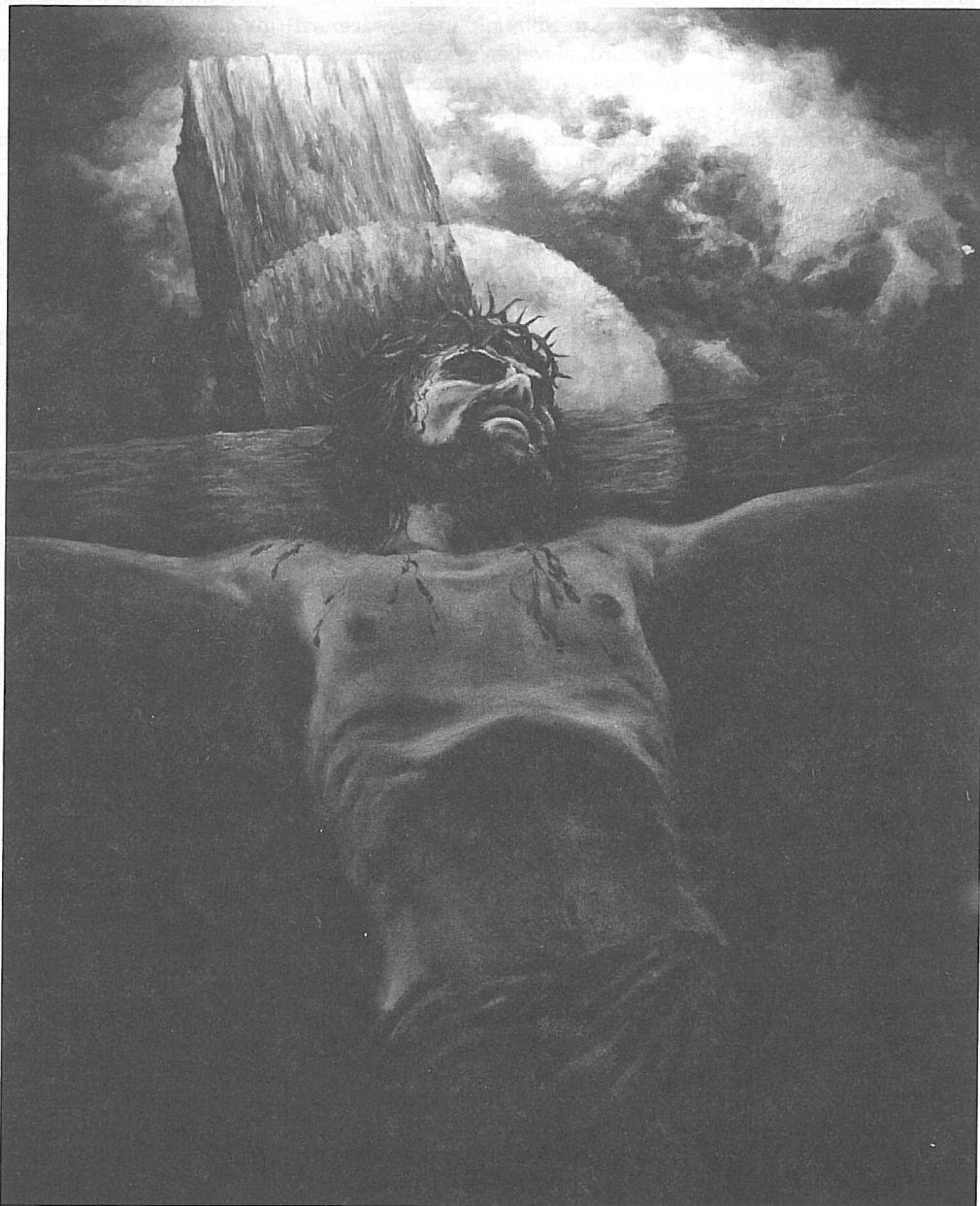


THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

March 24, 1987



Richard Gorsuch, artist

Joel Strasser, photography

at the MASTER'S FEET

Remembering repentance

Someone has wisely said that "the thing that is the foundation of our theology is most likely to be the thing that we abuse the most." As Lutherans we stand on the conviction that Paul expressed beautifully when he quoted the words of the prophet Habakkuk: "But the righteous man shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17).

God offers us the opportunity to know Him by faith because of His marvelous grace that He poured out upon us through the death and resurrection of His Son. God's grace is sufficient for and greater than even our sin. His grace reaches back into the past and cleanses my unrighteousness. His grace extends into the future to cover those sins that I do not have the opportunity to repent of.

Some people cannot sleep at night because of the fear that death will come and they will not have repented of every sin. Others go through daily rituals hoping that ritualistic acts will "keep them safe" and they will go to heaven. God invites us to "*relax*" in His grace.

The Lord, however, does not want us to be "*lax*" about His grace. Have you ever had the experience, that in a moment of time you come to the sharp realization that it has been literally days since you asked the Lord for forgiveness and truly repented of your sins, sins you know you committed?

As we continue in the season of Lent, let us be reminded of its theme of "reflective contemplation." The apostle John takes six verses in his first epistle to remind us of the need to "keep short accounts with God" by daily thinking through the reality that we are sinners and need to be forgiven for our sin. While God's grace will always be sufficient for all sin, there exists the need to openly and honestly and specifically admit sin to the Lord and accept His promise that as we confess our sin, "He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Dr. Martin Luther, writing concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, points out that to believe the words: "Given and shed for you, for the remission of sins," means . . . "that we heartily feel our sin and unworthiness before God, but also that we confidently accept for ourselves the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."¹

On more than one occasion I have found myself at the end of a day concluding my prayers with what almost seems to be a trite request, "and please forgive

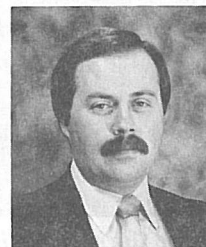
my sins, Amen." What were those sins? Have I thought it through and come to the place where I believe that my relationship to the Lord is worth the time it takes to earnestly recount my transgressions and sincerely implore His forgiveness?

A number of years ago a popular hit film made the statement: "Love means you never have to say you're sorry." What a sad commentary on how easy it becomes for us to hurt our Lord or those around us and not seriously feel repentance and sorrow for our sin. Real love will compel us to want to say we are sorry and admit that we were indeed wrong.

In all of the Christian life we need balance! That balance will involve living in honesty before the Lord, openly acknowledging when we have sinned, and repenting of it. It will also involve asking the Holy Spirit to bring us to that place where we realize that we are saved and forgiven by grace and that God's grace is sufficient for yesterday, today and always.

Our Gospel is a gospel of grace. Let's be earnest in how we accept that grace and apply it to our lives. Church history would indicate that revival starts with prayer, prayer that has at its heart a desire to confess and repent of sin.

¹ *Luther's Small Catechism Explained*, The Board of Parish Education of The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 1963, paragraphs 375, 376.



by Pastor
Robert Lewis

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Volume 25 Number 6

Once a symbol of shame

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself. But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die" (John 12:32, 33).

As we look at these verses of Scripture we see what we might term the "magnetic" strength of the cross as through it God draws men to Himself. Prior to the death of Christ the cross was viewed as a symbol of shame; the Romans reserved it for the vilest of criminals — for them it was repulsive. Cicero writes, "Let the very name of the cross be far away not only from the body of a Roman citizen, but even from his thoughts, his eyes, his ears." But Jesus has turned that symbol of shame into one of strength and power — a symbol that draws us to God. The Apostle Paul speaks of these two ways of viewing the cross when he writes, "The word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18).

