minister to us at all times! Acts 9:31 reads, "Walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." When we walk in the fear of the Lord and allow the Holy Spirit to minister in us and through us, then there is comfort, joy and peace.

In John 16:7, our Lord says that it is expedient that He leave in order for the Comforter to come, and in John 14:16, 18, Jesus tells us that the Comforter will abide with us forever and that He will not leave us comfortless. How wonderfully our heavenly Father has taken care of our every need through His Son Jesus. And by His Holy Spirit and through the Word, we are taught to glorify the Father and the Son.

We are also taught that we cannot pray to the Father except through the name of Jesus. There are times that we cannot find words for our needs, and then the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered and according to the will of God (Romans 8:26, 27).

The Holy Spirit also reveals to us our position in Christ and how rich spiritually we are in Christ. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

How often we allow our hearts and minds to be overcome with the trials, tribulations, and burdens of the day. So we despair. It is then that the Holy Spirit will bring you comforting words like we find in Job 1:10, where we are reminded that God has placed a hedge around us and nothing can touch or harm us that God is not aware of or

allows. Perhaps we worry about our children getting involved with the wrong kind of friends, drugs or cults. During those times, how precious are the words in II Chronicles 16:9: "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro to shew himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."

What about the everyday cares of this life ... making ends meet ... keeping your job? Then the blessed Spirit might come with these words of comfort, "Casting all your care upon him for He careth for you" (I Peter 5:7). Or Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever."

Perhaps you have lost a loved one or you have someone seriously sick. Isaiah 26:3 says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." And in John 14:27, "My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth ..."

These are just a few of the nuggets in the gold mine of God's Word.

God in His great love will comfort His children. Isaiah 40:1-2 says: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned ... " Our God even has a word of comfort and assurance for those who have yet not come to peace with him, but who will respond to Revelation 22:17, "And the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Today is your opportunity to accept God's outstretched hand of love. Accept what His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, did on Calvary for you and then, and only then, can you experience the comfort of the Holy Spirit.



by Rev.
Alvin Larson



Seven Words from the Cross

The first word —

Father, forgive them (Luke 23:34).

Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46), describes the verdict on that day of tragedy and triumph. Never are we more impressed with the truth of those words than when we come to the cross and listen to the last words of the suffering servant of God.

Forgiveness begins with God

"Father." The prayer of Christ addresses God the Father. The Christian Gospel begins here in that God is the One who forgives. One who does wrong can only ask for forgiveness. Forgiveness must begin with the Father for only He is good and most wonderfully kind.

Forgiveness requires an intercessor

"Forgive them." He who was the victim of the cross was the only victor over the sin of the world. He alone is able to stand in the gap and bridge the gulf. He "became sin for us, Who knew no sin" (II Corinthians 5:21). Abraham Lincoln said: "No man can escape history." So also we cannot be blind to what has happened on the cross. Martin Luther expressed himself when he said, "Where forgiveness of sins is, there is the life and blessedness."

And so it is that from this center of power man has entered into the benefits of sins forgiven and a new life. We cannot change or alter what Christianity is or what it offers.

In every age this has been the wonder of the message, that forgiveness has been offered to sinning man through the mediatorship of the only Saviour from sin. For this and much more we are truly grateful.

— by Rev. David Molstre
Palmdale, California

The second word —

Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise (Luke 23:43).

Jesus' word to a criminal, crucified with no chance to amend his ways, shows us the heart of God. He knows that man's heart is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jeremiah 17:9). He expects nothing to come from man's heart but evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, ... (Matthew 15:19). Only man imagines something better is possible.

All the robber had was sin. He had nothing that was worth taking, no merits. He knew it and admitted it.

When we are brought to the end of ourselves and see our pitiful condition, then we too must cry, "Lord, remember me, have mercy."

What a merciful heart Jesus has for desperate sinners! Granting them absolution, He justifies the ungodly without any work on their part (Romans 4:5), and promises them heaven. As the robber listened to Jesus, "Who when He was reviled, reviled not again" (I Peter 2:23), he got a new heart that showed its newness by confessing faith in Jesus. This heart, a fit temple for God, was promised heaven and must go to heaven.

We are poor and depraved, but drawn by the merciful heart of God to be pardoned, are made heirs of life. Come. Your sin is not too great for Him.

— by Rev. Bruce Dalager
Grand Forks, North Dakota



The third word —

Woman, behold My Son (John 19:26).

Jesus loved his mother. This should not surprise us. He was a model son; she was a devoted mother. It was natural that He should be concerned for Mary's welfare after His impending death. So Jesus provided John, the disciple whom He loved, to care for her. Even as He hung on the cross — suffering, bleeding, and dying — Jesus put the concerns of others, especially his mother, ahead of his own needs.

But what is surprising to us is the use of the word, "woman," to address His mother. We might expect that a more tender expression such as "Mary" or "mother" would better indicate His compassion and concern. But, in reality, "woman" reveals the extraordinary love Jesus had for Mary. It is a word indicative of His single-minded purpose. It is the same word He used at Cana when He performed His first miracle. Jesus had only one purpose on this earth — to redeem lost sinners. At Cana He said to Mary, "Woman ... mine hour is not yet come" (John 2:40). Here it is as if He were saying, "Woman, ... mine hour is **now** come!"

Jesus does not allow human emotion to alter His purpose of dying on the cross. As a wounded, suffering man He doesn't look for pity from His mother as we might expect. He is not saying to her,

"Help me in my suffering," but rather, "I am going to help you!" As a mother, Mary probably thought to herself, "He needs me." But she needed Him — not as her son, but as her Saviour. "Woman" was not a word of harshness or disrespect on Jesus' part, but rather a sign of His redemptive love.

Jesus' love for Mary kept Him on the cross. Before, He had been her son; she had guided Him, commanded Him, trained Him. Now He was her Saviour. Now He won her salvation! No son who loves his mother would wilfully put her through the pain of seeing him die. But Jesus had to in order to save both her and the rest of mankind. In one sense, Jesus reverses roles with her. He becomes the parent who knows what is best for the child. Like a mother who allows her little boy to slightly touch the hot stove in order to save him from an even greater pain later; so Jesus let His mother see Him experience a painful death only to save her from an even greater pain to come.

