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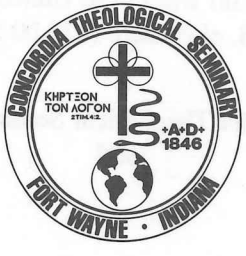

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The Symposia of Concordia Theological Seminary (January 1996)

THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM ON EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY
in the Sesquicentennial Year of the Seminary

"The Bible: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow"

Tuesday, January 16, 1996

1:00 p.m.	Welcome and Introduction
1:15 p.m.	"The Future Role of the Bible in Seminary Education." Dr. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Colman M. Mockler Professor of Old Testament and Director of the Biblical Foundation for Ethics at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts
2:15 p.m.	"The Word of the Cross in First Corinthians: Wisdom and Cleverness, Substance and Style." Dr. Gregory J. Lockwood, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology (New Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary
3:00 p.m.	Afternoon Tea
3:30 p.m.	"The Centrality of the Sacraments in the Old Testament: Circumcision as Fleshly Grace." Dr. James G. Bollhagen, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology (Old Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary
4:15 p.m.	"'Preach the Word' in the Old Testament." Dr. Walter A. Maier III, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology (Old Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary

Wednesday, January 17, 1996

8:30 a.m.	"Practice as Hermeneutical Test: The Life of the Church as a Rehearsal of the Biblical Narrative or Alternative Narratives." Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, Chairman of the Department of Exegetical Theology, Professor of Exegetical Theology (Old Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary

9:15 a.m.	"Messianic Prophecy in the History of Concordia Theological Seminary." Dr. Douglas McC. L. Judisch, Professor of Exegetical Theology (Old Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary
10:00 a.m.	Matins in the Chapel
11:00 a.m.	"Doublets and Conflict Scenes in Mark: Literary Evangelism Devices." Dr. Lane A. Burgland, Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology (New Testament Exegesis), Concordia Theological Seminary

THE NINTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE LUTHERAN LITURGY AND HYMNODY

Wednesday, January 17, 1996

1:00 p.m.	Welcome and Introduction
1:05 p.m.	"Celebrating the Heritage of Friedrich Lochner." Dr. Cameron A. MacKenzie, Associate Professor of Historical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
2:15 p.m.	Coffee Break
2:45 p.m.	"Celebrating the Heritage of Wilhelm Loehe." Dr. Kenneth F. Korby, Former Professor of Theology at Valparaiso University, Pastor, *locum tenens* (vacancy pastor), Zion Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minnesota
4:30 p.m.	Choral Vespers: Seminary Schola Cantorum
5:30 p.m.	Dinner

THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

"Commemorating the 450th Anniversary of the Death of Martin Luther: Themes in Luther's Theology"

Thursday, January 18, 1996

8:30 a.m.	"Luther on Atonement." Dr. Kenneth Hagen, Pro-

	fessor of Theology, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
10:00 a.m.	Choral Matins: Seminary Kantorei
10:30 a.m.	Coffee Break
11:00 a.m.	"Luther's Doctrine of Justification and Rome." Dr. Robert D. Preus, Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
12:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:15 p.m.	"Luther and the Theosis." Rev. Kurt E. Marquart, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
2:15 p.m.	"Luther and Baptism." Dr. David P. Scaer, Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
3:15 p.m.	Coffee Break
3:45 p.m.	"Luther and Scholasticism." Dr. Alan W. Borcherding, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
5:00 p.m.	Organ Recital: Paul Grime
6:30 p.m.	Symposium Banquet
	Friday, January 20, 1995
8:30 a.m.	"Luther and the Priesthood of All Believers." Dr. Norman E. Nagel, Graduate Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri
10:00 a.m.	Service in the Chapel
10:30 a.m.	Coffee Break
11:00 a.m.	Panel Discussion
12:15 p.m.	Adjournment and Lunch

Information on registration fees, accommodations, and meals with respect to one or more of the symposia described above may be obtained from Miss Trudy Behning, Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 North Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825, or by telephone at 219-452-2143.

Books Received

James G. Kiecker. *Martin Luther and the Long Reformation: Response and Reform in the Church: Pentecost to the Present.* Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1992. xiv + 241 pages. Paperback. $10.99.

Richard Wetzel. *Melanchthons Briefwechsel: Band T 1, Texte 1-254 (1514-1522).* Melanchthons Briefwechsel. Kritische und kommentierte Gesamtausgabe, hrsg. von Heinz Scheible. Stuttgart-BadCannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1991. 558 pages. Hardback. DM351.

Norman L. Geisler. *Miracles and the Modern Mind: A Defense of Biblical Miracles.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992. 163 pages. Paperback.

Sherwood Lingenfelter. *Transforming Culture: A Challenge for Christian Mission.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992. 218 pages. Paperback.

Paul Avis. *Authority, Leadership, and Conflict in the Church.* Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992. xiii + 144 pages. Paperback. $14.95.

James M. Childs, Jr. *Faith, Formation, and Decision: Ethics in the Community of Promise.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992. x + 166 pages. Paperback.

Peter P. J. Beyerhaus. *God's Kingdom and the Utopian Error: Discerning the Biblical Kingdom of God from Its Political Counterfeits.* Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1992. x + 221 pages. Paperback. $12.95.

Royce Gordon Gruenler. *Meaning and Understanding: The Philosophical Framework for Biblical Interpretation.* Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation, vol. 2. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992. xvii + 223 pages. Paperback.

Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks, editors. *The Pluralistic Vision: Presbyterians and Mainstream Protestant Education and Leadership.* Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1992. 417 pages. Paperback. $15.95.

Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks, editors. *The Organization Revolution: Presbyterians and American Denominationalism.* Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1992. 391 pages. Paperback. $16.95.

Mary Duckert. *New Kid in the Pew: Shared Ministry with Children.* Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1992. 122 pages. Paperback. $8.95.

Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe, editors. *The Women's Bible Commentary.* London: SPCK; Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1992. xix + 396 pages. Hardback. $19.95.

Luther's Reception of Bernard of Clairvaux

Theo M. M. A. C. Bell

I. The Popularity of a Saint

The way in which Bernard of Clairvaux has come down to us is molded by history, hagiography, legends, and miracle tales, but most of all his name was made famous by his own sermons and writings and by many others which were attributed to him during the Middle Ages. As soon as a saint is canonized, he loses most of his earthly features and is refashioned by meta-historical ones.[1] His life, works, and teachings are reshaped by pious imagination and devotion. The human being is exchanged for the hero, the monk for the saint. History and legend have become so inextricably intertwined that even in this century historians are hard pressed to discern the historical figure from his legendary attributes. At the basis of all we find the *vita*, which describes the earthly life and works of a Christian who had died as a saint and molds him in the image of a saint. This *vita*, which was written as the story of a fruitful and pious life, was not meant as a biography, but as a hagiography, aiming at the ecclesiastical canonization of the saint. In Bernard's case it was especially meant to illustrate the significance of Bernard's holiness for the whole church and society. Bernard was represented not only as a Cistercian abbot, but as a *doctor ecclesiae* as well, an authoritative preacher of the church and in service of the church.[2] That approach paved the way to a greater glory of the saint transcending his own order. It became the way in which the Middle Ages looked at him.

Although by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Bernard's fame had increased immensely (due to the larger distribution of his authentic and non-authentic writings since the last quarter of the fifteenth century), the image of the saint still had the same features as it originally had and was still determined by the hagiography of the *vitae*. Of great importance as an intermediary became Jacob de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*, which gave excerpts from the early *Vita Prima*, the first hagiography written on Bernard of Clairvaux. Critical views on his person were muted by the time. His status, on the other hand, as a miracle-man kept growing steadily. Some original elements of his teachings were magnified; by the end of the Middle Ages Bernard was uncelled as a *doctor marianus* and a Master of the Passion and Imitation of Christ. Especially the

fifteenth century viewed him as the Master of Passion-Piety and, because of this fact, Bernard was mentioned together with the four most outstanding teachers of the church (*egregii doctores ecclesiae*): Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, and Gregory the Great.[3]

II. Luther and Bernard of Clairvaux

It was as a young Augustinian friar in the convent of Erfurt that Luther learned to know Bernard. We do not know very much about those early years, but there is no doubt that apart from his scholastic studies at the University of Erfurt, the *Studium Generale* of his order and personal spiritual reading brought him in touch with the fathers of the church aiming at piety and spiritual life.[4] We do not know if he already read complete sermons of Bernard; we can say, at least, of these early years that he became familiar with some thoughts of St. Bernard. An example can be found in Melanchthon's *Vita Lutheri*; he claims to have heard this story from Luther himself. An old man in the Augustinian friary had shown Luther an important passage in Bernard's sermons which taught the necessity of a personal faith.[5] Starting with the expounding of the Psalms in 1512, the young doctor Martin Luther showed already considerable familiarity with Bernard of Clairvaux. He seems to be well acquainted with his sermons, especially with those on the Song of Songs. My question here is not whether Luther knew Bernard of Clairvaux, but, rather, which Bernard he actually knew—the one of history or the one of legend, the one of iconography or the one of popular imagination and devotion? All these various aspects seem to play a part in Luther's image of Bernard. We shall deal here only with a few aspects of the subject.[6]

A. How Does Luther Refer to Bernard of Clairvaux?

The name of Bernard appears in Luther's writings in Latin as well as in German texts most often in German spelling as "Bernhardus" or "Bernhard" or "Bernhart."[7] The regular spelling "Bernardus" (without an "h") occurs in Luther's Latin writings too. Generally the name has no *epitheton ornans*; but, when the young Luther (until 1518) does use one, it mostly is *beatus* (also used by many late medieval theologians as, for example, Jean Gerson and Johann von Paltz). From 1518 onward we can also find *d(ivus)*, an expression

which arose in humanistic circles and which was popular from the beginning of the sixteenth century. The author's impression is that this epitheton is particularly—but not exclusively—used in academic disputes and theses. We find it for the first time in the *Acta Augustana* (1518), which record Luther's interrogation by Cajetan in Augsburg. We also find it in the Dispute with Johann Eck in Leipzig (1519), in the *Operationes in Psalmos*, and in the *Commentary on Galatians* from the same time as well.[8] In the same period the attributive *divus* is also used by Luther in conjunction with the names of Paul, Augustine, Jerome, and even Thomas Aquinas!