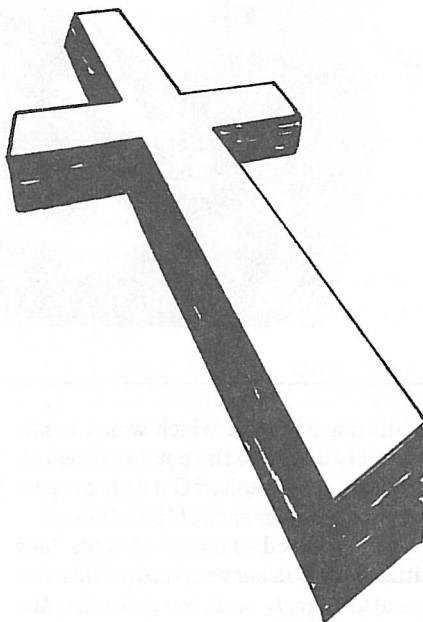
As we consider the "magnetism of the cross" we realize that God is using the cross and the One lifted up on it, Jesus Christ, to draw us to Himself. That drawing is displayed in several ways, all of which lead us ultimately to God.

First of all, the cross draws us to *repentance*. On the cross we see the supreme act of God's love demonstrated in the death of Jesus in our place. God says to us, in Jer. 31:3, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have *drawn* you with lovingkindness." As we see the love of God displayed on the cross, we are moved to respond to that love; we confess, as the songwriter, "It should have been me!" As we observe the innocence of the suffering of Christ, we are led to confess our guilt. The Word of God tells us, in Romans



by Pastor
Leslie Johnson,
Lake Alma, Sask.

THE MAGNETISM OF THE CROSS



"Prior to the death of Christ the cross was viewed as a symbol of shame . . ."

2:4, that it is the love of God that leads us to repentance. God's love and kindness are clearly seen on the cross and as we see this we are led to declare our unworthiness and repent of our sin.

Having drawn us to repentance, the cross draws us to *faith*. Paul tells us, in Romans 10:17, "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." In our catechisms, Luther speaks of the Holy Spirit who "calls me through the Gospel;" and what is the message of that Gospel? It is the good news that

Jesus died on the cross in our place to pay the penalty for our sin. In the second chapter of Acts, we see how Peter preached a Gospel sermon that led 3,000 souls to the Lord and we see that the theme of his sermon was the death of Jesus on the cross. Paul's message to the church at Corinth was "Jesus Christ and Him crucified". And so it is today; if men are to be led to a saving relationship with their God, they must hear the good news that Jesus Christ has been lifted up to die on the cross to pay the penalty for their sin so that "whoever believes may in Him have eternal life" (Jn. 3:15).

"For the Christian, the purification from sin is an ongoing process that lasts a lifetime."

Next, we see how once we have been saved the cross draws us to *sanctification*. In Titus 2:14, we read that Jesus died on the cross so "that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession." For the Christian, the purification from sin is an ongoing process that lasts a lifetime. Again, it is the cross of Christ that provides this cleansing power that we need. Paul tells us, in Romans 6, that "our old self was crucified with Him (Jesus), that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin" (vs. 6), and "now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification" (vs. 22). As we seek to grow in our personal holiness here on earth we must look to the cross where Jesus gained the victory over sin once and for all. If we look inward to find our goodness, we can



O Perfect Life of Love

O perfect life of love!
All, all is finished now:
All that He left His throne above
To do for us below.

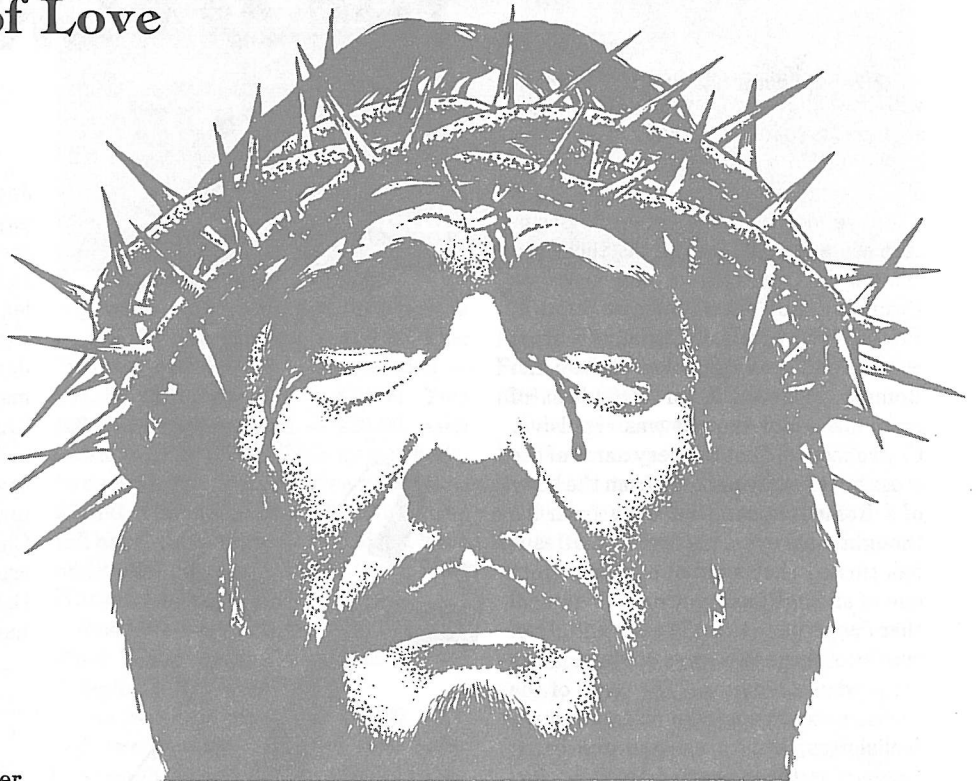
No work is left undone
Of all the Father willed;
His toil, His sorrows, one by one,
The Scriptures have fulfilled.

No pain that we can share
But He has felt its smart;
All forms of human grief and care
Have pierced that tender heart.

In perfect love He dies;
For me He dies, for me;
O all-atoning Sacrifice,
I cling by faith to Thee.

Work, then, O Lord, in me,
As Thou for me hast wrought;
And let my love the answer be
To grace Thy love has brought.

Henry Williams Baker
(from *The Hymnal-Augustana*)



CROSS . . .

only declare as Paul did, "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! (Rom. 7:24, 25a). We *must* look to the cross, where our sin is forever nailed!

The cross also draws us to *service*. In II Corinthians 5:15, we read that Jesus "died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf." Having experienced the love of God in our lives, we are motivated to return that love to God as we willingly serve Him in His kingdom. Having met the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, Paul asked the question, "What shall I do, Lord?" From that time forward he referred to himself as a "bond-servant of Jesus Christ," a term that spoke of the love that Paul had for his Savior as he served Him on earth. We, too, as we observe the love of our Jesus on the cross are drawn to gladly serve Him in our lives.

Finally, the cross draws us to *our home*. Philippians 2:8, 9 speaks of the

exaltation of Christ which was a result of His obedience to the point of death on the cross. This exalted Christ is preparing a mansion for each of His followers.

As redeemed children of God, "our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we also eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory" (Phil. 3:20, 21). This is the destination to which the cross draws us, to the very *presence* of our Savior where we will eternally sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing" (Rev. 5:12). Jesus said, "If I be lifted up . . . (I) will draw all men to Myself." The death of Christ on Calvary's cross has as its goal the bringing of many sons to glory! This is the

"Are you clinging
to the 'Old Rugged Cross'
as you are eternity-bound?"

"magnetism of the cross," the bringing and drawing together — "the summing up of all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10).

Dear reader, as we focus on the cross in the midst of this Lenten Season, has God drawn you through the cross of His Son? Has the love of God displayed there led you to repent of your sin and respond to Jesus — *your substitute* — in faith? Do you flee to the cross daily in repentance and there dedicate yourself to serve the Lord who loves you with an everlasting love? Are you clinging to that "Old Rugged Cross" as you are eternity-bound? In short, have you opened to the nail-scarred hands that knock at your heart's door and been led by them back to a right relationship with your God?