Jesus loved His mother with an extraordinary love. His love for her kept Him on the cross, because what she needed was a Saviour, not simply a son.

— by Rev. John D. Mundfrom
Eben Junction, Michigan

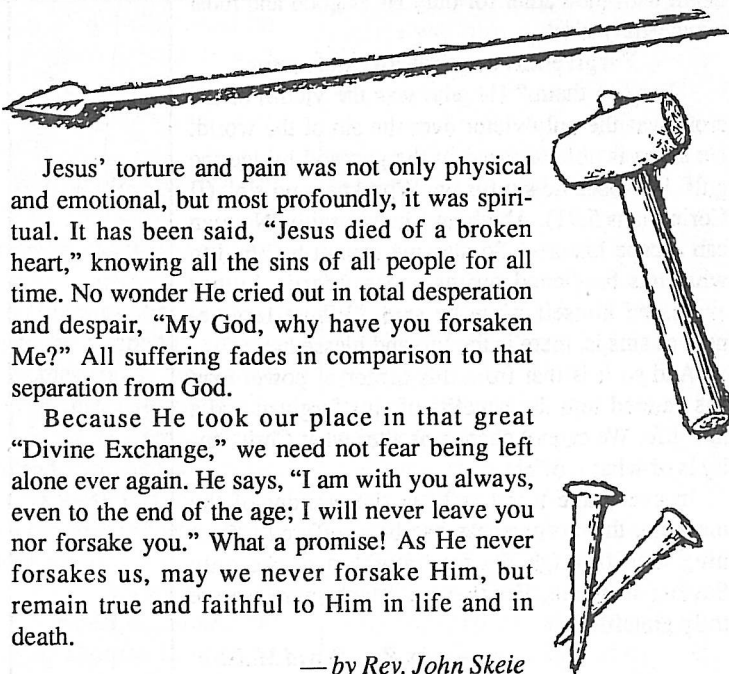
The fourth word —

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? (Matthew 27:46).

Forsaken! What a desolate and forlorn word. It means to be left alone, deserted and abandoned. Has that ever happened to you, perhaps by one you felt was your friend? It happened to Jesus, as well.

In His hour of suffering, Jesus' very own disciples betrayed and forsook Him. Even at the very moment of death, when in deepest misery Christ became sin for us, Jesus felt that His Father in heaven had forsaken Him and had left Him to die all alone and totally abandoned.

This is what death does — it is a separation that brings about loneliness. Worse, however, than physical death of the body is spiritual death of the soul. Eternal death is everlasting separation from God in the awfulness of hell. Christ suffered as our Substitute, our Sacrifice and our Savior. He was forsaken by God so that we would never have to taste abandonment.



Jesus' torture and pain was not only physical and emotional, but most profoundly, it was spiritual. It has been said, "Jesus died of a broken heart," knowing all the sins of all people for all time. No wonder He cried out in total desperation and despair, "My God, why have you forsaken Me?" All suffering fades in comparison to that separation from God.

Because He took our place in that great "Divine Exchange," we need not fear being left alone ever again. He says, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age; I will never leave you nor forsake you." What a promise! As He never forsakes us, may we never forsake Him, but remain true and faithful to Him in life and in death.

— by Rev. John Skeie
Morris, Illinois

The fifth word —

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst (John 19:28).

Jesus was thirsty. This statement is made by a dying man whose body craved moisture. After beatings, after carrying a cross to Golgotha, after hanging from that cross for hours, Jesus' body was weak and dehydrated.

Here we see the **man** Jesus Christ on the cross.

The writer of Hebrews throughout his epistle makes the point clear: unless Jesus was a man, a man just like you and me, there is no hope for us to live a life pleasing to God. Because Jesus lived the life of a man and died the death of a man, we are assured that:

He intercedes for us before the Heavenly Father.

"Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).

He purchased our redemption.

"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12).

He provided for our sanctification.

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10).

He was an example of how a believer endures trials and resists sin.

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Hebrews 12:3-5).

Jesus will not fail you. He lived His life on this earth in the same kind of body that you and I have. Only a man can understand the weakness of man; only in Jesus does this knowledge abide in one God-man.

If you do not know Him, ask Jesus to come into your life and to begin making you into the kind of person that He wants you to be. He willingly allowed Himself to be hung on a cross just for you. He offers you all the blessings of eternal life because He understands and knows your need like no one else can.

—by Rev. Brian Davidson
Rice Lake, Wisconsin

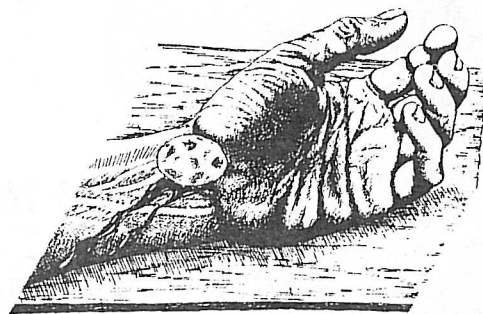
The sixth word —

When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the spirit (John 19:30).

There is no quote in human language to compare with: "It is finished." There is nothing to equal it in meaning and impact upon mankind. It is at this point that the Old Testament concludes and the New Testament begins. All that God had promised for the redemption of humanity from sin had now been successfully accomplished, according to His Word. A New Testament (Covenant) was being signed in His own blood on the cross.

In the beginning the promise was made to Adam and Eve on behalf of the race. It was on the strength of that promise that men and women believed throughout the Old Testament to the saving of their souls. The God-man would arrive in the fullness of time. "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation" (Zechariah 9:9).

Isaiah wrote, "He (God the Father) shall see the



travail of His (Jesus) soul and shall be satisfied." There was never any doubt these words would be uttered from the cross some 700 years later. And there was never a doubt that Jesus' sacrifice for sin would be accepted by the Father at His Throne of Grace where Jesus is now victoriously seated. May we rejoice in the words that God the Son uttered from the cross. That settled it once and for all. It is finished!