From 1518-1519 the attribute *sanctus* occurs, slowly replacing *beatus*. This development may be surprising against the background of Luther's new understanding of sanctity and the rising criticism of the worship of saints. After 1520 *beatus* has been permanently replaced by *sanctus*. Luther is now generally speaking of "Sanctus Bernhardus" or "Sanct Bernhard" (or "Sanct Bernhart") in his vernacular writings, especially in his sermons. Twice, in addition, we find "der heilige Bernardus" ("Bernhart")[9] and the honorary "Pater Bernhardus."[10] Luther was also acquainted with the honorary title *doctor mellifluus*, which became popular in the fifteenth century; but though he knew it, he rarely used it. From 1521 onward Bernard's name often appears in a sequence of saints. The sequences, in which Bernard's name is included, comprise either fathers of the church or founders and fathers of medieval monasticism. In the defense of his own case Luther often referred to this mighty cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1) from the past.

B. Which Writings of Bernard Did Luther Know?

Generally speaking, Bernard's writings can be divided into sermons, treatises, and letters. We find traces of all three genres in Luther's works, though the letters play only a minor role. Most important to Luther are the sermons; they are to him the best known and favorite part of Bernard's *opera*. Apart from Bernard's own writings he was also familiar with some anecdotes of Bernard's life. Although some of them can be traced back to the early *Vita Prima Bernardi*, Luther's knowledge of this hagiography itself can still be questioned.

1. Sermons of Bernard

We come across quotations from Bernard's sermons, more than from any other non-biblical source, throughout the course of Luther's life as a theologian and preacher. He did not, to be sure, always have these quotations at first hand from Bernard; most likely many came from anthologies (*Flores*, *Sententiae Bernardi*) and collections of excerpts (*rapiaria*) or indirectly through other authors like Gerson, Biel, Bonaventure, and Ludolph of Saxony. The quotations are often concise and not always very accurate, so that it is hard to decide the exact place from which Luther gets them. Luther—like all monks and friars—used to learn sentences of Bernard by heart, most of the time unaware of the exact sources. Thus, primary and secondary citations of Bernard are interwoven throughout Luther's life in his works.

What collections of Bernard's sermons did Luther know? There were firstly the collection of his sermons on the Canticle and secondly his sermons on the liturgical year (particularly the sermons on Advent and Christmastide). Both collections of sermons were available in the cloister of Erfurt probably already in Luther's time.[11] The Augustinian friar, therefore, could very well have known Bernard at first hand even in the early years. He also knew the collection of the four sermons *Super Missus Est*, but the question remains as to how well he knew them. They are quoted for the first time in the marginal notes to the *Opuscula Anselmi* in order to emphasize the relation between grace and humility.[12] Recently it has emerged that Luther drew this and other quotations of Bernard from Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes Vitae Christi.*[13] Later on, in the course of his Table-Talk in 1533, Luther rejects Bernard's sermons in *Super Missus Est.* because they deal too much with the position of the Virgin Mary and too little with the incarnation, but even then he does not seem very familiar with the contents of these sermons.[14]

It appears that Luther knew pseudo-bernardine sermons too, although he rarely mentions them specifically. They are, clearly, of minor significance to him. Some thoughts on detraction (*detractio*) originate from pseudo-bernardine sermons which are yet to be recovered. They turn up in the early years but disappear again soon.[15]

2. Treatises of Bernard

Compared to the sermons the treatises of Bernard play a much more modest part in Luther's works. Which ones did he know directly or indirectly? One is certain, others less so. There is, in the first place, Bernard's *De Consideratione*. There is no doubt that Luther had already, as a young monk, read this famous work of the elder Bernard. It is mentioned by him for the first time in his *Commentary on Romans* (1515). Although Luther highly praises this work in a general way, he does not quote from it very often. He usually restricts himself to a few favorite passages. This fact has caused the surprise which has been expressed by such scholars as Peter Manns. Why did Luther not quote more extensively from this popular work, and why were Bernard's critical remarks on the pope and Rome passed over in silence?[16] One should not, however, immediately conclude that the popularity of *De Consideratione* was declining in Luther's days. The author could find no actual evidence to corroborate this opinion.[17] There are, on the contrary, more indications that this book was still popular on the eve of the Reformation.

The five books named *De Consideratione* were treated by the Middle Ages as a rich source of ideas and certainly not only as a basis for criticizing Rome. Luther does not dwell on the popular texts which were drawn from the Fourth Book of *De Consideratione* (as, for example, *In His Successisti non Petro sed Constantino*). He creates, in a sense, his own tradition by borrowing materials from Bernard for his own theology. He criticizes the spiritual power of Rome, which binds the free preaching of the gospel, and no longer criticizes its worldly power and wealth. He is partial to referring to Bernard's definition of the hardened heart (*cor durum*) and to his exhortation to tend the sheep (*evangelizare pascere est*). In his last appeal to Rome in September of 1520, referring explicitly to *De Consideratione* twice, Luther derives from Bernard the authority to address the pope by means of fraternal exhortation. At the same time he also recommends to Leo X the book of St. Bernard which, in his opinion, "every pope should know by heart."[18]

At the debate in Leipzig of 1519 Johann Eck skillfully referred to Bernard's *De Consideratione* in support of the primacy of Peter and

his successors by the virtue of divine right. Luther was not impressed by this citation. He refuted the allegorical interpretation of Peter walking on the water (Matthew 14:29) by appealing to the literal sense of this story.[19] Treading the water does not mean ruling the whole world! The point here is that Christ comes to rescue Peter from his unbelief. In later years, when Luther remembered the Leipzig Debate and Eck's reference to Bernard's interpretation of Matthew 14:29, it is not Bernard, but Eck, who is denounced for this peculiar allegorical interpretation. According to Luther, it is a typical conclusion of the new dialectics!

The other treatises of Bernard are mentioned by Luther to a much lesser extent. It is, therefore, a valid question as to which writings Luther knew and to what extent he was familiar with them. A closer look at the few writings of Bernard which are mentioned by Luther would be appropriate. *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* was the most popular and influential of Bernard's works among the scholastics.[20] But it also played a special role in the *Christianae Religionis Institutio* of John Calvin, who commented extensively on several passages.[21] What did Luther hold of it? He knew the title, certainly, of the famous treatise, but was he familiar with its contents? Did he know Bernard's definition of free will and his distinction of three states of liberty (*liberum arbitrium, liberum consilium, liberum complacitum*)?[22] He could have come across the definition involved in Gabriel Biel's *Commentary on the Sentences* in his early years.[23] The only place where he explicitly quotes from *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* is in his first Explanation of the Holy Father (1518). Here he refers to a sentence which actually is a contraction of two chapters of the *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*,[24] but he claims to take this sentence from Bernard's exposition of "the gospel of Mary Magdalene." Presumably Luther is referring here to a pseudo-bernardine sermon or treatise which has not yet been traced by contemporary scholars. But the more important point is that this sentence originally comes from *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*, whether Luther was aware of it or not. "Wir konnen wollen, aber nicht wol wollen. Dan wollen ist vollkommen machen, das allein gottes ist, ubel wollen ist gebruch leyden, das ist unser."[25] Bernard taught a distinction between "creating grace" (*gratia creans*) and "saving grace" (*gratia salvans*). The first one is responsible for the

existence of the free subject, the second one for its achievement. This distinction was fairly popular in the twelfth century. Although it is generally Augustinian in character, Bernard's adoption of it may have had something to do with its popularity. What counts for Luther here is only the "saving grace," because free choice without saving grace is just an empty term. He knows that only the justified sinner can do good, while the unjustified sinner can only do evil. That means that for Luther Bernard (like Augustine) is an advocate of the bondage of the will and an ally in his battle against scholastic anthropology. "Here Saint Bernard throws down Aristotle's doctrine."[26] In the same year (1518) Karlstadt referred to Bernard's treatise in his eleventh thesis against Johann Eck.[27] Like Luther, he also viewed free choice and saving grace in Bernard's treatise as indissolubly linked together. Karlstadt and Luther wanted to start at the real situation of man, totally captured by sin and unable to do any good without saving grace.