May God grant each of us grace to confess as did the beloved hymnwriter:

"I take, O cross, thy shadow
For my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than
The sunshine of His face;
Content to let the world go by,
To know no gain or loss,
My sinful self my only shame,
My glory all the cross."

by Pastor Fredrik Wisløff

He went out, bearing His own cross" (John 19:17).

A restless procession is moving through the world, a procession of thousands, millions of people, of all races and all times. It speeds on in feverish haste. It sweeps others along in its swirling torrent. Eyes blaze with the fire of covetousness; the goal is one: to enjoy and to possess. A person destroys happiness in his search for fortune; in the ceaseless chase after glitter and splendor a man forgets life's true values. And covetousness strikes out in blazing hatred. If someone comes in the way he is trampled underfoot. The greatest law is the right of the strong. Everything must give way to the demands of self, and the desires of the flesh, for the glitter of gold and glory's wreath. — So man presses on to the end of life. In spite of failing eyesight, covetousness burns on till the eyes grow dim in eternal night. Even if the hand is shaking it reaches out unsteadily in desire for life's laurels, and then drops down — disappointed for eternity; for the wreath of glory was made up only of withered flowers.

There is a *quiet procession* moving through the world. Before it walks He who carries His cross. Despised, spit upon and thorn-crowned, with the accursed tree upon His bloody back. He for whom life's goal is to be a sacrifice — to give His people life by dying Himself. He, the great sign of offence, for His weapon a cross, for His heart foolishness, a rock of offence and a stone of stumbling. Surrounded by the laughter and scorn of the multitude, He quietly walks the holy way of sacrifice, bearing His cross on His way of suffering.

And after Him walks a little flock, also today, through the world's tumult. Despised and scorned like their Master, they bear their crosses gladly and quietly. There aren't many mighty or wealthy, not many of the world's great or wise, but a poor, unknown, humble people who seek their refuge in the Lord's name. With hearts cleansed in the blood of the Lamb, they follow quietly in the Master's footsteps, waiting joyfully for the marriage of the

Lamb. When love and faith grow weary, then hope points to the end of the way; there the beautiful crown awaits them — a wreath of glory for a furrowed brow — a gift from Him who wore the crown of thorns.

Via Dolorosa is the way of suffering — the heavy way to the place of execution. The pavement stones in Jerusalem's streets that day felt two burning hot feet and its dry earth was watered by drops of blood from a back which had been scourged and a torn brow. Every step Jesus took here was boundless suffering. The weight of the cross was all the world's sins. Also mine and yours! And that cross was laid on Him who had been robbed of His strength through a terrible night, through the appalling suffering of scourging with blows and wounds, and through an agony of spirit which we can never understand. No wonder He fell under the burden — as His last strength was used up under your cross and mine.

"A way to Calv'ry leadeth

From dark Gethsemane,

May ev'ry one behold Him

Who weary walks that way.

The way doth lead to perfect bliss,

But a way of pain it is.

In nameless woe our Savior

Here pass'd with troubled breath,

His heart of tender mercy

That day was pierced to death.

The way doth lead to perfect bliss,

But a way of pain it is."

Our Bible tells us a couple of incidents which cast small rays of light over that sorrowful way.

We find here the first sign of human compassion. A group of women followed Jesus, weeping. Perhaps He had helped them sometime or healed their sick, or blessed their children. And now they see His boundless suffering and break out in weeping.

Through all the ages there have been those who have followed Jesus in His suffering with tears in their eyes. The little child in mother's lap has sat and heard about His suffering until his eyes grew large and tear-filled and at last a

From the files of *Folkebladet*,
April 2, 1930

THE WAY OF SUFFERING

tear fell down his face. And the grown-up always feels the ache of compassion when he thinks of the Man of Sorrows.

(A hymn stanza is omitted here.)

Then Jesus turned to the flock which followed Him weeping. He forbids them to cry. Surely what they did made His heart feel good. He longed for sympathy (see, for example, the Gethsemane experience). But He spoke to them about the right kind of weeping: that is, to weep over one's self, not over Him. Salvation isn't to be found in a sympathetic heart, in a grasp of religious things, in esthetic feeling. It is the weeping over one's own sins, the longing after God who brings salvation — that is the weeping Jesus looks for. The joy of salvation is born through tears.

The other ray of light over the way of suffering is Simon of Cyrene. He bends his strong neck under the cross and carries it on to the place of execution. To be sure, he was constrained to do so, but he *did* it, at any rate. And behind Simon four large boyish eyes noticed. They saw the women who cried; perhaps their mother was among them. And that struck them perhaps so that their eyes were glistening. And so they followed Him, step by step, a safe distance back of Father. And the two small-boy hearts beat with sympathy over Him who had to suffer. A child has more of sense of justice than an adult. —And



And He died for all,
that those who live
might live no longer
for themselves
but for Him
who for their sake
died and was raised.

—II Corinthians 5:15



SUFFERING . . .

when Jesus fell they stood there speechless and perplexed. Then it was that the soldiers called out to Father and said he should carry the cross and Father went forward and put the cross on his shoulder and carried it. Then I think that I see the two boys rejoice. No one was so strong and good as Father! And they ventured ever closer, right up to Jesus who walked by Father's side. And they looked from Father to Jesus and from Jesus to Father; and in the glances there was a mixture of compassion and pride and joy; how great that Father, *their father*, could lessen the suffering of Jesus and bear His cross.

Later on we meet them as Christian men out in the congregations, undoubtedly leading men in the work of proclaiming the message of the cross — and that even in Rome (Mk. 15:21, Rom. 16:13).

What a boy hears, he often soon forgets. Even if he has heard it from his father. The boy who not only hears his father preach and talk, but also sees him bend himself under the cross of Jesus, that boy is influenced by it for life.

As a boy I stood by my grandfather's grave. Grandpa was an old pastor who had given his life in the service of God's

kingdom and at his casket many great and good words were said about him. I had always had great respect for Grandpa, but that day I thought that Grandpa must have been one of Norway's greatest men. —Now I have forgotten everything that was said except for one sentence; and I will remember it as long as I live. It was the most important thing that was said about him that day. When all the remarks had been given, Father stood by the grave to express thanks to all who had gathered, after the Norwegian custom, and he said, "Many good and beautiful things have been said about Father today, but the greatest thing about him was this: *Father was a Christian at home.*"

Fortunate the father who gets such an epitaph. That is the greatest that can be said about a man; what matters good ability, good gifts as speaker, great talents as a leader, etc., if it can't be said, "Father lived Christ at home?"

—Translated from Norwegian
(The late Pastor Fredrik Wisløff, author of the marvelous devotional book *Rest A While* and other works, is not to be confused with Dr. Carl Fredrik Wisløff, present day theologian in Norway, who will be guest lecturer at the 1987 Summer Institute of Theology at the Association Seminary.)

Our hymn study

Concordia, No. 167

Bernard of Clairvaux, 1091-1153

Paul Gerhardt, 1656

Tr. James W. Alexander, 1830

Tune: PASSION CHORALE

Hans Leo Hassler, 1601

Arr. F. Melius Christiansen, 1907

The life of Bernard of Clairvaux is one of the most noble stories in the Church's history. Born in a castle, his father was a knight and his mother a pious woman of saintly character who raised her seven children in the image of Jesus. His mother died when he was 22 but her instruction and direction survived in Bernard who immediately set out to lead his family into the richness of life in Christ. Soon his entire family, including his father and uncle, about 30 noblemen in all, entered a monastery in their native France. Bernard was an enormously gifted man and was quickly appointed to head up a new order. The 24-year-old leader and a group of 12 followers established Clairvaux (Valley of Light), a highly disciplined order that was to be the main religious power in Europe for 300 years.

Bernard never relaxed his ethic to work. If not reading, praying, teaching or preaching, he was farming, milking or clearing the land of stumps. His mind became so keen he was consulted by kings, emperors and popes who invariably followed his advice. He even settled a war, with leaders on both sides being won by his reason and eloquence. He interceded in theological squabbles and convinced the brilliant debaters that what counts most in God's sight is a life of holiness, simplicity, devotion, prayer and ministering to the physical and spiritual needs of others. This is the man that Luther called "the greatest monk that ever lived."

