In the classic work on Christian community, *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, “God has willed that we should seek and find God’s living Word in the testimony of other Christians, in the mouths of human beings. Therefore, Christians need other Christians who speak God’s Word to them. They need them again and again when they become uncertain and disheartened because, living by their own resources, they cannot help themselves without cheating themselves out of the truth. The Christ in their own hearts is weaker than the Christ in the words of other Christians. Their own hearts are uncertain; those of their brothers are true.”

How vital, therefore, is the brotherhood of Christians gathered in community when one begins his preparation for the Holy Ministry. The Christian community gathers so that God’s universal pardon over mankind may be heard and received by the condemned individual that God has placed before us. Your brother (or sister) is there before you for your Word; you are there before him for his Word.

Concordia Theological Seminary is all about community, the community of brothers and sisters in Christ. CTS forms servants of God, and the servant of God begins to set himself toward his godly work only at the point when God has forgiven him in Christ. We exist in our brother’s presence for the sake of his consolation. Community exists that God’s forgiveness may be forgiveness for our neighbor. If a community exists only to promote some kind of political agenda, then when that agenda is rejected, the community collapses because the strength of any community is proportionate to the strength of its cause. Outside of Christ we only have our own egotistical agendas that will all be confounded unequivocally. It is only the community formed in Christ which can firmly trust that it will not pass away, that its arduous tasks will not be in vain, that it will remain into eternity.

So at ten o’clock every weekday morning, the community at CTS pauses and gathers in the chapel for a little community, a little “life together.” The community of the faithful at CTS looks toward the eternal community of the new heaven and the new earth when the community of God and man shall be perfect and uninhibited and, therefore, community with one another shall be perfect and uninhibited. Until that blessed moment, we work while it is still day (John 9:4) putting our hope and trust in Christ who has promised to “gather into One the dispersed children of God” (John 11:52).

**PILGRIMAGE**

Admission Bulletin Spring 2012 Volume Fifteen, Issue One

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Any information is subject to change without notice. If you would like to be placed on the Pilgrimage mailing list, please contact the Admission Office by phone, e-mail or write: Office of Admission Concordia Theological Seminary 6600 North Clinton Street Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825

By Rev. Andrew T. Yeager

Christians need other Christians who speak God’s Word to them.
Should I count on paying the full cost of tuition when I enroll for classes?
Tuition assistance is available for most students. Students who are enrolled in programs leading to ordination, for pastoral ministry students, or placement as a deaconess in the LCMS are eligible to apply for the seminary tuition grant program. This program requires that the student complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to determine the student’s financial need based upon income and assets. A seminary tuition grant of up to 50% of the actual tuition cost is awarded each quarter based upon the student’s financial need.

I have been a lifelong member of my congregation and they want to support me during my time as a seminary student. Is this possible?
Yes, we encourage each congregation to support the students from their home congregation by suggesting an amount of financial assistance for the upcoming academic year. Students receive 100% of the funds that a congregation sends and designates for the student.

If I am accepted as a seminary student, are there scholarships for which I can apply? How do I find out about available scholarships?
There are Outside Scholarship Opportunities that are available and are listed on the seminary’s financial aid webpage at www.ctsfw.edu/FinancialAid. Also, we encourage students to look for scholarships that may be available from their home congregation or local communities.

What is student adoption and who contributes to it?
The seminary has a Student Adoption Program where the student applies and is then assigned to an adoptive donor. Most of the donors in the program are congregations that have a special group like the Ladies Aid Society or the Men’s Bible Breakfast that want to provide monthly support to a seminarian or deaconess student in need. Also, there are individual donors who participate in the program. Students are required to correspond with their assigned donors on a regular basis.

I am married with two children. What assistance is available to alleviate the financial strain of everyday costs on my family?
The seminary operates the Food & Clothing Co-op where these items are available free of charge because of the generosity of seminary donors. The student or a family member is asked to donate a few hours of work each month to keep the Co-op running smoothly. Food items are awarded based upon a point system where families with more children receive more points to use. Many students report that 75%-85% of their grocery needs are met at the Food Co-op.

If I take student loans, what kind of plans are available to me when the time comes for me to repay the loans?
The seminary participates in the Federal Direct Loan program. Unsubsidized Direct loans and Graduate PLUS loans are the two main types of loans available to our students. There are several repayment plans available to the student after graduation: 1) Standard—10 years; 2) Extended—up to 25 years; 3) Graduated; 4) Income Based—up to 25 years; 5) Income Contingent—up to 25 years. Go to www.studentloans.gov to see the details of these various repayment plans.

Rev. Mark C. Sheafer serves as the Director of Financial Aid at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana. You may contact him at Mark.Shearer@ctsfw.edu or 260-452-2151.
The journey of the average seminarian appears a bit fractured. On paper you note that you arrive on campus at Concordia Theological Seminary and begin your course of instruction, but after two short years you are driven out, thrown out of the nurturing nest of your seminary training to face the wilderness of the parish ministry. Dramatic and overstated, no doubt, but this is the feeling often expressed by those leaving our friendly confines to engage the world from a “foreign” parish. After all, are you ready?

