A beneficial exercise for men contemplating theological education is to learn how to pray the Catechism. Edmund Schlink spoke of modernity as that time when “dogmatics had become largely a playground for the subjective originality of speculative piety, a period in which Christians generally forgot how to pray through their Catechism” (The Theology of the Lutheran Confessions, p. 36—emphasis mine). Schlink’s words call us back to something that ought to characterize a confessional Lutheran seminary. Namely, seminarians should remember how to pray through their Catechism.

Unbuckled from the content and rhythm of the Catechism, theology too easily degenerates into religious speech about self or philosophical assertions about an unknown god. The Catechism itself establishes the contours for our speaking of God, for it anchors us in what God says and does. Genuine theology is always confessing, speaking in the presence of God the words that God has spoken to us. Creativity in theology is the blight of the church. Our aim is not creativity but faithfulness to God’s speaking and doing.

The Formula of Concord would come to call the Catechism “a Bible of the Laity, in which everything is summarized that is treated in detail in Holy Scripture and that is necessary for a Christian to know for salvation” (FC-SD Epitome I:7, Kolb/Wengert, p. 487). The Commandments, Creed and the Lord’s Prayer, drawn from the Scriptures form the core of the Catechism. Luther adds Baptism and the Lord’s Supper anchoring both in the words of Jesus that institute them, unpacks their benefits and tutors us in how faith receives the gifts.

In time Luther would also insert a short form of confession between Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar. Our duty “to thank, praise, serve and obey” (First Article) is given concrete form in the daily prayers and the table of duties appended to the Catechism. God’s Law (Ten Commandments)
Developing an Educated Layperson

The Importance of the Master of Arts Program at CTS

By Adriane A. Dorr

The church is in great need of faithful, pious, educated laypeople. She needs pastors and deaconesses, vicars and interns, but she also needs Lutheran doctors, Lutheran chocolatiers, Lutheran landscapers and Lutheran cowboys.

Lay theological study is critical to the health and vitality of the church. Formative understanding of God’s Word and of the Lutheran Confessions, of the church’s history and the great heroes of the faith by laypeople is one of the church’s greatest blessings.

An educated laity judges its pastors by the very words of Christ. It reminds the church of its past. It allows its deeply-rooted Scriptural truths to determine its future. It trusts and believes. It is watchful, on guard, alert. It calls out false doctrine when it sees it, prays for forgiveness when it is wrong, strengthens those called to serve. The church depends upon educated laypeople.

“They all say, ‘The ordinary reader does not want Theology; give him plain practical religion,’” C. S. Lewis wrote in Mere Christianity. “I have rejected their advice. I do not think the ordinary reader is such a fool. Theology means ‘the science of God,’ and I think any man who wants to think about God at all would like to have the clearest and most accurate ideas about Him which are available.”

Those interested in lay theological study are the very people who are not satisfied with pat answers, who want those clear and accurate ideas about Christ that Lewis describes. They are armchair theologians, eager to know more, understand fully, explain better, speak clearer.

These are the kinds of people that Lutheran pastors want in their congregations, their Bible studies and on their Board of Elders. These are the kinds of people that Lutheran deaconesses want teaching Sunday School, serving on Ladies’ Aid and assisting with childcare: laypeople with a deep and profound thirst for the holy things of God.

The Master of Arts degree at Concordia Theological Seminary offers a kind of theological formation uniquely suited to just that kind of layperson. For the person who desires to understand the faith and the church; for the academic who wants to teach or to study in depth, the seminary’s M.A. Program opens before them a world of resources—faculty, community, worship—second to none.

At CTS, professors eat lunch with students, invite them over for supper, visit them in their homes and personally invest time in their spiritual growth and development. Faculty care for and about each student. Theological discussions amongst peers are as robust as they are in the classroom. They take place over hot wings, during a ping-pong battle and in between studies. And at the heart of it all, students gather daily around God’s Word and Sacraments, praying the creeds and liturgy, unified in confession and belief. Learning side-by-side—with peers and pastors—about the faith from the very words of Christ Himself has a formative, life-altering impact.

Each of these unique aspects of the program equips students to be of benefit to the church. Some students become teachers, some
The Catechism itself establishes the contours for our speaking of God, for it anchors us in what God says and does.

Genuine theology is always confessing, speaking in the presence of God the words that God has spoken to us.

Creativity in theology is the blight of the church. Our aim is not creativity but faithfulness to God’s speaking and doing.

Paul exhorted Timothy to “Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 1:13). This is what we are given in the Catechism, “the pattern of the sound words ... in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.” This pattern guides us in the study of theology—the speaking of the true words about God received from Him. Faith confesses Christ. Love hands on the gifts that we have been given to the neighbor. We remain students. Listen to Luther, “I am also a doctor and a preacher, just as learned and experienced as all of them who are so high and mighty. Nevertheless, each morning and whenever else I have time, I do as a child who is being taught the catechism and I read and recite word for word the Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Psalms, etc. I must still read and study the catechism—and I also do so gladly” (Preface to the Large Catechism, Kolb/Wengert, p. 380). Luther’s practice is not beneath those who would study theology today.

For the person who desires to understand the faith and the church; for the academic who wants to teach or to study in depth, the seminary’s M.A. Program opens before them a world of resources—faculty, community, worship—second to none.
As our guest, there is no charge for you to attend CAC/PAC or the Good Shepherd Institute Conference. You may fill out this form and return it to the Office of Admission at Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 N. Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46825 or you may register online at www.ctsfw.edu/CAC.

Please register me for (please check one):

- [ ] Christ Academy College
- [ ] Phoebe Academy College
- [ ] The Good Shepherd Institute Conference, November 6–8, 2011.

