You Are Not the Only One!

By Rev. Timothy D. Storck

What are you going to do with your life? Maybe you have been asked that question a lot. I certainly was. During those last few months of high school and possibly college that question and those like it get thrown around a lot. What are you going to do with your life? How are your plans shaping up? You may even think you have it all decided. Finish high school, attend a good university and then get a great job. Through my last year of high school I had the same thoughts. Yet in the back of my mind I had one thought that would always remain, “What about being a pastor?”

You see, I went to public school from grade school through high school, and the thought of mentioning the word “pastor” in those discussions of future vocations seemed a little strange. I felt we were supposed to mention vocations like marine biologist, doctor, firefighter. Becoming a pastor was one vocation I never listed nor heard anyone else mention. To be frank, I was afraid of mentioning it to my friends, classmates and family. What would they say? How would they react?

Maybe you have had the same thoughts. At times we may even believe we are alone in those thoughts. That no one else out there in the world understands what you are going through. I’ve been there. I thought no one else could understand. But guess what, you are not alone. There are others your age who have pondered life in the Holy Ministry.

That was the driving force behind a new program created 11 years ago at Concordia Theological Seminary. What if there were young men in high school who wanted to learn more about the pastoral ministry? How could young men experience seminary before seminary?

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Christ Academy was born. In 1999 I was one of 15 high-school-aged men who gathered at CTS for the first event. It was two weeks of intensive classes taught by the seminary professors and pastors, playing sports on the expansive fields and in the gym, dorm and dining hall life, roller coasters galore at Cedar Point and gathering daily around the forgiveness of sins through the proclamation of the Word and the reception of the Sacraments.

Christ Academy is a firsthand way of being immersed in the life of the seminary, in preparation for becoming a pastor. For those of us who struggled with the thought of becoming a pastor, Christ Academy showed us that we were not alone. As we spent time together, we began to realize that we had common bonds, especially in our desire to learn more about the office of the ministry. Though we had all come from different backgrounds, experiences and families, we had found common ground. Yes, common ground in learning more about life as a pastor and seminary preparation, but also common ground in the confession of faith. We learned that we are a part of a community of believers gathered around Christ’s Altar to receive the blessings of forgiveness and salvation in His body and blood.

Over the last 11 years, hundreds of young men have attended Christ Academy. We have had the opportunity to watch the Academy grow and flourish. Christ Academy—Germany allowed college-aged men the opportunity to visit the sites of Luther and to worship in Berlin with our fellow brothers and sisters in the faith. In 2005, Christ Academy—College was begun in order to give young men in college, who aspired to the Office of Holy Ministry, an opportunity to gather at the seminary. And, beginning in 2009, Phoebe Academy—College was formed to give college-aged women who aspire to become a deaconess a place to gather and learn about that calling.

Though not everyone who attends Christ Academy and its brother and sister programs goes on to serves in professional church work, it does help to answer that question, “Am I the only one who thinks about becoming a pastor?” You are not alone, there are others. Take heart in that knowledge.

In each of these events young men and women have discovered that they weren’t the only ones to think about a life of service in the Church. They were strengthened by their own fellowship and encouragement, but most importantly in the fellowship of the altar in knowing that they share a common faith; in knowing that their sins have been forgiven by the blood of the Lamb.

Rev. Timothy D. Storck is the Associate Pastor of Lutheran Church and School of Messiah in Grand Junction, Colorado, and a 1999 Christ Academy Alumnus.
Christ Academy is a two-week residential program for high-school-aged young men of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. It is a place where students can study about Christ who is present in His Word and Sacraments and who died that our sins would be forgiven. It is a place where students can experience seminary life and a time when students can explore the possibility of some day becoming a pastor.

Life-Changing Studies
Christ Academy, like Concordia Theological Seminary, is centered on Christ crucified, who is present in His Word and Sacraments to forgive and dwell in His Church. Students of Christ Academy will study Exegetical, Systematic, Historical and Pastoral Theology. Seminary professors, Concordia University professors and pastors teach the classes.

* “Very edifying, interesting and kept me on the edge of my seat.”
* “The professors, while being extremely smart, always listened to what I had to say.”
* “It’s great living on campus and learning from the professors.”

Worship: The Center of the Experience
Students are engaged in the daily prayer life of the seminary. Attendees will join both professors and seminarians in daily worship services which take place four times a day.

* “These past two weeks have really made me come to realize that what’s not important is what we do for Christ, but ultimately what He did for us in His sacrifice.”
* “I really enjoy worshiping four times a day. It really ties in with what we’re learning.”
* “Loved it. Adored it. I want more.”
Clarity of Direction

Having a focus that's uniquely Lutheran, Christ Academy explores the many facets of pastoral ministry and its application in the real world.