— by Rev. Wayne Hjermstad
St. Paul, Minnesota



The seventh word —

Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit (Luke 23:4-6).

These words of Jesus express a beautiful resolution of the struggle first introduced in the Garden of Gethsemane. It was here that our Lord sweat drops of blood as He experientially realized the load of our sins. Now, close to the end of His suffering, He expresses full confidence in God's perfect will by resigning His spirit into His loving Father's hands.

Psalm 31, which Jesus quotes, is identified as a psalm of complaint and praise. While parts of the psalm are complaints (not to be confused with grumbling or murmuring), the overall tone is to acknowledge deep appreciation for God's faithfulness and an earnest desire that His Name be praised. In this act of obedience and ultimate trust, Jesus brings glory to His Father. Certainly, God's Name is praised and His people are drawn to worship Him.

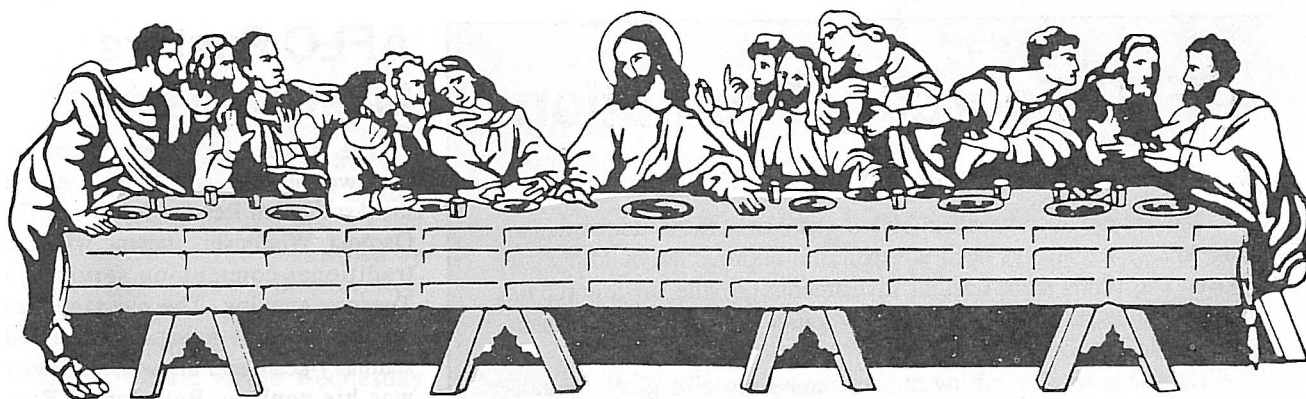
In addition to the beauty of the completion of the redemptive act, Jesus also illustrates a godly response to suffering. The Apostle Peter, reflecting years later on Jesus' Words on the Cross, instructs the Church to follow His example in times of suffering. In I Peter 2:23 he observes that "Christ ... kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously." Then, as he counsels the Church in the midst of suffering, he writes in I Peter 4:19, "Let those who suffer ... entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right."

Throughout the centuries, God's people have brought glory and praise to God in times of suffering as they have rejoiced in Christ's work on the cross, and furthermore have committed their spirits unto a faithful God. In this, too, let us take our stand "Beneath the Cross of Jesus." As we do so, the world will again rejoice in the revelation of God's glory, revealed by grace in His people.

— by Rev. Kenneth Moland
Kirkland, Washington

*For the message of the
cross is foolishness to those
who are perishing, but to us
who are being saved
it is the power of God.*

I Corinthians 1:18 (NIV)



Holy Week Worship for the Church or Home

TENEBRAE

A Service of Tenebrae is a traditional way to worship during Holy Week that may date back as far as the fourth century. Tenebrae, the Latin word for "shadows" or "darkness," describes a worship service that moves from light to darkness, symbolic of the death and burial of Jesus Christ. In the early church it was observed on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of Holy Week for the purpose of impressing upon the hearts and minds of Christians the darkness of human sin and the depth of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

The church sanctuary should be stripped of all signs of life or celebration. No flowers should be displayed, and the altar and cross are usually draped in black.

There are several options for the structure of the service, but one suggestion would be to center the worship order on a candle holder for seven candles (perhaps constructed by someone in the church). Each one of these candles would signify one of the Seven Last Words of Christ.

The singing of Lenten hymns should be inserted at appropriate intervals, including such solid favorites as "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded," "Go to Dark Gethsemane," "There is a Green Hill Far Away," "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," "Beneath the Cross of Jesus," "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross," "Alas, and Did My Saviour

Bleed," and "In the Cross of Christ I Glory." The Concordia Hymnal also contains several hymns that would be especially fitting: "A Way to Calvary

Leadeth" (176), "O Darkest Woe" (185), "Tis Finished!" (189), "Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted" (190), and "Ah, Holy Jesus" (192).

Order of Worship

Prelude Opening Prayer Hymn

Leader: Almost two thousand years ago a small procession arrived at Golgotha, the place of the skull. The city was Jerusalem, and the time was probably a little before nine o'clock in the morning. The purpose was to execute three criminals by crucifixion. First two thieves were fastened to their crosses. Then the Roman soldiers drove nails through the hands and feet of Jesus Christ into His cross, and raised up the cross and the crucified One to an upright position. Three crosses stood on Calvary's hill that day, with Jesus in the center. Crowds of people gathered to mock the men on the crosses, especially the One who claimed to be the Son of God. Jesus Christ spoke seven words from the cross on the day He died, and we hear them again today.

The First Word: Luke 23:34a

(the first candle is extinguished)

The Second Word: Luke 23:43

(the second candle is extinguished)

The Third Word:

John 19:26b-27a

(the third candle is extinguished)

The Fourth Word: Psalm 22:1

(the fourth candle is extinguished)

The Fifth Word: John 19:28b

(the fifth candle is extinguished)

The Sixth Word: John 19:30b

(the sixth candle is extinguished)

The Seventh Word: Psalm 31:5a

(the seventh candle is extinguished)

The church sanctuary is now in total darkness. Some congregations will serve Holy Communion before or after the candles are extinguished, and a message may also be included.