It is easy to visualize this pious and devoted man of nearly a thousand years ago kneeling alone on the stone floor of his cell, gazing intently upon the cross bearing the crucified Lord and Savior. From that fervent devotion came his vivid Passion Hymn in which he meditated on the agony of Jesus' suffering. He wrote about the sacred head, hands, feet, knees, side, breast, face and heart of Jesus as He hung on the cross. The



O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

devotion is 350 lines long. (For other parts of this devotion see #181 and #188.)

"And after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying 'Hail, King of the Jews!' And they spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head" (Matt. 27:29-30). See also Isaiah 53.

O sacred Head, now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, Thine only crown;
O sacred Head, what glory
What bliss, till now was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory,
I joy to call Thee mine.

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered
Was all for sinners' gain;
Mine, mine was the transgression,
But Thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve Thy place;
Look on me with Thy favor,
Vouchsafe to me Thy grace.

What language shall I borrow
To thank Thee, dearest Friend,
For this, Thy dying sorrow,
Thy pity without end?
O make me Thine forever;
And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never,
Outlive my love to Thee.

Be near when I am dying,
O show Thy cross to me;
Lord, on Thy help relying,
Come Thou and set me free.
These eyes, new faith receiving,
From Jesus shall not move,
For he who dies believing,
Dies safely through Thy love.

Bernard's original hymn is powerful and searching, but Gerhardt's rendition (based on Bernard's devotions, significantly changed to merit credit as the author) is even more powerful and profound because it has drawn from the deeper well of evangelical Lutheranism and pure doctrine.

The masterful translation from German to English was done by Dr. James Waddell Alexander, an accomplished scholar, teacher and preacher. The son of an eminent theologian, Dr. Archibald Alexander, James was only 13 when he entered Princeton and 16 when he graduated with honors. He immediately entered Princeton Theological Seminary but interrupted his progress toward a ministerial career to accept a professorship at College of New Jersey, a post he served for only two years. Upon earning his ordination he alternated as a parish pastor and professor (including his alma mater, PTS), finally settling at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City where he labored until his untimely death in 1859 at age 55.

His literary contributions are too enormous to recite here; suffice it to say he was prolific as well as profound. One notable effort was 30 volumes for the American Sunday School Union.

For more on Bernard of Clairvaux, see #101.

For Paul Gerhardt, see #112.

PASSION CHORALE was written by Hans Leo Hassler, one of Germany's earliest classical musicians and among those credited with relocating musical leadership from Italy to Germany. Although he composed more sacred music than secular, he was not in the employment of the Church; he was a "court" musician and served various noblemen at Augsburg, Nuremberg (his birthplace), Ulm and Dresden. This tune was originally written for a tender, sad love song that began "My peace of mind is shattered by a tender maiden's charms." Later it was set to a sacred text called "My Heart Is Filled With Longing," and finally to "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded." While Hassler is credited as the composer, some musicologists say the original source for the tune is an 8th century medieval hymn.

It has undergone a lot of modification through the years, especially in its rhythm and harmony. This setting bears little resemblance to Hassler's. This is basically Bach's. He considered this tune a favorite; there is no other that he used as frequently: five times in the "St. Matthew Passion" (the work most commonly regarded as the greatest musical composition of all time), twice in "Christmas Oratorio," in five different cantatas, and sundry preludes for organ.

A hymnal without this text and tune is hollow and unfit since it deprives its users of one of God's most precious gifts to the Church.

For F. Melius Christiansen, see #247.

—Don Rodvold

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with His stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:5

I want to grow, Lord!

by Mrs. Richard (Clara) Gunderson,
Lake Stevens, Wash.

What hinders me?

The truth laid out so plainly by Jesus, but no courage to lay hold of it! Oh, friend, don't you see? All these years you have been trying to keep the commandments, yet you lack, you lack! What? Jesus knew what you lacked! "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess, and give it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Mark 10:21).

Do you remember that Jesus spoke like words to Martha when the *hindrance of an anxious spirit* and, yes, the *hindrance of comparison* prevented her from being what Jesus wanted her to be?

How quickly I see the need of this man and this woman, the need to change. How blind I can be to my own need of the same in my walk with the Lord. I have been reminded of this recently as I was part of the West Coast Winter Bible Conference, which continued the emphasis on revival that our AFLC is emphasizing this year. How quickly I agree that the church needs revival! And, yes, that *I* do, too! But will I *allow* it? When the Spirit convicts me of sin, will I go further than the step of confession? Will I allow changes to take place? The young man to whom Jesus was speaking in Mark 10 went away sad; it hurt too much to change. I wonder, did Martha find freedom in change?

Long years of being in church, both in times of eagerness and out of habit, just fulfilling my Christian duty, have made me complacent with ears that do not always hear what the Spirit is saying to His people. How many years have I not known that in true repentance I have to turn and walk the opposite direction

from where I was headed? When my children tell me they are sorry for something done for the second, third, or fourth time I assure them of forgiveness but also tell them that they *must* change. Growing up, I say, means you assume responsibility for changing. Physically, your body grows, each limb, each member; mentally, your attitudes change as knowledge is gained. Why, then, do I settle for stunted growth spiritually? And I *am* stunted when I hold back from yielding to God's Spirit.

First, God's Word and then the Catechism teach that conviction of sin and repentance are the work of the Holy Spirit. Surely, I must see, then, that my refusal to change (and my *not* changing must be viewed as refusal, whether verbalized or not) means I am resisting the very power of God which I claim I want. I say I want revival in my life, but then I walk away from it. And if you are understanding and saying "amen" to this, it is no wonder our prayers for the church are not being answered!

“ . . . my refusal
to change . . . means
I am resisting
the very power
of God which I
claim I want.”

I remember as a youth being at Bible camps and in special meetings where the Spirit of God spoke clearly to me and my heart would be bursting with desire to yield completely. "Let go and let God have His wonderful way," we would sing. "Let go and let God have His way . . ." "Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me; melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me" was sung from a heart longing that it would be so. But too often, back away from the Christian community the old, willful ways would become the norm. And the revived heart and will would cool down. My heart, prepared to receive and yield to God's Word in the warm atmosphere of

Bible camp, would allow the Word to be choked out when not bathing in the warmth of other Christians. This is a youth's experience, Lord; may not the hindrance of refusal to change be mine now!

What *today* hinders me from being revived? Is God's Spirit not moving? Does not this very Spirit of God live within me? Has He changed His purpose of sanctification in my life. Can I decide, can I pick and choose which promptings of the Holy Spirit I want to yield to? In Stephen's sermon (Acts 7), he says, in verse 51, that they are "stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears," "*Always resisting the Holy Spirit.*" I remember how I first responded to the phrase "circumcision of the heart," as mentioned in Deuteronomy 10:16 and 30:6. It is so graphic to picture the cutting away of the sin so that I can love the Lord with all my heart and soul. As Stephen says, to have my ears circumcised! To be one who hears what the Spirit is saying! Without both heart and ears treated in this way I will be stiff-necked and unchanging.

Lenten season always causes me to think more deeply about my sin and the wonderful love of Jesus that frees me from the condemnation of this sin. Yes, the truth of the death of Jesus for me is laid out so plainly, the truth of His resurrection to free me from death is plain for me to see in God's Word. The truth of my own need to respond to what changes He wants in my life is plainly spoken in His Word. And the question will continue: Do I have the courage to change and walk in His light? Or will refusal to change and yield be the hindrance that keeps me from being all that He has in mind for me to be?

A DEATH FOR OUR SALVATION

The tree is accursed, and the man that hangs on it is accursed. The cause of His hanging on it is also accursed. For upon sin there follows the curse, and the more sin lies upon the Lord the greater is the curse. But it is a death for our salvation, which takes away the curse from us and wins for us the blessing of God.