Name ______________________________________________________
College or University __________________________________________
Pre-Sem Director/Student Advisor ______________________________
Age ________ Year in College __________________________________
E-Mail ______________________________________________________
Cell Phone __________________________________________________
Home Address ________________________________________________
City/State/Zip ________________________________________________
College Address ______________________________________________
City/State/Zip ________________________________________________

I will be travelling by: [ ] Car [ ] Plane
Airline and Flight # __________________________________________
Airport ______________________________________________________
Arrival date and time _________________________________________
Departure date and time _______________________________________

[ ] I will need housing and meals while on campus.
[ ] I have been to the CTS campus previously.
[ ] I have attended CAC/PAC in previous years.

---

**The End Times: Lutheranism, Millennialism and Revelation**

**FEATURING:**

**Dr. Charles A. Gieschen, Ph.D.**
Professor of Exegetical Theology, Academic Dean; Associate Editor of CTQ


In addition to holding membership with the prestigious Society of Biblical Literature, Dr. Gieschen serves as Associate Editor of *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, the theological journal of Concordia Theological Seminary.

**Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr., PhD.**
CTS President; Professor of Historical Theology

With Dr. Rast's commanding knowledge of the Pietism and Lutheranism of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Academy will explore such Lutheran figures as Joseph Seiss and S. S. Schmucker and learn the contours of Millennialism as it infiltrated American Lutheran identity in ages past. Dr. Rast has written many academic works on the subject, including “Pietism and Mission: Lutheran Millennialism in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 64 (2000), no. 4:295-318.

---

**Experience**

Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana

**November 3–6, 2011**

www.ctsfw.edu/CAC

---

**Worship.**

Join the seminary community in daily worship as you encounter the vibrant liturgical life of Kramer Chapel.

**Learn.**

Become acquainted with our world renowned faculty by observing regular class lectures. You may choose to sit in on whatever classes you wish.

**Explore.**

Meet with your brothers and sisters from the colleges around the country. Share your goals and aspirations with your Admission Counselor.
“It is indeed not we who can preserve the Church. Nor was it our ancestors, and it will not be those who come after us. But it has been, is now, and shall be the One who said, ‘I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” – Dr. Martin Luther

Hermann Sasse, a pastor who held faithfully to the Holy Scriptures and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church in the mid-twentieth century, often described his work as “the lonely way.” For him, the world had become increasingly godless, despising the Word of God and the church’s preachers.

Today it might be said that not many in our nation seek to destroy the church—at least in an overt sense. Nevertheless, the church is faced with increasing apathy among its people, declining membership and giving, a faltering piety, materialism, the post-modern worldview taught in schools which stands contrary to a Christian view of the world and a populace which turns to the alternative secular methods for self-betterment instead of to the Means of Grace for help in their lives. On the books, the church is losing. Her pastors are no longer looked to for counsel and advice. All of this begs the question, “What is the church to do?” Is it time for the church to throw off her confession, her marks, her liturgy, in order to save herself? What should the church’s pastors be doing about all of this?

The church’s pastors ought not run to the voice of their insecure hearts for the answer, “What am I to do?” Rather, they should first ask, “What has God called me to do? What has God made me to be?” Article V of the Augsburg Confession calls our Office the “Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and Administering the Sacraments.” Such has the Pastoral Office been from the time of Christ, and such will the Pastoral Office be until the end of this world–simply put, to give people Christ.

The Lord desires that in our sermons and confirmation classes, our adult instruction and sick visits, our board meetings and voter’s assemblies, we preach nothing but the crucified and risen Christ. Christ alone is our content, our message. As Sasse says, “He [the Lord] desires through the simple preaching of this Gospel and through the unpretentious Sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Holy Supper to build the church on earth as the Body of His Son.” If all of this is the Lord’s beginning, His calling and ordaining, His commissioning, then God shall sustain and preserve the Pastoral Office until the end of the age. Sasse points out that, as God’s grace was good for the ancient church, for Luther and the Reformers, so it shall be for us: “There is no moratorium on grace. His Word shall not return void” (Isaiah 55:10-11).

Those who hold the Pastoral Office are bound by their confession. Preaching Christ, baptizing and administering Holy Communion to the Lord’s people are the chief tasks of the Pastoral Office. This is comforting in that we are freed from imposing our own agenda on the church or attempting to boost our own egos. Confessing Christ alone saves us from conceit and from craving spiritual power. It is Christ who saves the church, for the church is Christ’s and not ours. If preserving the church were up to us, our future indeed would be grim. If it were up to us, we would be robbed of all hope and courage and would sink the church into false doctrine and ultimately end the church’s life.

Thanks be to God that He is raising up a new generation of pastors who are rooted deeply in the faith of the church of Christ and who make their confession in the Lord who, by His suffering and death, rising and ascending, has accomplished all things in our place and on our behalf. Thanks be to God that the content of their message is Christ, no more, no less.

Rev. Andrew T. Yeager serves as an Admission Counselor and Director of Christ Academy at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana. He can be reached at Andrew.Yeager@ctsfw.edu or 260-452-2178.

1 WA 54.470, Quoting Matthew 28:20.
Inside This Issue:

- Praying the Catechism
- Developing an Educated Layperson
- The Office of the Holy Ministry

CTS Admission Counselor Tours

The Admission Counselors of Concordia Theological Seminary will be traveling throughout the United States to meet with men who are considering the vocation of pastor and women who are considering the vocation of deaconess. Please check to see when there will be a counselor in your area and contact him if you would like to set up a visit.

Please visit our website (www.ctsfw.edu) for more information regarding these upcoming on-campus events:

- Prayerfully Consider Visit: October 20–22, 2011
- Christ Academy/Phoebe Academy College: November 3–6, 2011
- Good Shepherd Institute: November 6–8, 2011
- Prayerfully Consider Visit: March 22–24, 2012