Families can readily adapt the Service of Tenebrae to their worship times, calling upon various family members to read the portions of Scripture and extinguish the candles one by one.

The day that Jesus Christ died was surely the darkest day in all history. A Service of Tenebrae may be a helpful aid to impress those who worship with a new realization of the grief and gloom of His suffering and death, as well as a preparation for the joy and celebration of Easter Sunday.

— RLL

AFLC February Promotion

Capital Investments

God has provided beautiful buildings for us at the Headquarters of the AFLC. We always need to repair and improve the buildings we have. The funds from Capital Investments provide for this repair. Capital Investments also provide a resource for repayment of loans on building projects.

The funds for Capital Investment come from gifts given by individuals and congregations. Loans from individuals and congregations also provide a resource for Capital Investments. Interest on a loan would be seven percent over a five-year period. There is a penalty of one percent if money is withdrawn before the end of a five-year period.

The funds for the 75 percent needed before we build the Administration Building do not come from the Capital Investment Fund. The monies for the Administration Building are through gifts given to the special building fund of "Rise Up and Build."

We praise God for what each one of you has done throughout the years in providing a beautiful headquarters and campus for our schools. Pray for God's leading as you remember Capital Investments with gifts and loans.

"Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name" (Psalm 100:4).

—by Pastor Les Galland
Chairman, Coordinating Committee

AFLC Pastors Meet at the ARC

The annual AFLC pastors' conference was held January 22-24, 1991, at the Association Retreat Center (ARC), Osceola, Wisconsin, opening with the traditional communion service on Tuesday evening. The message was preached by Rev. Amos Dyrud, retired seminary dean, and the worship leader was his nephew, Rev. James Rasmussen, Park River, North Dakota.

Bible study leader for the conference was Rev. Richard Anderson, Lakeville, Minnesota, who presented three devotional studies from the Book of Revelation, which he has been teaching to his congregation on Sunday mornings and at midweek services. Avoiding millennial controversies, he emphasized the timeless themes of the book and encouraged his fellow pastors not to neglect it.

Dr. Howard B. Franzen, Hastings, Nebraska, presented two timely lectures on the pastor's mental health. New to our fellowship, Dr. Franzen has served as a military and institutional chaplain, as well as a pastor and counselor, and was able to share many personal and practical insights with his fellow clergymen.



Rev. Richard Snipstead, AFLC president, Dr. Uuras Saarnivaara, Minneapolis, and Rev. Robert Lee, AFLC vice president were among the 168 registered for the Pastors' Conference.



The women's sessions were informal discussion times. Pictured here are: Mrs. James Asp, Mrs. Mauritz Lundeen, Mrs. Tonnes Pollestad and Mrs. Amos Dyrud.

The conference also featured two theological lectures on "The Lutheran Doctrine of Conversion" by Dr. Francis Monseth, seminary dean; a presentation entitled "Music in the Ministry of the Church" by our Bible School dean, Rev. Don Greven; and a panel discussion on church growth led by AFLC Home Missions Director, Rev. Elden Nelson.

Dr. Paul Zietlow, Milford, Illinois, was the speaker at the Wednesday night banquet, addressing the topic "Creative Approaches to Preaching" in a creative and challenging way.

Two sessions for pastors' wives were led by Mrs. Bennert Solberg (in place of Mrs. Vince Will, who was called away from the conference by the death of her mother), and the prayer times were conducted by Pastor James Asp and Lay Pastor Dale Finstrom.

It is good for our pastors to "come apart" and be refreshed through the various sessions as well as the fellowship. AFLC congregations are encouraged to make it a priority concern that their pastors might attend. As the number of pastors grows from year to year, this is often the only opportunity that our men have to get to know one another.

Pastors, mark your calendars for next January. See you there!



Rev. Ray Klug, Fairbury, Nebraska, attended the Pastors' conference for the first time.

God Owns All Things

Do you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. Therefore, honor God with your body (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

I want to continue the thought from my article in the last issue. There we discussed how we find our life by losing it in complete dedication of self to Christ.

I would like to have you think with me about what complete dedication to Christ involves. It must involve my whole self — my time, my talents, my treasures — to His service.

Time belongs to God. It is not a noble gesture on my part to dedicate my time to God. God has placed time in our charge and it becomes our responsibility to use it in a way that is pleasing to God. Most of us will have to admit that we dedicate a very small portion of our time to God's service. Our church attendance, daily prayer and Bible reading take up a very small portion of our time. Is God pleased that I use the rest of my time for basically personal pursuits?

Because we are stewards of time we must schedule our lives wisely. If we are to be ready instruments of service for God, we must of necessity be prepared instruments. That involves the care of our own soul. It means setting aside time to hear God's Word, to study it, and for prayer and meditation.

The stewardship of my time requires that I be willing to set aside time to serve God through my own church.

Our talents also belong to God. The ones I have, be they few or many, were given to me by God. They are a trust from God, again to be used as God wishes. The talent I use for God will grow and develop. The talent that I bury will lie dormant and render me ineffective in God's Kingdom.

What a privilege it is to be able to use our talents to serve God. It should cause a thrill to run through us to realize that God wants to use us. The particular talent or talents He has given me were given so that God could complete His purposes in the Kingdom.

Our treasures also belong to God. Someone has said that the last part of a man that is dedicated to God is his pocketbook. How easy it is for us to talk about our own possessions. The money we call our own does not belong to us. It belongs to God. He has simply allowed these possessions to be placed in our hands for a short time. They are not special gifts for our indulgence. The money I possess is entrusted to my care to be used in God's service. It is hard for us to admit that we are not the owners of our money, only the managers for a short time.

God compels no one to make a commitment of his time, talents or treasure to Him. What a privilege it is for us to make the commitment because the love of Christ constrains us. When we become fully aware of the blessings that God has bestowed on us, our response to God can come from a heart of gratitude.