It was a common scholastic usage to define the (created) nature of free choice principally apart from discussions of sin and grace. It was for this reason that Karlstadt's thesis was contested by Eck at Leipzig. According to Eck, also Bernard teaches a free choice of man as a gift of creation—that is to say, as a natural gift apart from grace. Free choice after the fall is not just an empty term, but remains unviolated.[28] To Karlstadt (and Luther), on the other hand, it is just an empty term if it is considered apart from grace. Thus, both points of view were extracted from the same treatise. Bernard himself had tried to keep grace and free choice in balance by vindicating the sovereignty of grace without subtracting from the dignity of free choice as a gift of creation. Bernard's treatise drew for this reason the attention of Melanchthon as well. In his *Loci Communes* (1521) he spoke of Bernard as having treated the question of the will in a rather ambivalent way. Bernard did not always remain true to himself (*non similis sui*). From the early twenties of the sixteenth century on Luther seems to follow this opinion of Melanchthon. He now discerns an ambivalence in Bernard's understanding of the will and blames it on the fact that the fathers of the church spoke differently in different situations. *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* is barely mentioned.

The *Wirkungsgeschichte* of *De Praecepto et Dispensatione* was extensive in the Middle Ages. It was often regarded as a commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict. Luther, indeed, knew the work, but rarely mentioned it—mainly in one treatise of 1521, his *De Votis Monasticis Iudicium*. Luther restricts himself to a few passages that are meant to emphasize generosity in the application of monastic dispensation and to show the limitation of obedience to human rule. The brief allusions clearly have an exemplary character;[29] they serve as corroboration of Luther's own view, developed from his understanding of Scripture, on the relationship between baptism and vows, Christian freedom and coercion by law, divine commandments and human precepts. Luther, following Bernard, teaches that, whereas divine commandments should always be obeyed, one may be exempted at times from obeying human precepts. Where Bernard, however, sees in the latter case only a limited possibility of dispensation by a monastic superior, Luther advocates a much more accommodating view.[30] For as things stand, human precepts are in essence subject to abolition.[31] Luther is not, however, advocating an arbitrary policy of dispensation, as Denifle has wrongly stated.[32] Dispensation is always a matter of prudence and wisdom for Luther, just as Bernard had taught previously. Following the pattern of the later Middle Ages, Luther understood *De Praecepto et Dispensatione* as a liberal guideline in cases of dispensations from human laws and precepts. In this sense Gerson too had referred to this treatise several times in his *De Vita Spirituali*.[33]

No quotation from *De Gradibus Humilitatis* occurs anywhere in Luther's works, but he clearly was familiar with the bernardine understanding of *humilitas* as the basic virtue of monastic life. This familiarity particularly shows itself in his notes on the *Opuscula Anselmi*, but is also seen later on. In citing Bernard on the theme of humility, Luther usually quotes something from one of his sermons.[34]

3. Letters of Bernard

It is not very likely that Luther was acquainted with Bernard's letters as such. He does, to be sure, know a few sentences drawn from them, mainly concerning the necessary progress (*profectus*) of a Christian in this life.[35] He is also acquainted with a sentence on

faith and baptism deriving from Letter 77, which was known in the tradition of following generations as the *Tractatus de Baptismo.*[36] Luther must have picked up these statements from his monastic tradition during his early years since there is no trace of evidence that he knew whence these quotations originally came.

4. Examples and Anecdotes

Examples and anecdotes from Bernard's life are sometimes hard to trace back to original sources. A number of them, however, stem ultimately from the first hagiography of Bernard, the *Vita Prima.* At no point, to be sure, does Luther show any direct acquaintance with the *Vita Prima*; but, still, he does know some of its contents indirectly, most likely through the popular *Legenda Aurea* and the *Breviarium Romanum* (lectiones IV-VI on the Feast of St. Bernard). *Exempla* and anecdotes of Bernard occur in Luther's works from 1518 on. They play minor parts except for the story of the blessed death of Bernard, which assumes a central position in Luther's image of Bernard. The lamentation "perdite vixi," which Luther places on Bernard's dying lips, is initially (1518) quoted as an example of Christian penitence and humility, of which Augustine and Bernard were the most impressive examples.[37] But in the *De Votis Monasticis Iudicium* (1521-1522) the prayer of St. Bernard receives a new meaning: his renunciation of his monastic vows in his dying hour and his return to Christ.

In opposition to Bernard's death his life was to Luther only a side-issue. It was not his person but Bernard as an example of true Christian faith which was the main focus of Luther's attention. The few facts of Bernard's life which Luther brings to the attention of others are mostly presented by way of example. The many journeys of Bernard in the service of the church are seen as a temporary abrogation of the *stabilitas loci.* For Luther this behavior illustrates the Christian freedom in which Bernard lived his monastic life. His excessive asceticism is rejected. It is understood as a serious way of undermining oneself and consequently as falling short in the service of one's brethren.

Legends and miracle-tales of Bernard, so abundant in the Middle Ages, are but rarely found in Luther's writings and sermons. Nor

are they regarded very highly by him. They are fabrications invented to promote an even higher regard for the saint, thus actually detracting from God's glorious activity in His saints. The conception of Bernard as a great miracle-worker was certainly known to Luther, but he paid little attention to it. The iconographic representation of the legendary miracle of the *lactatio* Luther undoubtedly knew but rejected.

III. Luther's Images of Bernard of Clairvaux

The images which Luther had of Bernard are firmly rooted in the late Middle Ages and are still in line with it. In the author's opinion one must speak, not of one clearly defined image, but rather of several *images* which in one way or another are connected with the historical person and the cultic figure of Bernard of Clairvaux. These images may very well have their origin in the historical person, but were also shaped by *Übermalung* (repainting). Luther contributed to this process, too, by adding his own reformatory touches to certain images. His image of Bernard thus resembles a mosaic in which the different pieces together make up some sort of whole.

A. Bernard as the Last Father of the Church

Although Bernard belongs to the more recent authors of the church (*recentiores*), he is clearly distinguished from scholasticism as representing a type of theology not yet infected by Aristotle and still in line with the fathers of the church. Occasionally Luther speaks of Bernard as *pater*, clearly pointing to the high authority of certain fathers of the church. In importance Bernard ranks as the third *doctor ecclesiasticus* after Augustine and Ambrose.[38] It may be noted that these fathers, too, were generally extolled for their eloquence in preaching. The expression "the last but not the least of the church's fathers," which became popular in humanist circles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was not yet in use in Luther's time.[39] In fact, however, Bernard and the Victorines were for Luther the last fathers before Aristotle took hold of the theology of the universities.

B. Bernard as a Preacher

The Middle Ages loved Bernard as a preacher in line with his stylized image in the *Vita Prima*, which the Cistercians wished to transmit to the generations to come. Bernard had been not only the abbot of the monastery of Clairvaux, but also a preacher in the service of the pope and the church. Bernard was first canonized as a holy abbot in 1174, but efforts by the Cistercians to have him recognized by the pope as a *doctor ecclesiae* proved successful soon thereafter in 1202.[40] Thus, the Franciscan tradition (represented for example, by Bonaventure) reckoned, not Bernard among the *contemplativi*, but among the *praedicatores*. The *Bernardus praedicans* is an important aspect of Luther's image of Bernard and a very positive one, since it is related to his preaching of Christ as the Savior of mankind. In Luther's opinion Bernard surpasses even Augustine in his sermons as a preacher (though not as a teacher of the church). When Bernard preaches of Christ, Luther has nothing but praise for him. "Bernhardo ist der Jesu so lieb; es ist eitel Jesus mitt im."[41] For Luther this is sufficient reason for ranking Bernard highly in the tradition of the church—on the first grade as a preacher[42] and on the third grade as a teacher.[43] He refers to Bernard mainly in connection with the incarnation and the union of the soul with Christ. Later on Luther's criticism is aimed in the first place at the doctrinal content of Bernard; when, for instance, Bernard extols Mary as he does, he obscures the place of Christ in salvation. Something similar can be said of the monastic life of Bernard: He lived this kind of life in freedom and taught likewise within his own community. Yet outside of it he taught under papal direction the perpetual obligation of the vows. In this way he became an instrument of deception and error to many people. Bernard's doctrine, then, shifted with the situation in which it was taught.