Martin Luther
(*Day By Day We Magnify Thee*)

editorials

LODGING INFORMATION

Never have we had information about Annual Conference housing as early as this year, but then this won't be the usual Conference either. It will be the 25th anniversary Annual Conference, held in the city where the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations was organized in the fall of 1962.

Receiving this information while the snows of winter still lay deeply upon northern Minnesota was a reminder that all too soon it will be time for the yearly assembly of our church. We know that all arrangements are being worked out carefully and early. All will be in readiness when June 17 comes. The place, you remember, is Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

The host congregation, Our Saviour's Lutheran, invites you to make reservations for your housing during the Conference as soon as possible. The housing information will be run again later, but if you wish to stay at a place where reservations are needed, you would be wise to act soon. Please signify when doing so that you will be attending the AFLC Annual Conference.

More about the Conference later. In the meantime, make the Conference a prayer concern.

DIVISION AT THE CROSS

Just as the great event of Bethlehem in Judea divides man's reckoning of years into Before Christ (B. C.) and Anno Domini (A. D.), what happened at Golgotha is a great divider, not of time, but of individuals, of people.

The electric current in a high tension wire may act as a servant in providing power for our appliances or it may bring death, depending on how it is used or misused. Paul tells us that the cross of Jesus Christ can be viewed in either of two ways. It is folly or foolishness to some while to others it is the power of God unto salvation. The cross is a great dividing line. Like the two thieves impaled with Jesus that Friday morning, we choose to believe in Him or turn away without hope.

The "word of the cross" or the "preaching of the cross" (I Cor. 1:18), briefly, is the message that God, motivated by love, stepped into human history through His Son to save mankind. That salvation was effected, further, not by noble example or exceptional teaching, but by the vicarious death of Jesus at the hands of evil men as the atonement for sin.

The attitude that the cross is foolishness is found outside the church in anti-Christian philosophers who throw out everything pertaining to God or consider it only superstition. Sometimes it is found within the church in theologians who are comfortable only with that which is reasonable and without offence to their intellects. That is, they see no need for the cross and reject the concept of one dying for others, perhaps also of the idea that God is severe in His judgment of sin at all.

Sometimes those who consider the cross foolishness are regular church people, even church-going people. There are those who, against the witness of Scripture, will not recog-

nize sin as a serious problem. Often, together with that, there may be an unwillingness to accept personal responsibility. It may be conceded that "all are sinners," but there may be no sense that one has offended God as an individual and is accountable before a holy God.

The witness of the Bible, however, is that man is by nature sinful and, left to himself, under God's wrath. Furthermore, he commits sins in his thought life, in the words he speaks and in his deeds. All of these are charted against the "sinner" and he will pay for them unless he accepts Christ's payment for himself.

The preaching of the cross is just this, the message that God hasn't left man to his own devices, which would be no answer at all to the sin problem. Rather He has, through Jesus, provided forgiveness and salvation. That's good news but it really means something to the individual only when it is embraced.

The hardest words to say in the English language are "I am wrong." They are hard to say to someone else. They are hard to say to God. But the saying of them opens the riches of God's grace. They make possible healing and wholeness. The exact words aren't put down for us, but they are implied in David's confrontation by Nathan. "You are the man," said the prophet, referring to David's heinous sin against Uriah and Bathsheba. And in his heart David responded, "I am." That was the turning point. For the Prodigal Son, it was when he said, "I will arise and go to my father . . ." It is at this point that the message of the cross changes from one of foolishness to power in the heart of the sinner.

The word of the cross is power to those who are being saved. It is power not for perfect people, but for those who have heard the blessed word of forgiveness for sins confessed and who live day by day by God's grace and eagerly look forward to that day when safe from the world's temptations they will experience eternal glory.

A division takes place at the cross of Christ. Some count it as foolishness, at best a part of old folklore. To others it is "the old rugged cross" whose message of love has made all the difference in the world and they would give up life itself for it.

May the latter be true of us all.

**"He Himself bore our sins in His body
on the tree, that we might die to sin
and live to righteousness. By His
wounds you have been healed."**

I Peter 2:24

world mission news

Meet the students of IBSM

part V



Osnir Jose Silva

My name is Osnir Jose Silva. I am 16 years old and live in Campo Mourao, Parana. I come from a family of four children of which I am the oldest.

I met Jesus in September of 1985 and since then my life has been transforming wonderfully.

Sometimes I stop and think about what I was before Christ came into my life. I was a teenager who didn't know the reason for living, but was searching for peace and love in the world. The more I sought these things in the world, the more I sank into a "miry bog" that was suffocating me. But one night I

visited the Free Lutheran Church in my town, Christ extended me His hand, and freed me from the agonies of the world.

I have been in God's family for almost a year now and am studying at the Bible School. I am a member of the Central Free Lutheran Church and am president of our youth group.

My goal for my life is to become a pastor.

Certainly things have changed as "from water to wine" in my life. Before I had no direction, now my feet are on solid ground and I am walking in the direction of the Holy City to meet Jesus Christ! Amen!

A special verse in my life is: Psalm 40:2, "He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure."

Osnir has two brothers who have also accepted Christ and through their testimonies their mother is also attending church and a Bible study is being held in their home.

A great deal of what we see
depends on what we are looking for!



Sonia Martins

My name is Sonia Martins. I am 18 years old and come from a non-Christian family. I have a brother who is three years older than I. In my family only my mother and I are Christians, and I also have an uncle who is a Christian.

I belong to the Central Free Lutheran Church here in Campo Mourao. I started going to church there in 1984 and on the 25th of November of that year I was baptized. I help out in church by playing the guitar, singing in the choir and am also a teacher of the 9- to 12-year-olds in Sunday School. In the afternoons on Sunday I also have a Sunday School for children. I am involved in the activities of our youth group and am director of sports, along with Marcelo, another teenager.

Now, in 1986, I am studying at the Bible School, and I thank God for having brought me here. I have wanted to study here since 1984. I also have the desire to stay one more year and study the missionary course, as I wish to serve God as a missionary.

I enjoy studying here, learning more about Jesus. I had thought I'd never have this privilege, so I am very thankful to God that I am here. I want Jesus to use me for the furtherance of His Gospel, according to His will. And I repeat the words that Isaiah said: "Here I am! Send me" (Isaiah 6:8b). I carry this verse with me everywhere I go, waiting the orders of my Lord.

Heathenism is a searching
for God with a godless spirit.



Letters to the editor

THOUGHT COVERAGE FAIR

I personally wish to congratulate you and your publication on the publishing of the article "The Millenium - Two Views" printed in the February 10th issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador*. I would like also to congratulate the two writers of these articles. Both were well done and stated their respective cases in clear and unmistakable language.

In a day when the majority of the larger Lutheran bodies have taken a stand on one side of this particular issue

and in which many openly condemn those who hold the opposite view, it takes real courage to be so fair-minded as to publish both sides.

Although I have studied the subject of eschatology quite thoroughly for a good number of years and have my own very definite opinion on "The Millenium," I am very happy to see both sides printed in parallel columns. This should help much to clarify the subject for many who have been "on the fence."

*Pastor Robert D. Giles,
Laveen, Ariz.*

THE WOMEN'S PAGE

WMF Banquet held at Eagan, Minn.

Approximately 120 women attended the Mid-Winter Conference Banquet served by the ladies of the host church, Living Word Lutheran Church, Eagan, Minn., Feb. 28, 1987. Mrs. David Barnhart was the song leader, with Mrs. Betty Kehlenbeck as accompanist. The theme song was, "Revive Us Again". Mrs. Wendell Johnson, National WMF President shared some thoughts and introduced the National WMF Board. Mrs. Marlin Benrud and daughter Jan, of Zumbrota, Minn., rendered two beautiful duets. Mrs. Richard Gilmore, Mpls. District President, was the speaker. She emphasized that only God can create a revival. She likened renewal to Cardio-Pulmonary-Resuscitation.