God owns all. "Lord, make us faithful stewards."

— Richard Snipstead

Daily Devotional Books

The 1986 Annual Conference requested the Board of Parish Education to provide a list of devotional materials which are true to Lutheran doctrine. It was suggested that this list be published in *The Lutheran Ambassador*. From time to time the following lists of devotional materials will be printed. We welcome other suggestions of devotional materials which express the distinctive Lutheran emphasis on Law and Gospel and strengthen our understanding and appreciation for the Word, the Means of Grace and the Sacraments.

In response to this request, a list of devotional books has been compiled. We have listed these works in two sections; those now in print, together with publishers and prices, and those no longer in print.

In Print

A Faithful Guide to Peace with God by C.O. Rosenius. Recently reprinted by The Board of Parish Education — AFLC by a grant from Lutheran Brotherhood. A true classic of Lutheran devotional writing that speaks to the Christian life. An accurate handling of the Word of God, of Law and Gospel, that demands truth in the inward parts and leads to a peace that comes from God on the basis of faith. \$4.95.

Daily Walk with God by Herman W. Gockel. Concordia, 1982, \$10.95.

My Hand in His by H.W. Gockel. Concordia, 1961, \$6.50. Consists of 110 brief devotional readings, not coordinated with the year.

What Jesus Means to Me by H.W. Gockel. Concordia, 1956, \$4.95. A compilation of several longer devotional readings.

God's Word for Today by O. Hallesby. Augsburg, 1979, \$5.95.

Family Altar by Harry N. Huxhold. Concordia, 1964, \$12.95.

Little Visits with God by Jahsmann and Simon. Concordia, 1957, \$6.50. Primarily for families with small children.

More Little Visits with God by Jahsmann and Simon. Concordia, 1961, \$6.50.

Day by Day We Magnify Thee by Martin Luther. Fortress Press, 1982, \$10.95. Daily devotional readings arranged according to the church year.

Day by Day by Rudolph F. Norden. Concordia, 1985, \$10.95.

Light for the Way by Frank Starr. Concordia, 1986, \$2.95. Daily devotional Bible reading guide in four Old Testament and four New Testament books takes the reader through the Scriptures in two years. Historical background notes, brief commentaries and Gospel applications for daily life.

Out of Print

These Things I Remember by Gerhard E. Frost. Augsburg.

Walking with God by Martin Hegland. Augsburg.

Altar Steps by R. P. Haakonson. Lutheran Colportage. For families with children.

Two Minutes with God by Hoh and Hoh. Abingdon and Cokesbury. For families with small children.

Thy Kingdom Come by Ludvig Hope. Augsburg.

John Goszner's Treasury. Augsburg.

Book of Family Prayer by N.J. Lache. Augsburg.

Light and Life by pastors and lay people of the Lutheran Free Church.

Waters in the Wilderness by AFLC people.

Family on Maple Street by Erling Rolfsrud. Augsburg.

Happy Acres by Erling Rolfsrud. Augsburg.

Spirit and Power by Ludvig Hope. Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation. A limited number of copies are available from the Parish Education Office — AFLC.

On My Father's Knee by Fredrik Wisloff. Augsburg.

Sanctification by Ludvig Hope.

The Word of Truth by Samuel Miller.

Life in His Name by Samuel Miller.

Christ and His Cross by Samuel Miller.

The Believer Free from the Law by C.O. Rosenius. Lutheran Colportage.

Rosenius' Daily Meditations by C.O. Rosenius. Lutheran Colportage. Copies are available from the parish Education Office — AFLC, \$5.

I do not feel the resurrection of Christ, but the Word affirms it. I feel sin but the Word says that it is forgiven to those who believe. I see that Christians die like other men, but the Word tells me they shall rise again. So we must not be guided by our own feelings but by the Word.

— Martin Luther

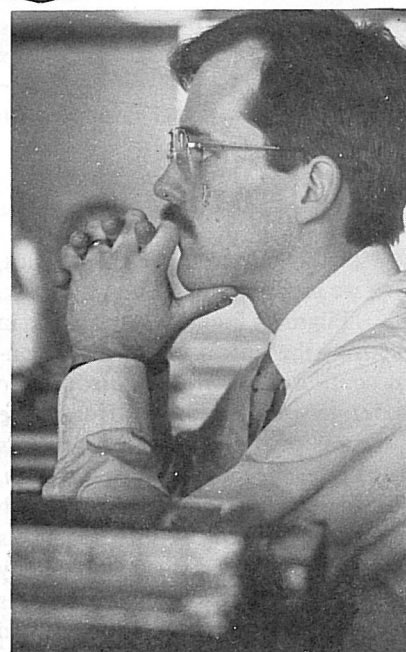
Missions Conference Held



Missionary Don Richardson, internationally known speaker and author, was the guest lecturer at the AFLC Missions Conference on February 1-2. The sessions were held on campus.



"The 4000 Year Connection" is the title of Don Richardson's seminar in which he traces the Biblical mandate for missions back to Genesis. The banner was painted by Seminarian Jonathan Abel.



Seminarian David Nelson managed the book table. Many mission related books were sold as an added benefit in attending the seminar. The large selection of books were provided by Missionary Richardson.



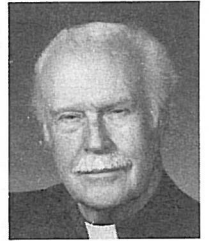
AFLBS students, Megan Hoff, Fergus Falls, Minnesota, and Matt Greven, Plymouth, Minnesota, served at the registration table during the conference.



Rev. Jay Weidner, AFLTS guest lecturer, is teaching "Lutherans in America," during the seminary's spring semester. Dr. Craig Jennings continues as a guest teacher at AFLBS. He is currently teaching "Reformation History."

The AFLBS Choir and Choral Club will be on tour March 16-29, throughout the southwestern U. S. and Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin. Watch local announcements and attend the concert in your area.