C. Bernard as an Interpreter of Holy Scripture

This aspect of Bernard's legacy is sometimes valued in a positive way and sometimes in a negative way—in a positive way particularly in Luther's early exposition of the Book of Psalms. Bernard's effective way of interpreting Scripture touched Luther deeply then. From the Book of Psalms Bernard had drawn his abundant erudition. He who, like Bernard, is versed in the Psalms, will find much more

in them than in all the commentaries ever written.[44] The Psalms were read with monastic eyes (*lectio-meditatio-oratio-contemplatio*),[45] and Luther tried to shed light on them with the help of the fathers, among others Bernard. It is not the personal authority of Bernard which is of first importance, but some of his thoughts which shed light on the scriptural text to be interpreted. In later years, of course, Luther, emphasizing the *sensus literalis*, criticizes the random use of allegory, whereas Bernard, in line with the whole patristic tradition, had placed great emphasis on the spiritual interpretation of the Scriptures.[46] Luther came, therefore, to have criticism as well as appreciation for the *mirabilis artifex in catachresibus* ("the wonderful master of *catachreses*," which refers to misapplications of Scripture). Bernard's exegesis is not always to the point; the particular meaning of a text is often applied to a more general meaning (*generalis sententia*). This general meaning Luther often calls good or pious, even if the application seems mistaken to him (*sententia bona, sed non bene applicata*).

D. The Paradigm of Bernard's Blessed Death

Luther is not very interested in the life of Bernard, except in his death as the ultimate and most decisive moment in a Christian life. Two stories are cited by Luther which relate to the blessed death of Bernard. The first one involves the often cited *perdite vixi* which was already used by the later Middle Ages in the context of *ars moriendi* (Gerson). The second one is an anecdote from the *Vita Prima*, in which Bernard—taken away in a vision—is deposited in front of God's judgment seat and appeals to the "second heritage" of Christ. Christ has a "double heritage"; one He possesses by right of His divinity, the second He has merited through His suffering, yet without needing it for Himself. From 1521 onwards Luther often mentioned (and linked) these two stories together. Until his death they remained his most favorite recollections of Bernard. Initially (1518) Bernard appears, along with Augustine, as the prime example of ultimate repentance and self-accusation in one's dying hour. Beginning in 1521, however, Luther focuses on the *perdite vixi* as the final renunciation of monastic vows as good works meriting salvation. The continuing conception remains, however, the renunciation of human righteousness and final reliance on Christ by

faith alone.

E. Bernard as a Monk

According to Joseph Lortz in the congress on Bernard of 1953 in Mainz, Luther excluded Bernard from monastic life "in a grotesque way" by having him renounce his vows in his dying hour.[47] But did Luther, in fact, ever intend to exclude Bernard from monastic life? In opposition to this opinion is the fact that Luther never denied that Bernard lived the life of a monk until his dying day. Living the life of a monk could in itself be a good thing, so long as it was not considered a way of gaining eternal life. It is for this reason that Luther used to speak of Bernard as a monk in a twofold sense: He regarded him, on the one hand, as the greatest and most pious monk who had ever lived, while, on the other hand, Luther could not keep from pointing out that even the life of the most pious of monks could effect no salvation at all. The founders of the monastic orders had instituted monastic life as a life to be lived in freedom, but their followers had imitated them wrongly; they followed the fathers in their works instead of in their faith. Because of the circumstances Luther could speak of Bernard as a monk who, deceived by the pope, believed he could merit eternal life with his *Muncherey*, but who renounced his wasted life at the end and returned to faith in Christ.

Luther speaks of Bernard as a reformer of monastic life only once and in a limited sense—in *De Votis Monasticis*: Bernard had partly restored to his own community the *vera cultus dei* urged by St. Paul (1 Corinthians 14:26).[48] This true worship in faith is characterized by the *lectio* and *expositio* of Scripture, common prayer, and singing. More often Luther remembered Bernard as an excellent monastic preacher, because "nobody can teach the word of God better than monks can, just as St. Bernard and others did."[49] A cloister lacking *doctores fidei* has no reason to exist any longer; it would be better to tear it down altogether.[50] If, however, there were still people like Bernard living in the cloisters today, the cloisters could well be tolerated.[51]

F. Bernard as a Worshipper of the Virgin Mary

There is no doubt about the fact that Bernard had a personal

devotion to the Virgin Mary, but, in relation to the totality of his treatises and sermons, only a very small proportion (mainly sermons delivered on liturgical feasts) deal with her. The first biographers hardly spoke of Bernard's devotion to Mary, but from the thirteenth century on marian legends were woven around him:[52] some miraculous appearances of Mary to Bernard appealed strongly to the pious imagination of people (such as the *lactatio*). In addition, the mariological treatises of such contemporaries of Bernard as Arnold of Bonneval, Eckbert of Schönau, and Oglerius of Locedio circulated under Bernard's name throughout Europe. It is no wonder that soon Bernard was praised in tradition and art as a *doctor marianus.*

The young Luther praises with Bernard the faith of Mary; she was the first believer in the incarnation of God's Son within her.[53] He appeals here to an old saying of Augustine (which was familiar to Bernard also), that the virgin would never have conceived the Son of God if she had not first believed the angel's word in her heart.[54] In later years, when Luther distances himself from the worship of the saints, he distances himself from Bernard's appraisal of Mary as well. The abbot had attributed too much to her (*zuviel gethan*). Bernard had not always spoken rightly about the annunciation in his sermon (*sic*) *Super Missus Est*; he had given too much room to human digressions in Mary's honor. Anyone who reads the sermons involved, will, indeed, find that Bernard praises the honor and the election of Mary at length and that he expresses himself in a style which Christine Mohrmann has rightly called an "exubérance quelque peu baroque."[55] One should also notice, however, that the abundant praise of Mary is set completely within the framework of the incarnation.[56] Though these homilies were written as personal praise of Mary, this praise was closely connected with the annunciation of the Lord. What was it, then, which offended Luther in these sermons?

(1.) In the first place, the four homilies called *Super Missus Est*, which figure prominently among those few works of Bernard in which the Virgin Mary plays an important part, served in the Middle Ages as primary sources of Bernard's reputation as a *doctor marianus.* By virtue of the wide distribution which they received in both manuscript and print, they contributed greatly to the image of

Bernard as a *docteur marial par excellence.*[57] Bernard, for instance—and especially these homilies of his—are the most important source of the discourses on the Feast of Annunciation by Jacob de Voragine in his popular *Legenda Aurea.* Gabriel Biel's sermons on the Virgin Mary and also his *Expositio Canonis Missae* likewise refer extensively to this series of homilies called *Super Missus Est.* Johann von Paltz, a fellow-friar of Luther, had asserted in his *Supplementum Coelifodinae* that Mary had effected through her humility (*per humilitatem*) the Son of God's becoming man.[58] Mary had become a second gateway to heaven, the Queen of Mercy, the Treasury of Heaven, and the solid Foundation of the Church, all expressions which Paltz had borrowed from Bernard.[59] Nor is the well-known theme of the *mediatrix* by any means absent. Mary, the Mother of Mercy, sustains mankind in the terrifying presence of the divine "judge, in whose hand the terrible sword of His wrath is glittering above our heads."[60]

(2.) Luther's literal interpretation of Scripture is a second consideration which throws light upon the *zuviel gethan* previously cited. In the twenties of the sixteenth century Luther reinterpreted certain passages of Scripture which were generally understood in the tradition of the church in a mariological sense. It was precisely these passages, which Bernard in his *Super Missus Est* gives a traditional mariological interpretation—involving, for instance, the significance of the root of Jesse in Isaiah 11:1, the fullness of grace in Luke 1:28, and the agreeing (*fiat*) of Mary to the incarnation of Christ (Luke 1:38).[61] For interpretations of this kind the theologians of the Middle Ages eagerly referred to Bernard, notwithstanding the fact that these interpretations were much older than Bernard.

(3.) Although, thirdly, Bernard had tried to keep a balance between the Mother and her Son, the sermons of *Super Missus Est* were still, after all, written as a personal appraisal of Mary. For Luther some aspects of this appraisal would have sounded too one-sided, giving too much honor to a mere human being: (a.) Bernard extols the dignity of Mary as a virgin and a mother in an exuberant style. (b.) He places Mary, not inside the church as the community of believers, but rather beyond and apart from the church—close to her Son. (c.) Bernard emphasizes the importance

of Mary's agreeing to the incarnation.[62] (d.) He stresses the Eve-Mary analogy:[63] as Eve took part in the perdition of mankind, so Mary as Eve's daughter takes part in its redemption. (e.) Bernard poses as a question which of the two should be admired most—the condescension of the Son or the elevation of the mother.[64] For Luther there could be no such question: "Creatura Maria non potest satis laudari, sed wenn der Creator selb komt et fit pretium nostrum, da ist die freud."[65]

It is not quite clear, however, from the scarce remarks involved, to what extent Luther's criticism of the sermons of *Super Missus Est* arose from a personal perusal of Bernard's homilies in praise of Mary or from the image of them shaped by tradition. Even if, moreover, he read the sermons themselves, Luther would have read them against the background of the medieval representation of Bernard as a *doctor marianus*; nor can we underestimate the influence of this image shaped by tradition. Luther was, in addition, strongly affected by some iconographic representations, notably the image of Mary as the staircase to heaven (*Heilstreppe*), which he repeatedly attributes to Bernard's writings. As God had reached mankind in the incarnation of His Son through Mary, so mankind had to use this staircase in the opposite direction. God the Father could only be reached through His Son and the Son only through His mother (double mediation). The mother showed her breast to her Son and, in His turn, the Son His wounded heart to the Father. Though Luther sometimes attributes this theme to Bernard's writings, he generally seems to refer more to images than to writings dealing with this subject. He speaks of "paintings" which had spread this misrepresentation.[66] An important literary source for this image is the *Libellus de Laudibus Beatae Mariae Virginis* by Bernard's confrater Arnold of Bonneval, but this booklet was often attributed to Bernard. Related imagery, moreover, can be found in some of Bernard's own sermons; Mary as Mother of Mercy provides protection to mankind from the wrath of God and His Son.