Confession is the spiritual "cardio," dealing with the heart.

Prayer—asking God to revive us, crying out to God, "Revive Me Again".

Relax and relinquish control. Ask the Holy Spirit to breathe on me and resuscitate me.

—Mrs. Harry Lindgren

Women's Missionary Federation

In memoriam gifts

Anna Carlson, Webster, S. Dak.
Nina Nyhus, Ferndale, Wash.
Dennis Hovde, Grand Forks, N. Dak.
Anna Bakken, Roseau, Minn.
Lawrence Simon, Tioga, N. Dak.
Emma Berg, Dalton, Minn.
Curtis Lokken, Tioga, N. Dak.
Mamie Baldus, Kenyon, Minn.
Mr. Solberg, Litchville, N. Dak.
Minnie Hamstad, Valley City, N. Dak.
Mathilda Himmerich, Valley City, N. Dak.

*Blessed are
those who die
in the Lord*



Dedicated to all faithful teachers, past and present, in our congregations

My dear friend,

Hi! I bet you are really wondering who I am. But as I write, I'm sure you will remember . . .

About 25 years ago you were my Vacation Bible School teacher. . . . Mr. and Mrs. P. used to bring us four kids. We weren't much to go to church. Farmers were always so busy and we were on the poor side, not much nice clothes (which now to me makes no sense. God loves us all the same, rich or poor).

Anyway, you started a flame in my heart, a love for Jesus Christ our Savior, a love for God the Father of all the Universe. You taught me a song and for 25 years I have sung this song and used it as a blueprint for my life. It is "Trust and obey, for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus than to trust and obey."

Along with this beautiful little song, you gave me a little china doll. I remember we made a sari, a wrap the women in the Bible days wore, for this doll, and on the last day of Vacation Bible School, you gave me the doll and the sari. My dear lady, I still have the doll and a beautiful memory . . .

I'm a farm house-wife with four children. I love my job. I'm also a 2nd grade Sunday School teacher. I love it and plan to stay as long as I am needed.

Last evening we had our church women's meeting and we are honoring women who have been a special help. We get up and tell a story of some one who has helped in our faith. . . . You were my first choice. As you are my true source of faith and my first teacher to any religious belief, I brought my (your) china doll, still wearing the same little dress you had on it years ago. I told this little story, but I'm very tenderhearted, so some tears came. . . . But I shared something that has meant so much to me. . . . I love you so much. . . . God Bless You!

Would love to hear from you, and would enjoy seeing you again. . . . My husband and I have been married for almost 17 years and he has seen me hold and kiss this little doll and tell my little story and song. . . .

Love in Christ,

Note: This letter was received last winter by one of our WMF members. Eternity will reveal the effectiveness of the seed sown faithfully into the hearts of the children passing through our churches. But perhaps there is a teacher, or some other person, from your childhood to whom you could write a letter of appreciation. It would tremendously bless your heart and that of a dear saint.

—S. Hjermstad

Minot, N. Dak. Feb. 13-15

The weekend was very well attended, with the church full for all the sessions. (There were 160-200 people.)

The Sermons

Friday evening Pastor Herbert Franz spoke on the theme, "When The Fire Fell," from I Kings 18. He said we all need revival. We all want revival. But he asked if we are willing to pay the price for revival. God wants to bring revival but it will come as we repair the broken-down altars in our lives. As Elijah was on Mt. Carmel, he was standing alone and calling the halting and fence-straddlers to choose whom they would serve. Pastor Franz said God is looking for totally dedicated men, men of conviction, men of prayer, men of vision, men of the Word. He said the false gods of the world are not able to do anything for us, even as the prophets of Baal could do nothing for the people in Elijah's day. Some of the altars that need to be repaired before the fire of revival can begin are: the altar of worship, the altar of devotions, the altar of repentance and the altar of faith. Once the altar was repaired, fire came down from heaven.

Saturday evening Pastor Franz spoke on the theme, "Singing The Lord's Song," from II Chronicles 29. He said that there had been no singing in the temple of the Lord for 16 years and asked if we had a song in our hearts, or were we just going through the motions. In order to be able to sing the Lord's song there must first be confession of sin. Some of the specific sins which we need to confess are the sins of gossip, unfaithfulness, jealousy and bitterness. Pastor Franz said that these sins can be a roadblock to revival and can ruin a church. Once there is confession of sin, then comes cleansing of sin through the blood of Christ. Then after confession and cleansing the Lord will put a song in our hearts and we will have reason to sing. The altar was open for prayer after the service and many came to deal with sin and pray for revival.

Sunday morning Pastor Franz spoke on the text, II Chronicles 7:13-14. He drew a parallel between the literal famine, drought and pestilence which

Israel was facing during that time to its spiritual counterpart. There is a famine of the Word of God in our world today. Once there is a spiritual famine of the Word the result is a spiritual drought. And once there is a spiritual famine and drought, the third spiritual problem that comes is a spiritual pestilence where sin is tolerated. Then Pastor Franz spoke on the remedy for these spiritual problems. The first thing we must do is humble ourselves before God. Pride must be eliminated. Secondly, we must pray, by petitions, communion and intercession. Thirdly, we must seek God's face. And fourthly, we must turn from our wicked ways. When we follow God's remedy, then He will hear from heaven, forgive our sin and heal our land.

Pastor Robert Lee, Minneapolis, Minn., spoke on the theme text for the



Rev. Robert Lee, Bible teacher.

conference, Psalm 119:153-160. He said that the whole psalm is a revival psalm. He said revival comes at a time of deep moral darkness when people feel helpless. As we look at our world today, there doesn't seem to be a real sense of helplessness. Man thinks he has an answer for everything. But if revival is to come we must see it not as an option but as a necessity. Revival is often mentioned in Scripture in the form of a prayer or request.

Pastor Lee also stressed in his Bible studies that it is the Word that revives us. The Word of God is described in a number of different ways in this psalm, such as: the Law of the Lord, testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments, judgments, and "Thy Word." He said that the Word does a number of things to revive us. The Word has the power to keep us from sin. It produces true godly fear. It gives us assurance to pray with confidence. It gives wisdom and understanding. It gives light to the path. And it gives us true peace. Pastor Lee said that revival does not come through the Law of God because the Law can only kill. True revival comes only through the Gospel because it is the Gospel that gives life.

Clifford Johnson, who is the chairman of the 25th Anniversary Committee of the AFLC, spoke on Saturday afternoon. He spoke on the theme "My Burden For Revival," from Romans 9:1-3; 10:1. He asked if our burden for the souls of men is as great as Paul's. He



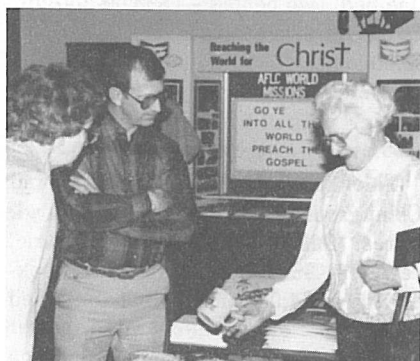
Left to right; Doreen Schmitz, Geri Olson, Elaine Schilla, Eleanor Vise, Carrie Nelson and Verna Peterson.

Winter Bible

Conferences



Mr. Clifford Johnson



Judith Wold displays an AFLC anniversary cup.

also said the need for revival is desperate. We need revival personally and in the church, as well as in our communities. He said that revival can come only on God's terms.

The men's banquet was held on Saturday night at the Bonanza restaurant with about 55-60 in attendance. We received reports from Pastor Lee on our schools, Pastor Franz on Home Missions, and from Pastor Eugene Enderlein on our World Missions. The food was excellent and the fellowship was even better.

Pastor David Barnhart's book, *The Church's Desperate Need for Revival*, was made available to people at the conference and many took advantage of the opportunity to purchase a copy. There were also book tables, displays, and other things which were of interest to the people who came. There was a good amount of people there who were not of AFLC background, which was very good to see. God richly blessed our weekend by beginning the work of revival we have so prayed for.