The Progress of the Pilgrim



—by Dr. Howard B. Franzen
Hastings, Nebraska

Through Fear

For this current series of articles, we are using John Bunyan's book, "Pilgrim's Progress," as a guide in studying the inner mental and emotional conflicts within the Christian. We refer to the Christian life as the progress of the Christian. Bunyan's book is an allegory, in which Christian, the prime character, progresses through life as in a dream. Christian begins his journey from Lost to Saved by recounting his dream. The book opens with these words: "I dreamed, and behold I saw a Man clothed in rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a Book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked, and saw him open the Book, and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he broke out with a lamentable cry, saying, 'What shall I do?'"

In the field of psychology, we speak of the unholy trinity of hate, fear and guilt, and greatest of these is fear.

John Newton wrote in his hymn "Amazing Grace" these words: "Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved."

Luther's Catechism states; "We should fear and love God." When my oldest daughter, as a child, first came into contact with this concept, she asked me how could she fear God whom she loved? She learned, then, that the fear of punishment was different from the fear of offending someone we love.

The fear of offending is a good, positive mental and emotional factor in life. On the other hand, the fear of punishment is an agony. It can incapacitate a person so as to destroy peace of mind, destroy relationships, and produce physical, mental and emotional ill health.

The basic antidote to fear is Love. The Lenten Season is a reminder that perfect love casteth out fear, and that "God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son ..."

Sigmund Freud, the father of psychiatry, spoke of angst, or anxiety. He called anxiety the closest companion of mental and emotional illness. Anxiety is the psycho-physical component of fear. It is that awful "gut-feeling" that overcomes one, yes, even the devout Christian. Anxiety is that awful feeling of dread, that "stomach-centered" tension of fearful fearing that cries out, "What shall I do?"

I once worked with an alcoholic patient whom I saw go through a cycle of victory and defeat. Every time he would recover from a drinking period he would pick up the pieces of his life, get a job, rent an apartment, buy a car and proceed to enjoy life. But then one day he would begin to dread a coming doom. He began to fear that God was angry because he was enjoying life and would punish him. So he would decide to punish himself and beat God to it. Consequently, he would go out, get drunk, and lose everything he had gained.

He could not seem to accept God's forgiveness nor Jesus' companionship for his life. Nor could he forgive himself.

Though fears are legion, we have concentrated on the fear John Bunyan wrote about; the fear of Divine punishment. The man in Christian's dream who was clothed in rags cried "What shall I do?" What shall anyone do who is so burdened? It may sound like an oversimplification to say, "Take it to the Lord and leave it there." But yet, that is it!

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

May I add, that today there are counseling clinics and medications that deal with anxiety. Seek out your pastor and your physician. Do not be afraid to back up your faith with the therapies in psychology and medicine. These, too, can be modern miracles from God.

My progress as a pilgrim through the Christian life, fraught with peril and problems, is eased when I know that Jesus took my punishment on the cross and there is "... therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 1:1).

from a
counselor's
study

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Romans 8:1

Television, Movies, Videos and You

By the time you are old enough to enter kindergarten you will have watched thousands of hours of TV. People today spend more time watching television than they do reading books! Rather than read the evening newspaper, they are found watching the news on TV.

Television does shape your life! It is a powerful influence in your life. You are learning quite a bit from TV! Since it was first introduced at the World's Fair in 1939, the number of families owning TV sets has really grown.

Now we not only have movies to attend and TV to watch, many of our homes have purchased video players.

We can watch movies at home now. While it is not the scope of this article to discuss the pros and cons of video watching, there is certainly an influence which can be seen.

Someone has called TV, videos and movies the "plug in" drugs of our society. We are becoming a nation which watches rather than participates.

The Bible tells us a thing in itself is not wrong. However, we would agree when it influences us in a negative way then it becomes wrong. We need to be aware of the effect such has on our lives.

Examine it and ask yourself how these things are affecting you. How are

these affecting your friends? Is it a "plug in" drug?

We need to learn how to use these things. How can they be used to be of help to us?

Talk about it at your next Luther League meeting. What do you think?

— *Pastor Dennis Gray*

AFLC Youth Resources Director

AFLC Luther Leaguers are busy planning and working on fund-raising projects for the National Luther League Convention, July 15-19, in Estes Park, Colorado. Our Leaguers need our encouragement and support.

Registrations for the convention is due April 1, 1991.

Schools Establish Scholarship from Borstad Estate

A gift of ten thousand dollars from the estate of the late H. Morris Borstad to the AFLC Schools has been established as a memorial scholarship fund for the benefit of students from both the Bible School and Seminary.

Borstad, a Tioga, North Dakota, attorney who served on the original "Seminary and Doctrine Committee" that first planned for our AFLC Schools, was also a legal advisor to the church body during some critical moments in our early history.

According to Dr. Francis Monseth, Dean of the Seminary, this scholarship fund will be "a wonderful reminder of a great figure in AFLC history."

(Editor's Note: H. Morris Borstad, who passed away in 1989, was a faithful friend of the AFLC. I served as his pastor for several years, and learned of his special love for our schools. We used to visit by phone regularly when I was a faculty member, and he always inquired about campus concerns. The seminary

interns and the Bible School students and graduates were a special source of joy to him, especially during his last years, which makes this scholarship fund a most fitting memorial. "... though he has died, he still speaks" Hebrews 11:4).

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences - February 1-January 31

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	REC'D IN JANUARY	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	%* TOTAL
General Fund	\$ 223,110.00	\$32,620.98	\$198,980.26	88
Schools - (AFLTS) . .	136,822.00	15,038.73	88,275.33	65
(AFLBS) . .	186,850.00	19,838.44	133,326.38	71
Home Missions.	433,616.00	54,418.79	301,794.53	70
World Missions.	366,197.00	65,869.84	287,380.95	78
Capital Investment . .	30,000.00	2,872.31	21,731.66	72
Parish Education . . .	64,970.00	7,884.91	49,766.32	77
TOTALS	\$1,441,565.00	\$198,544.00	\$1,079,255.43	75
1989 - 1990.	\$1,308,281.00	\$224,478.79	\$1,073,099.59	82

*Goal 100%

Many AFLC congregations have their own scholarship funds for their local youth who attend AFLBS. This has proven to be a great encouragement to numerous youth.