G. The Master of Passion-Piety

The fact that Bernard was considered in the late Middle Ages a *doctor passionis* is not a development without its oddities. Bernard received this title, in fact, mainly because of many *pseudo-Bernard-*

iana dealing with the passion of Christ.[67] Bernard had, however, become famous as a teacher of the *memoria passionis*; he taught affection and compassion for the sufferings and helplessness of the Savior of the world in his sermons. This fame was due, still, not only to the many sermons rightly or falsely attributed to him, but also to the famous miracle-tale of Bernard being embraced by the Crucified (*amplexus Christi*). Luther appears to be familiar with this legend. Bernard, nevertheless, as a master of passion-piety plays a less prominent part in Luther's theology than one might expect in view of his ample consideration of the suffering and death of Christ. If Bernard can be said to be of any importance in this regard, the reference is mainly to the young Luther. A few of his thoughts on the passion of Christ come originally from sermons of Bernard on the Song of Songs (in meditating on the wounds of Christ and describing the passion as a bundle of myrrh). Although these thoughts had become public domain in the Middle Ages and often appeared under the name of others (such as Augustine), we can by no means draw the conclusion that Luther did not know or read Bernard's sermons on the Song of Songs themselves.[68]

Special consideration is given by Luther to the wounds of Christ as focal points of meditation. The wounds of Christ could be understood in terms both of God's accusation of the sinner and of His mercy to him. Luther's monastic superior, Johann von Staupitz, seems to have played a major role in this interpretation of bernardine thought, according to Luther in some retrospective statements.[69] He taught that God's mercy rather than His judgment should be sought and found in the wounds of Christ. Meditating on the wounds of Christ dispels fears relating to predestination. In his commentary on the Letter to the Romans Luther urged the "weak" to stay, with him, close to the wounds of Christ; such meditation would protect them from fearful uncertainty of predestination.[70] "Tuta satis sunt nobis vulnera Ihesu Christi, 'foramina petre.'"[71] The allusion here is to Canticle 2:14 and indirectly to Bernard's famous Sermons 61-62 on the Song of Songs; the soul is like a dove, which finds shelter in the clefts of the rock constituted by the wounds of Christ.

The passion-piety of the late medieval period, aiming at the representation and imitation of the suffering Christ, was newly

reevaluated in the *theologia crucis*. Luther emphasizes that it is the work of God which the believer should discern in this suffering. He is, consequently, more interested in the *cognitio dei et hominis*, as a knowledge of sin and salvation, than in a merely outward imitation of the Man of Sorrows.

H. Bernard as a Mystic

In research on Luther it has become common to speak of Latin mysticism (Bernard and Bonaventure) as distinct from German mysticism (Tauler and the Theologia Deutsch). Luther's position on Latin mysticism has been seen as ambivalent as opposed to his position on the German type. The usual illustration is the bridal imagery of Latin mysticism which was partly incorporated into Luther's theology and partly rejected by him because of its erotic connotations. It is, however, very much a question if Luther ever considered Bernard a mystic; he never, at any rate, explicitly refers to him as such. Nor does Luther ever criticize Bernard's bridal mysticism in specific terms. The reformer, in fact, rather than borrowing the theme of the mystical marriage directly from Bernard, more likely derived a simplified version from Staupitz. He left out the erotic connotations of the image and restricted himself to a more biblical application to the church and the individual soul.[72] The bridal theme provides him with words to express the mutual affection in the relationship of Christ with the believing soul and of Christ with His church. Where there is any resonance to the themes of the mystics, Luther interprets them as referring to faith and the word of God.

I. Bernard as Doctor Mellifluus

From the fifteenth century on this title of *doctor mellifluus* was utilized widely. It originally referred to Bernard as an interpreter of Scripture who had the ability "to suck honey from a rock," knowing how to elicit a spiritual meaning from an otherwise dead letter (*mel in cera, devotio in littera*). For many medieval authors, however, the word "mellifluous" referred to Bernard's preaching by reason of the sweetness not only of its contents but also of its style. Luther rarely uses this honorific title, and when he does use it, he is not referring to Bernard as an interpreter of Scripture. Once he calls

him "mellifluous" in reference to his sermons on the Virgin Mary.[73] This understanding places Luther in a particular late-medieval tradition which attributed the title to Bernard as a *doctor marianus* of great popularity. This could be one reason why the title was of little importance to Luther.

J. Bernard as a Forerunner of the Reformation

In the course already of the sixteenth century it became popular among Lutherans and others to depict Bernard as a forerunner of Luther and his reformation. The abbot of Clairvaux was depicted in this way by Flacius Illyricus in his famous *Catalogus Testium Veritatis* (1556) and in the *Magdeburger Centurien* (1559 and subsequently).[74] Did Luther himself, however, ever think of Bernard as his forerunner? According to Luther's view of ecclesiastical history, certainly, Bernard lived in a time of spiritual decline. In his *Supputatio Annorum* (1541) Luther worked out an outline of the six millennia of the history of the church from Abel on. The name of Bernard appears at the beginning of the last millennium, which rang in the time of the antichrist and the return of Christ at the end of times. At the year 1000 Luther notes: "In this millennium Satan is now unchained and the bishop of Rome becomes the antichrist."[75] Bernard's name erroneously appears around 1080 instead of 1090, which means that Luther (like the writer in the *Legenda Aurea*) was unaware of the exact year of Bernard's birth. Luther also mentions that Bernard became a monk in 1112, was an abbot (for thirty-six years) who built one hundred sixty monasteries, and died in the year 1153.[76] These sparse facts were doubtless drawn from the *Legenda Aurea* or Luther's breviary. According to Luther, Bernard lived in times which were already dangerous, but still when darkness had not taken over the church completely. This eventuality would come a century later when Satan brought Rome to the height of its power and took over the universities, in which no longer Christ but Aristotle would rule. Bernard was one of the few people who kept the flame of faith burning in dark times. He preached the gospel, although public preaching was suppressed by the papal government.[77] Its effect was, therefore, limited, but God had still preserved in him His church in a wondrous way.

Was Bernard, then, a forerunner of Luther's reformation? Luther

never spoke of Bernard in these terms. If he was a forerunner, he was a messenger of the coming last times, just as Luther's reformation was the beginning of the end. To the end of his life Luther's expectation of an end coming soon kept growing. Luther hoped that God in His mercy would shorten the last years of history. In this light he could have seen Bernard and himself as forerunners of God's final reformation. In one instance of his table talks, five years before his death, Luther spoke of the course of the *ecclesia ab Abel* through history. Sometimes God preserved His church in no more than a handful of people. Like a final Jeremiah Luther puts himself in the line of Augustine, Ambrose, and Bernard, in his opinion the three greatest preachers of the post-apostolic church. Why did he call himself a Jeremiah? This prophet had to announce God's punishment and wrath to the people of his own time, but at the same time he had to comfort people with the message that this wrath would not last forever. With this prophet and with Bernard Luther saw himself sharing a *schweer Predigtamt.* Jeremiah had been a sad and pitiful prophet in evil times who in spite of his steady preaching saw things getting worse all the time. "Nu das Ende der Welt herzu trit, wüten und toben die Leute wider Gott auffs aller grewlichst, lestern und verdammen Gottes wort, das sie wissentlich erkennen, das es Gottes wort und die warheit sey."[78] Like a final Jeremiah Luther saw the end of times coming. It could now be expected soon. "Bernard did something, and now something is done by me, Jeremiah. And so the end may come and that it may come immediately let all pray: Come, Christ, come."[79]

IV. Some Perspectives and Some Questions

In *Divus Bernhardus* the author concentrated above all on quotations of Bernard and probable allusions to him. They offer an approach, of course, of prime importance to the subject of Luther and Bernard. By no means, however, has the subject been thereby exhaustively treated. Reinhard Schwarz has indicated the problem very well: "In welchem Masse Luther im Nachdenken über seine eigene Christus-und Gotteserfahrung von Augustin und Bernhard gefördert worden ist, lässt sich schwer ermessen. Die Anregungen liegen vor allem im Medium der Schriftauslegung; sie lassen sich nicht einfach an Zitaten oder an bestimmten theologischen Begriffen

ablesen."[80] Heiko Oberman made the point very clearly that, without the experience of the "mystical way" from Augustine to Bernard of Clairvaux, there would not have been Luther's "experience-borne," vital faith in Christ.[81] Perhaps understanding the young Luther's theology as a monastic theology or a *theologia experimentalis* offers us a valuable approach.