—Corr.

Shevlin - Bemidji Minn. Feb. 20-22

The Bible studies at the conference were given by Rev. Joel Rolf, Devils Lake, N. Dak. The three on Saturday were in the Beaux Arts Room of Hobson Memorial Union on the campus of the State University in Bemidji. The Saturday studies were based on Psalm 119. On Sunday morning Pastor Rolf considered II Chronicles 7:14.

He asked how a person can live a godly life. It is by taking heed to God's Word. Trusting and obeying that Word are like the two rails of a track. If there is only one, there will be a derailment.

The revived are teachable. The psalmist wasn't content with head knowledge; he wanted understanding. By nature man is not inclined to spiritual things, but if one is desirous of such things it is the Spirit's doing.

In the third study on Saturday, Pastor Rolf spent some time also on Isaiah's vision, chapter 6. He pointed out that we need a clearer vision of God's holiness, of our sinfulness and of God's will for our lives.

Mr. Clifford Johnson, Esko, Minn., spoke in the second hour on Saturday afternoon on his burden for revival. He is the co-ordinator of the AFLC's emphasis on prayer and revival in 1986-87.

He asked whether we have a desire for revival; do our churches? What would we give up in order that revival might come? He feels earnest prayer is being made in the church, but he asked if we have been sharing Christ with others.

The church needs revival, Mr. Johnson asserted. He spoke of trouble areas in society, of the hopelessness among young people. By God's grace we can reach our neighbor with the Gospel. But first God must be able to reach me and make me see sin in my life and how I must deal with that.

Rev. Bruce Dalager, Grand Forks, N. Dak., preached the conference sermons, all at Landstad Lutheran Church in Shevlin. Rev. Dennis O'Neil is pastor of Landstad and was host pastor at the conference. Here is a synopsis of Pastor Dalager's sermons.

Friday evening "Revive Me According to Thy Law (Ezra 9:1-10:1).

Revival involves a death to all that is of self. Only the strong demands of the

Law of God, which men are never able to achieve, can accomplish that death. The purpose of the Law of God is not to make us good but to bring us to the end of ourselves so that we might find our only hope in Christ. For Ezra that death involved four areas: death to pride, death to self-will, death to self-dependence, death to self-righteousness. No one born of woman has the clean hands and pure heart which are required of those who would stand in the holy presence of God. Only Jesus does. Only in Him do we stand righteous before the holy God.

Saturday evening "Revive Me According to Thy Gospel" (Is. 6:1-8).

I. The holiness of God brings despair to all who see it.

II. The grace of God brings pardon and mercy to the broken.

III. The mercies of God energize the forgiven.

It was emphasized that God's demand for holiness is satisfied by no one but Christ Jesus. God knows that we are corrupt and cannot keep His commandments. By the means of grace He gives us His grace and draws us to Himself that we might be cleansed. When by faith we are in Christ, we are forgiven, freed of guilt and made complete. In God's eyes, when we are covered with the righteousness of Christ, we are perfect. "Can anything be added to perfection?" was asked. Will we be dissatisfied with the righteousness of Christ and seek, by going back under the Law, to perfect that which God has begun which only He can complete? God will never be satisfied with us, but He is satisfied with Jesus. In Him we must rest.

It was added that the new man, or faith, is God's creation and is filled with vitality. Such is quick to respond to the will of God. He is energized by the power of God, not that of man, so he is not dependent upon human goodness or talent.

Sunday morning (Pericope text: Ps. 24, with I Cor. 1:20-25).

The God of all creation, in Whose presence sinners cannot stand, has come to us with salvation. He comes to us hidden in the Word and Sacraments, where He is concealed from the eyes of human wisdom and reason and can be seen and known only by faith. He must be sought where He can be found.

Lodging at the Annual Conference

Thief River Falls, Minnesota

Welcome to all of you who will be attending the AFLC Annual Conference. We are honored to be able to host the 25th anniversary of the AFLC. Thief River Falls has a number of fine motels and a beautiful tourist park and campsite for your lodging accommodations during your stay in our city June 17-21. Our Saviour's Christian Academy will also be providing a large area for camping as well.

Following is a list of motels and camping facilities with accommodations and rates. If you are planning to stay in one of the motels, please call them direct as soon as possible to make your reservations. The city tourist park and campground *does not* accept reservations. They are on a first come, first served basis. Camping at our Saviour's Christian Academy does not require reservations. If you would prefer to stay as a guest in private housing, please call us and we'll try to fill your needs.

To make reservations as a guest in private housing, or if you have any questions or concerns regarding your lodging accommodations, please call: David or Barb Rodahl (218) 681-2302; or Our Saviour's Lutheran Church (218) 681-4643. We pray that your stay in Thief River Falls will be fulfilling, pleasant and enjoyable.

Travel Host Motel, Highway 59 South, Thief River Falls, Minnesota 56701. Telephone (218) 681-6205.

One bed, one person — \$24.00 to 26.00; One bed, two people — \$26.00 to 31.00; Two beds, two people — \$29.00 to 31.00; Two beds, three people — \$32.00 to 35.00; Two beds, four people — \$35.00 to 38.00. Rollaway beds — \$4.00; Cribs free. No pets, please. No charge for children under 16 in same room as parents.

T-59 Motel, Highway 59 S.E., Thief River Falls, Minnesota 56701. Telephone (218) 681-2720.

One full bed, one person — \$20.00, two persons — \$22.00. One full bed, one person — \$20.00, two persons — \$22.00,

adjoining. One queen bed, one person — \$26.00, two persons — \$26.00. One twin and one full bed, two persons — \$25.00, three persons — \$26.00. Two full beds, two persons — \$28.00, each extra person \$2.00. Two queen beds, two persons — \$32.00, three persons — \$34.00, four persons — \$36.00. Three full beds, three persons — \$36.00. Each additional person — \$2.00. Cribs free. No cats, small dogs only.

Best Western, Highway 32 South, Thief River Falls, Minnesota 56701. Telephone (218) 681-7555.

One bed, one person — \$36.00. One bed, two persons — \$44.00. Two beds, two people — \$44.00. Two beds, three people — \$47.00. Two beds, four people — \$50.00. Poolside rooms add \$2.00. Children under 18 are free in same room as an adult. Rollaway beds are available at \$8.00 per night. Cribs are available at no extra charge on a first come, first served basis.

Holiday Motel, Highway 59 South, P.O. Box 75, Thief River Falls, Minnesota 56701. Telephone (218) 681-4053.

One bed, one person — \$18.00. One bed, two people — \$22.00. Two beds, two people — \$24.00. Two beds, three people — \$26.00. Two beds, four people — \$28.00. Cribs free. Rollaways are \$4.00 each.

In Memoriam

Key: The name of the town was the address of the deceased. Following that is listed the name of the deceased, age, date of death and the church in which he or she held membership.

MINNESOTA

Roseau

Mrs. Minnie Starren, 85, Feb. 12, Rose.

Our goal for the 25th Annual Conference

June 17-21, 1987

Thief River Falls, Minnesota

Every congregation represented by a lay delegate!

Hartwood Motel, 1010 Main Ave. North (Highway 32 No.), Thief River Falls, Minnesota 56701. Telephone (218) 681-2640.

One bed, one person — \$19.00 and up. One bed, two people — \$22.00 and up. Two beds, two people — \$24.00 and up. \$2.00 for each additional person. Cribs \$1.00. Rollaway \$3.00.

CAMPING

Thief River Falls Tourist Park and Campground. Oakland Park Road. Rates: Full hookup (water, electric, sewer) — \$6.50 per day. Electric hookup only — \$4.00 per day. Self-contained — \$2.00 per day. Coin-operated shower facilities. No charge for camper sewage dumping.

Our Saviour's Christian Academy. There will be a few electrical hookups available — \$4.00 per day. Large area for self-contained campers — \$2.00 per day. Shower and restroom facilities available in the school at no charge.