AFLBS Campus Days April 5-7

All Senior High Youth
are welcome guests
on the AFLBS campus.

Please contact the office
to pre-register.

3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd.
Plymouth, Minnesota 55411
(612) 544-9501

IT'S TIME TO PRAY

In these hours of war, we, the church must unite our hearts in prayer.

We are entering into the Lenten season, when we remember why Jesus left His holy reign to come to earth and be born of man. Jesus, Himself, faced all kinds of trials, and when faced with trials, what did He do? **He prayed.** Christ was and is our model for praying. He said to pray in His Name and all will be given unto us. Christ gave His life for us that we may live. **Not always in peace.** But we do know God is in control and we have His promise in Revelation 2:26, "To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations" (NIV). The United States was built on its belief in God and we profess that belief in our faith in the pledge to our flag "One nation under God."

So people, fellow Christians in Christ, now is the time to stand and be counted. Counted as a Christian, a warrior for Christ and the freedom to worship. It is truly time to pray.

Pray for Peace, Justice, Freedom and Uniting of Hearts in Love.

*Mrs. Kenneth (Sandy) Lehmann
St. John Lutheran Church of Schwer
Milford, Illinois*

ON ABORTION

I read this January 8 *Ambassador* with great interest. I, too, am very much against abortion. I was sure it is killing a human child.

However, I was disappointed not to see something written about the real cure for abortion. No woman, save Mary, got pregnant alone. **Every baby has a father.**

I'd say 85-90 percent of the people with real authority are men ... in our churches, legislatures, and in our courts. Why aren't they demanding men to exercise self-control and responsibility? Is it too easy to put all the blame on women? I think they share the blame. True, it is women who have the abortions (mostly performed by men — sometimes to great financial gain), but very few women with lov-

THE BLESSING OF THE ARC

The ARC has always been a very special place to me. I suppose that the wonderful staff and beautiful surroundings have been a part of the reason. But I believe that the main reason that the ARC is special to me is because of the presence of the Lord. Every time that I have had the privilege to be at the ARC, the preaching and teaching of the Word plus the fellowship of prayer has refreshed my weary heart.

Jesus said to the disciples in Mark 6:31: "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." The disciples were weary from the ministry and the Lord knew that they needed to go to an uninhabited place where they would not be disturbed. This time with the Lord Jesus to relax in a peaceful setting conferring with the Lord would refresh their spirits.

We need this same time alone with the Lord everyday but it is particularly wonderful when the Lord provides a place amidst His beautiful creation. That is the ministry of the ARC. It is a place where the song of birds fill the air and the rustle of the grass is the most hustle and bustle of the day. It is a place where the soul is ministered to. The ARC is good old-fashioned fellowship with family and friends revolving around the Lord. I never had such an opportunity growing up in my former church body.

I personally thank God for the

ing, supportive husbands have abortions.

The Bible teaches that God has placed men to be husbands and the heads of the homes and of the women. This gives them great responsibility also (Genesis 3:16). A woman is ruled over by men, and each man who comes to her has his responsibility too.

Thank you for an informative paper. May God bless you all.

*Barbara Hubner
Pipestone, Minnesota*

P.S. Let's stop abortion before pregnancy begins. This was God's plan for our happiness.

Association Retreat Center and pray that it will flourish and grow for many years. My own prayer is that my own family might grow up being able to be with the Lord during Family Camps at the ARC. *Come with Me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.*

*Rev. Harry Gimberg
DeKalb, Illinois*

COMING

West Coast Rally and Conference

The West Coast District WMF Rally and Mid-Winter Conference will be held at Calvary Lutheran Church in Everett, Washington, March 1-3. The theme for both conferences is *What God has Prepared for Those Who Love Him* (1 Corinthians 2:9).

The WMF Rally begins Friday morning at 9:30 a.m. with Linda Johnson from Elim Lutheran in Lake Stevens leading the Bible Study. Intern Jonathan Unverzagt from Triumph Lutheran in Ferndale will be the afternoon speaker.

The Mid-Winter Conference begins Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. with Pastor Steve Lombardo from the AFLC Seminary as guest speaker. He will also speak on Saturday morning and evening and also Sunday morning. Pastors and lay people from the district will also be taking part and the annual meeting of the district will be held Saturday afternoon.

Calvary Lutheran Church is located at 26th and Rockefeller in Everett, and David Hinrichs is the host pastor. For further information, please call (206) 252-6775.

Men's Retreat

February 22-24, 1991

"Men on Target"

ARC, Osceola, Wisconsin

Minneapolis District WMF Rally will be April 20, at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Zumbrota, Minnesota.

THE LENTEN WORD IN A BUSY WORLD

What does Lent mean? The dictionary declares that it is the period of forty weekdays from Ash Wednesday to Easter Eve, traditionally practiced by Christians as a time of fasting and penitence. The root of the word itself refers to the lengthening of days in the spring, and it relates to several words that signify a slowing down.

What does Lent mean to the modern church in the midst of a busy world? Perhaps even the word itself has a word for us.

Slow down, believers, and discover the blessing of Lent. Walk with Christ in the Word on the way to Calvary. Slow down and take time for special devotional reading and for the midweek Lenten services in your churches.

The hymnwriter invites us in these familiar words: Go to dark Gethsemane and learn of Jesus Christ to pray ... Follow to the judgment hall and learn of Him to bear the cross ... Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb and learn of Jesus Christ to die.

Slow down, pastors, and feed your own souls during the days of Lent. Our busy flocks are hungry, and need nothing more than a simple word from the heart with a focus on our suffering Saviour. Don't worry about having something new to declare; pray that the Lord would let you proclaim the old, old story with renewed delight.

The Lenten word lifts up the cross, and never has our busy world been more in need of its benediction.

A WORLD AT WAR

One of the editorials in the October 30th issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador*, entitled "Signs of the Times," stated that informed sources speculate about when, not if, there will be war. The speculation has sadly become reality.