Until now scholars have mainly focused on the setting of Luther's theology in late medieval scholasticism and German mysticism. His biblical theology has been characterized as a theology aimed at reform of the university, which pitted itself against traditional scholastic theology. To what extent, however, is Luther's theology monastic theology as well?[82] His theology also has its setting in the spiritual teaching of his own Augustinian Order.[83] It has been called "Luther's inalienable inheritance of monastic theology."[84] Monastic theology can be briefly described as a theology drawing upon Scripture and the fathers of the church and orientated toward an articulation of the experience of the spiritual life.[85] The author's research has not yet endeavored to define Bernard's influence on Luther; in his opinion it is still too early to do so. First the history of the reception of Bernard in the late Middle Ages must be explored in a more nuanced way. It is insufficient to conclude that he was highly appreciated. The reception of Bernard by the monastic orders at the dawn of the reformation has to be studied and particularly how Bernard was appreciated in Luther's own Augustinian Order.

Luther was acquainted with the late medieval passion-piety in which many traces of Bernard (*vestigia Bernardi*) could be found. We already referred here to sermons of Bernard on the Song of Songs which deal with the passion of Christ and which had a deep influence on later generations. Very popular was the metaphor of "the dove in the clefts of the rock," which stood for the soul finding a safe rest in the wounds of Christ. To what extent did these bernardine thoughts influence (directly or indirectly) the development of Luther's *theologia crucis*? Although it is too early to speak yet of influence, we can at least at this time note some striking similarities between Luther and Bernard and, even more importantly, some similarities of which Luther was aware: (1.) Both theologians were

rooted in Paul.[86] (2.) Both saw the manger and the cross as the primary locations of the hidden presence of God among men.[87] (3.) Both asserted the revelation of God in hiddenness to faith against reason. (4.) Both rejected speculative theology in favor of a theology oriented to the history of salvation. (5.) Both asserted the existential and personal nature of faith in man.[88]

How can we reach a more definite solution of the question of what kind of influence Bernard of Clairvaux had on the genesis of Luther's theology of the reformation? A few things may yet be said here on reception and influence. One thing is that reception by no means necessitates the full acceptance of an author from the past. Luther's reception of Bernard of Clairvaux was understandably selective; he picked up certain thoughts of Bernard and left others alone, consciously or unconsciously. His selection was determined by the writings which he knew and the way in which he appreciated them. But this selection was also determined by his congeniality toward Bernard. According to Peter Manns, this congeniality was based on a *sensorium*, which Luther developed during his early years.[89] As Luther was familiar mainly with Bernard's sermons, he admired him as a biblical theologian and a wonderful preacher. He praised his exposition of Scripture as aiming at allowing the hearts of his hearers to experience God's goodness.[90] The two Christian thinkers had much in common; for both theology had to be a preaching theology which aimed at the personal salvation of man. All other speculations were useless to them, which made them both critical of scholastic theology as of philosophy in the region of theology. Both, moreover, propagated a theology which was built, not on a neutral ontological foundation, but on an experience in faith of the living God manifesting Himself in His word. Knowing oneself and knowing God was the Augustian framework of this *theologia experimentalis*. That which they had in common, however, was also the point at which Bernard and Luther went their own ways by reason of their different personal experiences in different situations. For Bernard the mercy of God is no existential question. Man is supposed to become aware in life that he is touched by the love of God. Bernard's theology can be defined as a (monastic) road to loving God in return with all one's heart. It is the road of the pilgrim seeking perfection, though it is certain that

this goal will never be fully achieved in this life. Luther's theology starts with a fearful question: How can God ever be loved by a sinner? How can the sinner ever be sure that he is dealing with a merciful God? Loving God can only start with believing in God's mercy. The road to God, then, becomes the road from God to mankind. God seeks out sinners and wants to tie them forever to His liberating grace. If a man believes this much about himself, he is already justified. How did the thoughts of Bernard fit with the justification by faith alone which became the heart of Luther's theology? Without portraying Bernard as a forerunner of Luther the Reformer,[91] there can be no doubt that Bernard was a great help to him on his road to understanding faith as a clinging of the heart to the word of God.[92] On his road to the reformation Bernard was a true companion to Luther; but also in his later years Luther remembered Bernard as the greatest of all the fathers of the church after Augustine.[93] Certainly Luther must have been aware also of several differences between himself and Bernard, but to Luther these were matters of minor importance. Their theologies circled around the same focal point of personal experience of the Holy Writ. William of St. Thierry states in his hagiography that Bernard often used to say, "It is better to drink from the source itself than from the many streams."[94] Almost four hundred years later a doctor of Scripture at the University of Wittenberg would make this saying very much his own.

The Endnotes

1. P. de Leo, "La Posterité spirituelle," in *Bernard de Clairvaux, Histoire, mentalités, spiritualité, Oeuvres complètes*, I: *Introduction Générale* (*Sources Chrétiennes*, 380; Paris, 1992), 659-698, here 660-661.

2. This is one of the main themes of a new book by A. H. Bredero, *Bernardus van Clairvaux, Tussen cultus en historie* (Kampen-Kapellen, 1993), 98.

3. B. Hamm (*Frömmigkeitstheologie am Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts: Studien zu Johannes von Paltz und seinem Umkreis* [Tübingen, 1982], 193) speaks of a bernardine renaissance in the fifteenth century by virtue of his popularity as a master of

passion-piety.

4. C. Burger, "Der Augustinereremit Martin Luther in Kloster und Universität bis zum Jahre 1512," in *Kloster Amelungsborn 1135-1985*, ed. G. Ruhbach and K. Schmidt-Clausen (Amelungsborn, 1985), 166. More extensive remarks on the *Studium Generale* of Erfurt can be found in O. Scheel, *Martin Luther*, II, chapter 1, paragraph 3.

5. For a discussion of this story one may see the author's "*Testimonium Spiritus Sancti*, An Example of Bernard-Reception in Luther's Theology," in *Bijdragen*, 53 (1992), 62-72.

6. The theme is treated more extensively in the author's *Divus Bernhardus, Bernhard von Clairvaux in Martin Luthers Schriften* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte, 148, Mainz, 1993).

7. J. Leclercq, "Die Verbreitung der bernhardischen Schriften im deutschen Sprachraum," in *Bernhard von Clairvaux, Mönch und Mystiker* (Wiesbaden, 1955), 176 ff.

8. WA, 2, 15, 18; 2, 264, 2; 2, 543, 6; 2, 602, 8; 5, 47, 13; 5, 286, 10; 27, 335, 33; 39, II, 159, 23.

9. WA, 9, 107, 19; 21, 60, 20.

10. WA, 47, 109, 22; 52, 22, 2.

11. *De Consideratione* (Augsburg), *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum* (Strassburg, 1497), *Sermones de Tempore et de Sanctis* (Basel, 1495). One may also see J. Matsuura, *Restbestände aus der Erfurter Augustiner-Bibliothek zu Luthers Zeit*, in *AWA*, 5, 315-332; A. Zumkeller, *Handschriften aus dem ehemaligen Erfurter Augustinerkloster in der Staatsbibliothek Berlin-Preussischer Kulturbesitz*, in *A. Aug.*, 40 (1977), 223-277; D. Gutiérrez, "De Antiquis Ordinis Eremitarum Sancti Augustini Bibliothecis," in *A. Aug.*, 13 (1954), especially (on Bernard) 186, 200, 207, 214, 221, 232, 243, 245, 247, 275, 277, 278, 303, 306, 307.

12. WA, 9, 107, 28, citing *Missus* 4, 9.

13. Ulrich Köpf, "Die Rezeptions und Wirkungsgeschichte Bernhards von Clairvaux," in *Bernhard von Clairvaux. Rezeption und Wirkung im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit*, ed. Kaspar Elm

(Wiesbaden, 1994), 13-14.

14. WA, TR, 1, note 494: "Bernhardus consumit totum sermonem in laude virginis Mariae et obliviscitur rei gestae . . ." It is remarkable that Luther talks here about one sermon instead of four sermons. Possibly he had never read them and had drawn his scanty knowledge about them from another source.

15. WA 1, 49, 38; 4, 681, 4. One may see Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 76-77, 244; 387.

16. P. Manns, "Zum Gespräch zwischen M. Luther und der katholischen Theologie: Begegnung zwischen patristisch-monastischer und reformatorischer Theologie an der Scholastik vorbei," in *Thesaurus Lutheri: Auf der Suche nach neuen Paradigmen der Luther-Forschung*, ed. T. Mannermaa, A. Ghiselli, and S. Peura, Helsinki, 1987. Manns calls "das Echo auf diese Schrift . . . ausgesprochen mager. [. . .] Trotzdem müsste Bernhards scharfe Kritik an der Pseudomorphose des ursprünglichen Petrus-Amtes durch die päpstlichen Potentaten in der Nachfolge Konstantins eigentlich Luthers Interesse gefunden haben" (149).

17. Manns, *Zum Gespräch*, 149: "Dies mag seinen Grund darin haben, dass Bücher von dieser Berühmtheit auch für mittelalterlichen Leser schnell den Reiz der Neuheit verloren." One may compare Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 141-146.