Preaching Missions

Spicer, Minn. Green Lake Lutheran Church, Rodney Johnson, pastor. Mar. 29 - Apr. 1. — Rev. David Barnhart, Eagan, Minn., speaker.

Newfolden, Minn. Westaker Lutheran Church, Larry Haagenon, pastor. Apr. 5-9 — Rev. David Molstre, Fargo, N. Dak., speaker.

Minnewaukan, N. Dak. Trinity Lutheran Church, Jerome Nikunen, pastor, Apr. 26-29 — Lay Pastor Gene Sundby, Outlook, Sask., speaker.

Mrs. Galena Starren, 101, Feb. 16, Rose. (Mrs. Starren at the time of her death was older than her congregation, which will observe its centennial in 1988.)

Arthur L. Welin, 66, Feb. 20, Roseau.

news of the churches

from here and there . . .

Thief River Falls, Minn. — A Lenten round robin is being held among Our Saviour's, Emmanuel and Reiner Lutheran Churches with Pastors Leslie Galland, Lay Pastors J. A. Grimstad and Donald Balmer, and Student Pastor Tom Olson preaching on the theme: "Last Words of Others Who Were at the Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus."

Newfolden, Minn. — Pastor Larry Haagensohn is speaking on "The Passion Symbols" at Lenten services in West-aker and Bethania Lutheran Churches. Services alternate each week.

Tioga, N. Dak. — At Zion Lutheran, Pastor Dale Mellgren and Student Pastor James Rasmussen are speaking on "The Seven Last Sayings of Christ" at midweek Lenten services. On Sunday mornings, through Palm Sunday, Pastor Mellgren is preaching on the theme "His Conquering Love." The choir will present the David T. Clydesdale cantata "How Great Thou Art" on Palm Sunday.

Minneapolis, Minn. — The Worship service at Medicine Lake Lutheran on Sun., Mar. 1 was video-taped for use later over Interfaith Channel 26 in the northwest suburbs of Minneapolis.

Morgan Avenue Lutheran is participating in a Lenten round robin with other AFLC churches. The speakers, including Pastor Yeddo Gottel, are basing their messages on "The Seven Last Words."

A special evening program for Faith Lutheran was held at Pastor Ralph Rokke's home on Feb. 18. Mr. Bill Overn of the Bible Science Association showed a video tape on Creationism and answered questions on that topic.

ELEMENTARY TEACHER NEEDED

Elementary teacher for Fall '87 for a combined 2nd, 3rd and 4th Grade ABEKA Curriculum. Contact: Mr. Dean Franz, St. Paul's Academy, Wilson Avenue and 18th, Cloquet, Minn. 55720.

Minnewaukan, N. Dak. — Trinity Teens enjoyed an afternoon of roller-skating at the Youth Center in Devils Lake on Feb. 8. Back at the church afterward, barbecues were served.

Leeds, N. Dak. — Lebanon and North Prairie congregations are taking part in round robin Lenten services under the theme "Questions Answered from the Cross." In addition to Pastor LeRoy Flickinger of Leeds, other pastors involved are Jerome Nikunen, Joel Rolf and Christian Oswood.

Greenbush, Minn. — United Lutheran is considering the purchase of some playground equipment for the churchyard. A special committee is investigating.

Badger, Minn. — Rev. Raynard Huglen, Newfolden, Minn., is helping out with preaching at Lenten services for Badger Creek and Oiland churches this year.

Mission Conference

The sixth annual Missionary Conference was held at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Thief River Falls, Minn., March 15-19. Rev. Leslie Galland is pastor of the church.

Guest speakers for the conference were Rev. and Mrs. George Knapp, missionaries on furlough from Brazil, and Rev. Richard Anderson, Lakeville, Minn., pastor of Minnesota Valley Lutheran, a Home Mission congregation in Lakeville.

Bible studies were held each weekday morning at 10. Evening services were at 7:30. On two evenings Mrs. Knapp gave children's stories at the services. She also spoke at a ladies' salad luncheon on Tuesday. The church council had a dinner at Best Western Motel on Monday evening, with Pastor Anderson speaking. On Sunday night a Brazilian dinner was served at the church.

Pastor Knapp also preached at Reiner Lutheran church, rural Goodridge, on Sunday morning.

The theme of the conference was "O Lord, Revive Thy Work." The theme song was "Revive Us Again."



Duluth congregation has new building

St. John's Lutheran in Duluth, Minnesota, announces its move into a new building. St. John's, A Home Mission Church in Duluth, had been renting space at Duluth Cathedral High School.

The new location of the church is 1630 Kenwood Avenue, near the intersection of Kenwood Avenue and the Arrowhead Road. The church, shown above was built just after World War II and formerly housed the Kenwood Lutheran Free Church. With the merger, Kenwood Lutheran became a part of the American Lutheran Church and constructed a new church a mile away. Now the Free Lutherans have reclaimed the original structure.

St. John's Lutheran is served on a part-time basis by Pastor Thomas Kumpul. Free Lutherans are encouraged to worship with us in Duluth as they pass through the Arrowhead Country. Sunday morning worship is at 10.

— *Corr*

GAMBLING

An honest man will not encourage gambling. It may be suggested that gambling is wrong because we gain money for which we have not worked; may be depriving others of money which they ought not to part with; are seeking to gain by another's loss, and thus injuring the spirit of brotherhood and fostering selfishness. The excitement which gambling produces is also very apt to give a distaste for sober work, and often leads to dishonesty. Again, gambling adds nothing to the common wealth of the nation.

M. V. Hughes

Proclaim, My Soul, That Jesus Died

Proclaim, my soul,
that Jesus died
And tore from death
its prey;
His cry: "It's finished,"
death defied
And brought to hell
dismay.

The cross, the witness
of His love,
Who our transgressions
bore,
Our way is to
the throne above
That stands
for evermore.

God's people, in your
heart enthrone
The Lord who
died for us.
The earth shall bow
to Him who won
While suff'ring
on the cross.

From Jesus' cross
the foe doth fly
And fall before
His sword.
The crown now
beckons to the sky
Each child of Christ,
the Lord.

N. F. S. Grundtvig
(from *Hymnal for
Church and Home*)

What one man did

WALLACE, S. DAK. — To Whom it may concern: Except for members of his family, it came as a complete surprise to me that John D. Johnson stipulated in his will that \$23,953.63 (or 50%) was earmarked for the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

John was the eldest of a family of nine. In an unusual way, it is a family that is close-knit, all of them living in the city of Wallace; they now number four brothers and one sister. Every weekday they meet together about 7:00 a.m. and on Sunday they are found in church. There is never a hint of disharmony, and in the past it was John, as the eldest, who set the pace and the rest followed!

I am told that John was not so active in the church in his working years. Being 88 years of age when I came upon the scene over a year ago, John was very hard of hearing and thus communication was difficult. Although he hesitated to receive communion, with the encouragement of his sister I was privileged to minister to John before he quietly left this world in May of last year.

They are a remarkable family in that they draw little attention to themselves. They laugh at community or

church disturbances, wanting nothing to do with them. They think the best of others; yes, of the church and its workings. When I confronted the remaining members of the family regarding John's estate and showed them a copy of the will that described its distribution to the church, they silently read it and nodded their heads! They, as much as said, "John always knew what he was doing and we are not surprised."

On the following Sunday in church I commented what an unusual example John has set before us all. While most of us, in our wills, leave everything to our family, John has not forgotten his family or his *church*. It reminds us of Zacchaeus who, upon being confronted with Jesus, said, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor" (Luke 19:8a). John left half of his estate as a gift to our church body plus a generous \$500.00 to his local congregation. He has left a powerful sermon of love and loyalty to his church, an example we would do well to consider.

*Rev. Palmer E. Sevig,
Calvary Lutheran Church*

(Ed. note: We thank Pastor Sevig for sharing this inspiring testimony with us. Let it be an encouragement to us all.)