“A great event to attend if you are planning on becoming a pastor or if you just want to learn more about what you believe.”

“The Academy was not only very informative, but also very fun and helped me not only strengthen my faith, but to realize that I want to serve the Lord by preparing to go into the Holy Ministry.”

Top 10 Reasons to Come to Christ Academy:

1. “God’s Word and Holy Sacraments”
2. “clarifies one’s vocational direction”
3. “theological learning experience”
4. “the professors are awesome”
5. “learn as an adult”
6. “great food”
7. “worship”
8. Cedar Point
9. “meet great people”
10. “theology and fun activities”

Fun Activities

Lifelong friendships are made at the Academy. These friendships are strengthened through activities such as the trip to Cedar Point Amusement Park, the tour of churches, flag football, soccer and capture the flag. Activities are designed to engage students in the whole of Christian life.

“It is the best possible way to spend two weeks of summer with excellent teaching, heavenly worship and a good community.”
What is Christ Academy:
A two week retreat at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Who is Christ Academy for:
High-school-aged young men of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod who are (or should be) considering becoming pastors. It is open to those who have completed their freshman year through those who have completed their senior year.

What does it cost:
$500 is all inclusive (housing, meals, Christ Academy polo shirt, admission to an amusement park and other events, etc.) Limited financial aid may be available at the recommendation of your pastor.

How do I get there:
Please arrange your own transportation to and from Christ Academy. We can offer suggestions for planning air or rail travel, airport shuttles, car pooling, directions and the like.

Please type or print in ink all information. The form must be completed in every detail. Answer “N/A” for all items that do not apply to you.

Personal Information
Name ________________________________________________________________________________
First Middle Last
Permanent Address ____________________________________________________________________
Street, Route, Box #
City _______________________________ State _____ Zip __________________
Phone (_____ ) _____ – _______ E-mail Address ______________________________________________________________________
Date of Birth ____ / ____ / _____ Year of High School Graduation_______________
T-Shirt Size__________ Musical Experience ______________________________________________________________________
Do you play an instrument?______ If yes, what instrument(s)? _________________________________________

Church Membership Information
Home Congregation ______________________________________________________________________
Church Address ________________________________________________________________________
City _______________________________ State _____ Zip __________________
Church Phone (_____ ) _____ – _______ Year of Baptism_______________________
Year of Confirmation___________________ Years as LCMS Member____________
Pastor’s Name ____________________________________ LCMS District _____________
“I, (Pastor):__________________________________________, give my recommendation and approval for (Student):________________________________________ to attend the Christ Academy at Concordia Theological Seminary. He has shown interest in the Academy and in learning more about theology and the Holy Ministry.”
Signed: Rev.__________________________________________ Date _____ / _____ / ______

On a separate sheet of paper, please answer the following questions: (Please fold and mail with application.)
1. What is the Gospel?
2. What is the mission of the church?
3. Why do you seek to attend Christ Academy?

Please return this form to:
Admission/Christ Academy Registration
Concordia Theological Seminary
6600 North Clinton Street
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825-4996
Get on Board for Christ Academy 2010

By Sem. Brian German

Christ Academy is a two-week residential experience at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana, for high-school-aged men of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod which will take place June 20–July 3. It is Christ-centered, biblically-based and confessionally Lutheran. In relation to many other youth programs and gatherings, Christ Academy is the only multi-week residential event that strives to mimic the structure and rigor of advanced theological studies.

Participants of Christ Academy receive an in-depth and hands-on seminary experience as they worship, study and enjoy recreation. Worship takes place in Kramer Chapel with the seminary community, study takes place in classes taught by seminary professors (and other remarkable teachers and pastors) and extracurricular activities take place anywhere from on the seminary grounds to amusement parks. These components are all centered in and flow from the reception of Christ's gifts of forgiveness and life in Word and Sacrament at daily corporate worship, central to the entire experience. In addition to valuable study and edifying recreation, participants learn about the rich liturgical traditions of the church.

The theme for Christ Academy 2010 is “Evangelical Responses to Non-Christian Religions.” In addition to a special class entitled “Ministry in a Pluralistic Context” with Dr. Douglas Rutt, CTS Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions, and Dr. Adam Francisco, CTS Assistant Professor of Historical Theology, this Academy will feature a day-trip to Chicago where participants will visit the Baha’i Temple, a mosque and a Jewish synagogue. Students of Christ Academy 2010 will explore how to present and defend the faith “with gentleness and respect.” (1 Peter 3:16) Whether you are interested in pastoral ministry or would like to have more exposure to theology and seminary life, come join us for an enriching opportunity and clarity of vocational direction.

If you would like more information, please contact me at germanbt@ctsfw.edu or 260-452-3140.

Brian German is the Student Director for Christ Academy 2010 and a fourth-year seminarian at Concordia Theological Seminary.