The answer is “no.” So, why not stay at seminary three years and then leave on vicarage never to return? Or, better yet, why not bypass this vicarage year altogether? Just hit the ground running the race and fighting the good fight! Again, these are all thoughts expressed by those preparing for the Office of the Holy Ministry. And, on paper it makes sense, but it proves to be vastly impractical and not just a little dangerous on several levels.

The first two years spent at the seminary are a time of intense learning. The theology of the church is hammered home as the Scriptures are engaged in their original languages and the Confessions are inwardly digested. The face-to-face contact with professors and fellow students, along with the ongoing theological debate, hones the theological edge and provides an education that is unrivaled in the theological world. This is all part of the formation process and it is essential in producing solid, confessional men for the pastoral office. Yet, it is only one part of a twofold process.

Now, for something completely different! Vicarage is the next step. As you leave the seminary you have the theology and teachings of the church entrenched within and now the time has arrived to put this learning into practice. Thus far, apart from your limited fieldwork experience, all has been theoretical. The time has come to learn how all this knowledge applies in the practical realm. Indeed, vicarage is where theology and practice are melded together and the formation process takes a turn into the field where the harvest is white and ready.

Each day of the vicarage year provides insight into the actual use of that which has been taught and learned. Each day, as the vicar climbs down from the ivory tower of academia and wallows in the messiness of ministry he learns “What does this mean!” And, make no mistake, the ministry is messy and you do get dirty and you will never be the same again—and that is a good thing.

The teachings of Baptism will ripen as you witness a 78-year-old woman confess her faith and bend her head over the font. The Sacrament of the Altar will fill your eyes with tears when you observe the two antagonists of the recent voters meeting kneeling together at the rail, side by side. The power of the Holy Word will overcome you when you bring its message to the hospital bedside and your hand is clutched in gratefulness and thanksgiving. You will never be the same again. And then you have to return to the seminary, a trip that most vicars do not want to make, and that is a good thing as well.

You return a changed person. You ask different questions in your classes. You are no longer reciting theory, now you speak from experience. This second phase of your pastoral formation has brought you understanding that cannot be taught in a classroom or absorbed from a book. You are beginning to think like a pastor. Your questions demonstrate a concern for the flock. Your theology and your practice are being successfully melded together, a marriage that forms good and faithful parish pastors. You soon will be ready to be called and ordained into the Holy Ministry and serve the LORD as a faithful under shepherd of His flock.

Pastors are formed. There is much teaching and learning, but pastors are formed. This formation begins in the classroom. It is nurtured and molded by the vicarage. Finally, it is polished into a finished product when you enter into the ministry and serve a congregation. In truth, seminaries do not make pastors, churches make pastors. The seminary is an integral partner in this formation and vicarage provides the crucible that melds theology and practice—a good thing!

Prof. Jeffrey H. Pulse serves as an Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology and Director of Vicarage at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana. You may contact him at Jeffrey.Pulse@ctsfw.edu or 260-452-2273.
What’s New at the Seminary?

Concordia Theological Seminary is blessed to have many positive changes take place recently. Our new president, Dr. Lawrence R. Rast, Jr. was elected this past summer. Dr. Rast has served this campus for years as Academic Dean and Professor of Historical Theology, teaching mainly in the area of Lutheranism in America. Dr. Rast’s commanding knowledge of theology and enthusiasm for Lutheran education will certainly benefit CTS greatly in the months and years ahead.

Secondly, the first phase of the library expansion was recently completed. The expansion of Walther Library will allow for the addition of thousands of volumes of books and materials that will benefit not only CTS students, but also the worldwide community. With this expansion, Concordia Theological Seminary’s collection will rank with the best theological libraries in the region.

Last summer, CTS called Rev. Thomas Zimmerman, former Admission Counselor, to be Dean of Students. The seminary also called Rev. John Dreyer and Rev. Neil Ray to serve in the Admission Office as counselors. Those who are considering seminary education will certainly benefit from the faithful counsel and guidance of these men.

Rev. Dreyer will be the Admission Counselor for much of the Midwest, as well as Concordia College–Selma, Concordia University—Wisconsin, Concordia University—Nebraska and Concordia University—Saint Paul. Rev. Ray will handle prospective students from the western states, Concordia University—Irvine, Concordia University—Texas and Concordia University—Portland. Rev. Yeager will maintain the eastern states plus, Concordia University—Chicago, Concordia University—Ann Arbor and Concordia College—New York.

On-Campus Events

Please visit our website for more information regarding these upcoming campus events:

- Prayerfully Consider Campus Visit: March 22–24, 2012
  www.ctsfw.edu/PCV

- Christ Academy High School: June 17–30, 2012
  www.ctsfw.edu/ChristAcademy

- Prayerfully Consider Campus Visit: October 11–13, 2012
  www.ctsfw.edu/PCV

- Christ Academy College & Phoebe Academy College: October 18–21, 2012
  www.ctsfw.edu/CAC

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