The nations of the world stand together in almost one accord against a savage aggressor. Saddam Hussein must be stopped, and the United Nations sanctions against Iraq did not seem to be successful enough to force the invaders from Kuwait. Our president and other world leaders came to the painful conclusion that war could no longer be avoided if the goal of peace is to be gained.

Our insights into the problems of the Persian Gulf conflict are imperfect. Perhaps some of our readers disagree with a military solution to the present crisis. Probably the majority are persuaded that warfare was inevitable under the current circumstances.

But the military action must be translated into the loss of lives, and surely none of our congregations are untouched by this dark side of a world at war in the Middle East. Sons and daughters are called to serve our country in strange lands, and some will not return. The price of peace is a heavy burden to bear.

Remember to pray for our service men and women in the Middle East, and for the chaplains who minister to them. May each of them experience life in the Prince of Peace.

Let us continue to pray that peace may be restored soon to our wounded world, perhaps even before this issue is published.

Grant it, O Lord!

MERCY KILLING?

The case of Nancy Cruzan caused our nation to focus in a new way on what it means to die with dignity. After a three-year legal battle, her parents were allowed to order the removal of her hospital feeding tube, after which the comatose young woman lived for only three more days. Most of the media reports failed to mention the outrage of staff members who cared for Nancy at the decision to allow her to die of starvation.

The fearful consequences of our society's contempt for the sanctity of human life come even closer to home with the case of Hilda Wanglie, Minneapolis, which was featured in national news reports last month. Mrs. Wanglie is the wife of Oliver Wanglie, a retired attorney who represented the AFLC during early legal difficulties in the 1960s.

A legal battle to remove all life-support systems from Mrs. Wanglie, an 87-year-old stroke patient, is ready to begin. However, unlike the Cruzan case, the Wanglie family is firmly opposed to the proposed mercy killing, citing her conviction that only God should have the choice to end a human life.

Since news reports state that finances are not an issue, it is even more frightening to consider the state's involvement in this matter, contrary to a patient's faith and a family's desires.

Readers of *The Lutheran Ambassador* are urged to follow this case with prayerful concern, and to express this concern as Christian citizens to the appropriate authorities.

Changes, Changes!

This issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador* marks the introduction of a new cover design, the fifth in the life of our church magazine. A distinctive feature is the prominence of the AFLC logo, which is becoming more and more the accepted emblem of our fellowship. Other changes include the masthead on the second page and the "tags" for the regular features (for which we are considering some new titles). Thank you for all the words of encouragement that we have received, as well as for your patience with two new editors. Your comments are always welcome.

SCRIPTURES SUPPLIED FOR SOLDIERS IN MIDDLE EAST

New York — The American Bible Society is responding to new requests from the Pentagon Chaplains Board for more Scriptures for military personnel in Saudi Arabia.

Colonel Meredith R. Standley, executive director of the U.S. Armed Forces Chaplains Board, contacted the American Bible Society (ABS) in early January, requesting that the production of desert camouflage-covered Scriptures be doubled, said James Ray, ABS national field director. The Pentagon, he said, has asked for 50,000 Scriptures, in addition to the 50,000 already received.

"The ABS has agreed, and a new appeal to fund this need is already being planned," noted Mr. Ray. With this additional appeal, the ABS will have provided 148,000 Bibles and New Testaments for military personnel in Saudi Arabia to date.

Officials arranged for the service men and women being deployed to receive the Scriptures. One regimental chaplain wrote that the Bibles sent to his group "arrived just in time to make it into my fly-out gear ... praise the Lord for the gift of His Word."

(ABS News Release)

KOREA — "I believe that in the next ten years, one of history's greatest revivals is going to take place in our area. It is my strong conviction that 80 percent of the people in North Korea will become Christians when they are given freedom — complete freedom — in the next ten years." Kim Joon Gon, chairman of the Korean Evangelical Fellowship, made these comments at a fall mission conference, calling for the recruitment of 100,000 Korean Christian students to be ready when the door opens to the north. (From *World Pulse*, October 26, 1990)

MONGOLIA — A complete translation of the New Testament into Mongolian was completed last year, after eighteen years of labor, by John Gibbens, an Englishman, and his Mongolian wife Altaa. He also announced this nation, which has been closed to

Christian workers since 1920, has opened the door to Christian development workers. People International has already received permission to establish an eye clinic in April, 1991, at Ulan Bator, the capital city. (From *World Pulse*, October 26, 1990)

WASHINGTON D. C. (EP) — Despite hours of debate over obscenity and pornography, the House of Representatives voted to fund the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) for another three years — even increasing the amount of funding by \$9 million. A proposal to disallow government funding of projects such as child pornography and flag desecration was defeated. Although the measure does require grant recipients to return federal money if they are convicted of violating obscenity standards, none of the artworks funded by the NEA that have stirred the recent outcry have been found obscene by a court.

ISRAEL — In the face of rising anti-Semitism and economic hardship, record numbers of the Soviet Union's 1.8 million Jews continue to emigrate. The number of Soviet immigrants arriving in Israel topped 20,000 per month last October and continues to rise. Close to 180,000 Soviet Jews were expected to arrive by the end of

NEW YORK, NY (EP) — Leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Episcopal Church has proposed a plan that would bring their churches into closer union, but would stop short of a merger.

Under the proposal, the two denominations would retain separate organizational and governing structures, but would recognize their clergy as interchangeable, and would permit members to receive communion and other sacraments in churches of either denomination.

Edmond L. Browning, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, called the proposal "a historic agreement." Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom of the ELCA warned that the proposal could face stiff opposition from Lutherans.

The proposed "Concordat of Agreement" urges the Episcopal Church to recognize the "full authenticity of the ordained ministries presently existing" in the ELCA. It also urges the ELCA to begin ordaining bishops for life, and to agree that only bishops can ordain clergy.

Church leaders hope the proposal can be approved at Episcopal and Lutheran assemblies in 1994 and 1995.

last year; 400,000 are expected in 1991. The influx is creating critical shortages of housing and employment.