18. WA, 7, 10, 29; Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 147.

19. *De Consideratione*, II, 8, 16. Another argument was taken by Eck from *De Consideratione*, III, 4, 17-18.

20. J. Châtillon, "L'influence de S. Bernard sur la pensée scolastique au XIIe et au XIIIe siècle," in *Saint Bernard Théologien*, *ASOC*, 9 (1953), 3-4:268-288.

21. B. McGinn, *Bernard of Clairvaux: Treatises III* (Kalamazoo, 1977), 48-50.

22. *SBO*, III, 170-171 (*De Gratia* 3, 6-7): *libertas a necessitate, libertas a peccato, libertas a miseria.* Although the *liberum arbitrium* remains free, it is at the same time captured by sin. It is at this point from which Luther starts.

23. Gabriel Biel, *Collectorium circa Quattuor Libros Sententiarum*, ed. W. Werbeck and U. Hofmann (Tübingen, 1973 ff.), II, 487,

489, 490. Biel provides three definitions of the free will—those of Anselm, Bernhard, and Augustine (II, 25). One may compare II, 485: "Beatus Bernardus in suo *De Libero Arbitrio* sic definit: Est 'consensus ob voluntatis inamissibilem libertatem et rationis,' 'indeclinabile iudicium.'" One may see *SBO*, III, 169, 4 (*De Gratia*, 2, 4).

24. We have here a contraction of *De Gratia*, 6, 16, and 18.

25. WA, 9, 137, 19. One may see McGinn, *Treatises III*, 25. Johann Agricola, the publisher of Luther's *Explanation of the Holy Father* (1518), indicated *De Gratia* as the original source in the margin.

26. WA, 9, 137, 23: "Hye wirfft darnydder Bernhardus dye lere Arestotelis, da er sagt, ein mensch sey eyn herr aller seiner werck, anfanges, mittels und endes. Wye kan und magk aber das bestehen, dyweyl der will, dem Arestoteles die groste macht gibt, nicht gutes tzuwollen vormagk?"

27. V. E. Löscher, *Vollständige Reformations-Acta und Documenta* (Leipzig, 1720 ff.), III, 289.

28. Eck asserted, ". . . dass der freie Wille nach den Fall nicht ein blosser leerer Name sei, sondern unverrückt geblieben . . ." (G. Walch, *Sämtliche Schriften*, 15, 863). One may compare Bernard, *SBO*, III, 181, 24 (*De Gratia*, 7, 21): "Arbitrii utique libertatem, tam post peccatum quam ante, semper tenuit inconcussam."

29. The exemplary character of the quotations involved appears clearly in the formulations used by Luther in *De Votis Monasticis*: ". . . adeo ut et S. Bernhardus asserat" (WA, 8, 586, 17); "Concors est sententia, quam et Bernhardus probat" (WA, 8, 653, 37); ". . . ut et Bernhardus docet" (WA, 8, 646, 9).

30. Especially the second part of *De Praecepto* (Chapters II-IV) discusses dispensation from the Rule of Benedict. Luther shows no interest in the rest of Bernard's treatise. He merely refers to the opinion of Bernard as an illustration of the limited nature of the Rule of Benedict.

31. Bernard distinguishes between *necessarium stabile*, *inviolabile*, and *incommutabile* (*Pre*, II, 4). Only the *necessarium stabile* has some room for dispensation, in so far as superiors can dispense

their subordinates from precepts made by men (such as the rules of orders and the decrees of councils).

32. H. S. Denifle, *Luther und Luthertum in der ersten Entwicklung*, I, 1, 50. WA, 8, 634, 1 ff. One may also see Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 221; 226, note 229.

33. One may see Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres*, III, 193, 194, 199. He opposes those people who place divine and human precepts on the same level, attaching divine authority to the latter (201). According to his own words he built his *De Vita Spirituali* on the basis of Bernard's treatise: " . . . [Bernardus] scripsit volumen pulcherrimum *De Praecepto et Dispensatione*, qui liber huic operi nostro pro fundamento supponatur" (129).

34. *Missus* 4, 9, *Epi.* 1, 7, *SC*, 34, 3, *Div.* 25, 4.

35. The quotations involved stem from three letters (Ep. 91, 3; Ep. 244, 4, and Ep. 385, 1). The only other quotation from a letter of St. Bernard can be found in the marginal notes to the *Opuscula Anselmi.* Again it is a widely known sentence: "Multo facilius reperies multos seculares ad bonum converti quam unum de religiosis transire ad melius" (Ep. 96). One may see Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 78 and 71-75.

36. *SBO*, VII, 190, 17 (*De Baptismo*, 2, 8). WA, 41, 594, 29; WA, 41, XXXV. WA, 10, III, 142, 18 (without mentioning Bernard's name).

37. Possibly Luther learned this quotation from Gerson, *Sermo Nuptiae Facta Sunt* (*Oeuvres*, V, 393). One may compare WA, 38, 154, 10: ". . . wie es auch Gerson an zeucht: Ich habe verdammlich gelebt und mein leben verloren . . ." One may see Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 132.

38. WA, TR, 1, 683; WA, TR, 5, 5242. In the latter instance of his table-talk Luther places himself in this sequence after Bernard as a Jeremiah who announces the end of time.

39. "Ultimus inter patres, sed primis certe non impar." This title goes back to Nicolas Faber (1554-1612). Humanists saw Bernard as the symbol of a whole spiritual world, a whole literature which was a prolongation of the patristic age (Leclercq, *The Love of Learning*, 107; note 45). O. Rousseau, "Saint Bernard 'Le dernier des Pères'," in *Saint Bernard Théologien*,

ASOC, 9 (1953), 3-4:300-308; M. B. Pranger, "Bernardus van Clairvaux, de laatste der Vaders?" in *Millennium, Tijdschrift voor Middeleeuwse studies*, 2 (1988), 1, 41-46.

40. The mass-formulary was changed from the *commune abbatum* "os iusti" to the *commune doctorum ecclesiasticorum* "in medio ecclesiae." One may see A. H. Bredero, *Bernardus van Clairvaux*, 93-97. According Bredero it means a "shifted image of holiness" (93).

41. WA, TR, 5, 5439. One may compare *SBO*, I, 115, 3-7 (*SC*, 20, 2): "Super omnia, inquam, reddit amabilem te mihi, Jesu bone, calix quem bibisti, opus nostrae redemptionis. Hoc omnino amorem nostrum facile vindicat totum sibi. Hoc, inquam, est quod nostram devotionem et blandius allicit, et iustius exigit, et arctius stringit, et afficit vehementius."

42. WA, TR, 1, 871: "Bernhardus ubertrifft in seinen Predigten alle andere doctores, auch Augustinum selber, denn er lehret Christum sehr fein . . ." One may also see TR, 1, 872; 584; TR, 3, 3370b; WA, 47, 694, 4.

43. WA, TR, 1, 683. Bernard ranks here as the third teacher after Augustine and Ambrose. The fact that Luther in a few instances of his table-talk distinguishes between preachers and teachers, does not mean that he did not appreciate Bernard as a teacher and theologian as R. Mousnier and B. McGinn have falsely concluded. One may see, for instance, B. McGinn's introduction to *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*, in *The Works of Bernard of Clairvaux*, VII; *Treatises III* (Kalamazoo, 1977), 46, note 147.

44. WA, 5, 47, 13.

45. Luther later changed the phraseology to *oratio-meditatio-tentatio* (WA, 50, 657-661). *Lectio* is thereby merged with *meditatio*, which may point to the inseparability of letter and spirit. *Oratio* is put in first place because there is no true understanding of Scripture without praying God incessantly for such understanding. *Tentatio* is closely connected with meditation; the whole man in his intellect and emotions is waylaid by temptations from the outside and from the inside; the consolation of God's word in temptation is a matter of experience. One may see M. Nicol, *Meditation bei Luther* (Göttingen, 1984), 179 ff.

46. *SC*, 73, 1-2: "Hic litterae, et haec ludaeorum portio. Ego vero, quemadmodum accepi a Domino, in profundo sacri eloquii gremio spiritum mihi scrutabor et vitam: et pars mea haec, qui in Christum credo."

47. J. Lortz, *Introduction to Bernhard von Clairvaux: Mönch und Mystiker* (Wiesbaden, 1955), xxv. The relationship between Lortz's opinion and Denifle's polemical statements is discussed in *Divus Bernhardus*, 210 ff.

48. WA, 7, 622, 28ff. One may find more in Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 219.

49. WA, 8, 648, 26.

50. WA, 8, 328, 32.

51. WA, 8, 622, 31-32.

52. B. Schellenberger, *Bernhard von Clairvaux: Einführung* (Olten-Freiburg, 1982), 53-55.

53. WA, 2, 15, 17: "Unde fidem eius [Mariae] miratur divus Bernhardus et universa ecclesia."

54. WA, 9, 518, 6: "Hoc miraculum . . . inquit Bernhardus, certe ipsum est, das sy es glaube, nisi enim credidisset, numquam concepisset." For Bernard, one may see *Nat.* 2, 4. One may also see Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 274.

55. C. Mohrmann, *Observations sur la langue et le style de saint Bernard*, in *SBO*, II, xxv.

56. Bernard de Clairvaux, *A la louange de la vierge mère*, *Oeuvres complètes*, XX (*Sources Chrétiennes*, 390; Paris, 1993), 44: "Car jamais Bernard ne sépare la Vierge Marie de son Fils. Elle n'existe qu'en fonction de lui."

57. Bernard de Clairvaux, *A la louange de la vierge mère*, 29.

58. Johann von Paltz, "De Humilitate Gloriose Virginis Marie" ("qua deum traxit de celis, tria vota emisit pro omnibus religiosis et omnia monasteria, immo totam fidem christianam fundavit"). One may also see M. Düfel, *Luthers Stellung zur Marienverehrung* (Göttingen, 1948), 41.

59. R. Fischer, "Paltz und Luther," in *Lu. J.*, 37 (1970), 27, note 90.

Lohse, *Mönchtum*, 164.

60. Johann von Paltz, *Supplementum Coelifodinae* (*Werke*, II), 102, 11: "Ecce coram tremendo iudice peccatores assistimus, cuius manus terribilis gladium irae suae vibrat super nos."

61. WA, 7, 549, 8 (*Virga Jesse*); WA, 12, 456, 24 (*gratia plena*); *September-Bibel* (1522): "gegrusset seystu holdselige" (WA, DB, VI, 210). WA, 7, 565, 35: "wohl Vorbeterin, keine Fürsprecherin." WA, 9, 573, 24 (against emphasizing human agreement). Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 344.

62. *Missus*, 4, 8.

63. *Missus*, 2, 3.

64. *Missus*, 1, 7.

65. WA, TR, I, 494, possibly an allusion to *SC*, 1, 7.

66. WA 33, 83, 30; comparing WA 37, 207, 35: "pingebant"; WA 10, 1, 2, 434, 17: "pflegt zu malen"; WA 46, 663, 31; 47, 257, 9; 52, 22, 2: "gemalet." One may also see WA 47, 257, 9 and WA 33, 83, 34, where Luther talked about "die Mahler im Papstumb." Once Luther explicitly states that the picture was taken from "Sankt Bernhards Buchern" (WA 33, 83, 38). In regard to the final sentences of III. F, see Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 316-320.

67. K. Ruh, *Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik*, I (München, 1990), 243.

68. M. Elze, "Züge spätmittelalterliche Frömmigkeit in Luthers Theologie," in *Z. Th. K.*, 62 (1965), 388. One may also see A. McGrath (following Elze's opinion), *Luther's Theology of the Cross* (Oxford, 1990), 73; and the author's discussion of Elze in *Divus Bernhardus*, 250-251.

69. WA, TR, 1, 1017; TR, 2, 1490; 1820; 2654; TR, 5, 5658a; WA, 43, 461, 10-11.

70. WA, 56, 386, 30 ff.

71. WA, 56, 400, 1.

72. WA, 5, 163, 9. Luther criticizes here an erotic understanding of the Song of Songs.

73. WA, 20, 638, 1. An allusion to the title *mellifluus* may also be found in WA, TR, 4, 4321.

74. Theo Bell, "Pater Bernardus. Bernard de Clairvaux vu par Martin Luther," in *Cîteaux*, 1990, 233-235: "Bernard, précurseur de la Réforme."

75. WA, 53, 152.

76. WA, 53, 156-157.

77. WA, 45, 46, 13.

78. Martin Luther, *Die gantze Heilige Schrift*, ed. H. Volz, II: "Vorrede uber den Propheten Jeremia," 1270.

79. WA, TR, 5, 5242 (September, 1540). One may compare WA, BR, 1, 83, 16.

80. R. Schwarz, "Martin Luther," in *Grosse Mystiker: Leben und Wirken* (München, 1984), 188.

81. H. A. Oberman, "Die Bedeutung der Mystik von Meister Eckart bis Martin Luther," in *Die Reformation: Von Wittenberg nach Genf* (Göttingen, 1986), 42: "Sicher ist jedoch, dass wir ohne mystische Theologie keinen 'jungen Luther' kennen würden, dass es ohne die Erfahrung des mystischen Weges von Augustin bis zu Bernhard auch nicht den erfahrungsträchtigen, vitalen Christusglauben Luthers gegeben hätte."

82. T. Rasmussen, *Inimici Ecclesiae* (Leiden, 1989), 17: "So identifizierte sich Luther in seiner ersten Psalmenvorlesung weitgehend mit einer monastischen Tradition der Schriftauslegung. Das monastische Leben und die monastische 'humilitas'-Spiritualität, die durch Jahrhunderte eine im Wesentlichen konstante und stabile 'Lebenswelt' ausgemacht hatten, war für ihn der prägende Erfahrungshintergrund bei der Aneignung der Werke der altkirchlichen und mittelalterlichen Exegeten." U. Köpf calls Luther "der grösste monastische Theologe des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts" in his "Monastische Theologie im 15. Jahrhundert," in *Rottenburger Jahrbuch für Kirchengeschichte*, 11 (1992), 135. According to Köpf, Luther "knüpft nicht an die monastische Theologie des 15. Jahrhunderts, sondern in selbständigem Rückgriff wieder an die Bernhards an."

83. P. Manns, *Martin Luther* (Freiburg-Basel-Wien, 1982), chapter

2: "Luthers Erfurter Klosterzeit: Vom Novizen zum Priester-Mönch," 25-88. Manns calls Luther's "geistliche Erziehung zum Mönchtum und Priestertum . . . von eminenter Bedeutung für seine reformatorische Entwicklung" (27). One may also see Ulrich Köpf, "Martin Luthers Lebensgang als Mönch," in *Kloster Amelungsborn, 1135-1985*, 187-208.

84. R. Schwarz, "Luthers unveräusserte Erbschaft an der monastischen Theologie," in *Kloster Amelungsborn, 1135-1985*, 209-232. A translation by F. Posset is available in *The American Benedictine Review*, 39 (1988), 430-450. Peter Manns, "Zum Gespräch zwischen M. Luther und der katholischen Theologie: Begegnung zwischen patristisch-monastischer und reformatorischer Theologie an der Scholastik vorbei," in *Thesaurus Lutheri: Auf der Suche nach neuen Paradigmen der Luther-Forschung*, ed. T. Mannermaa, A. Ghiselli, and S. Peura (Helsinki, 1987), 63-154.

85. J. Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture* (New York, 1982), chapter 9: "Monastic Theology" (191-235). The work was originally published as *L'amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu: Initiation aux auteurs monastiques du moyen age* (Paris, 1957). For a characterization of sources, methods, and objects of monastic theology, one may see Jean Leclercq, "Saint Bernard et la théologie du XIIe siècle," in *ASOC*, 9 (1953), 3-4:7-23.

86. One may see, for instance, *SC*, 10, 1; *Div.* 7, 1: "Considera quantum superexcedere Pauli philosophia philosophiam sapientium mundi huius, quae nimirum stultitia est apud Deum."

87. Theo Bell, *Pater Bernardus*, 238: "L'attention durable aux mystères de la crèche et de la croix relie les deux moines. Dieu ne se laisse pas trouver dans les hauteurs, mais dans les profondeurs de l'humiliation, dans ce qui dëpasse tout entendement humain. C'est là que se trouve une racine de la theologia crucis de Luther, où la folie de la Croix contraste violemment avec la sagesse de ce monde."

88. One may see *Ann.* 1, 1 especially and 1, 3 (*SBO*, V, 14), which is quoted by Luther several times: WA, 56, 369, 28; 56, 79, 15; 57, III, 26, 7; WA, 2, 458, 20.

89. Manns, *Zum Gespräch*, 143.

90. WA, 3, 186, 34.

91. Heiko A. Oberman, *Forerunners of the Reformation: The Shape of Late Medieval Thought* (New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, 1966), chapter 1: "The Case of the Forerunner," 39: "To take Luther's doctrine of justification as the sole standard by which to identify a Forerunner, limits the Reformation to this one issue and betrays a dangerous bias of confessionalism."

92. One may see Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, chapter 2 (91-107).

93. WA, 47, 694, 4, 26; WA, TR, 1, 871, 872; WA, TR, 3, 3370.

94. *Vita Prima* I, 4, 24 (*PL* 185, 241). One may also see Bell, *Divus Bernhardus*, 165-169.

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Books Received

Donald Wilson Stake. *The ABCs of Worship: A Concise Dictionary.* Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1992. 196 pages. Paperback. $9.95.

John F. Brug. *A Bible Study on Man and Woman in God's World.* Leader's Guide. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1992. 55 pages. Paperback. $4.99.

John F. Brug. *A Bible Study on Man and Woman in God's World.* Student Manual. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1992. 63 pages. Paperback. $3.50.

David J. Valleskey. *2 Corinthians.* The People's Bible. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1992. vi + 253 pages. Paperback. $8.99.

Eleanor Scott Meyers, editor. *Envisioning the New City: A Reader on Urban Ministry.* Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1992. 363 pages. Paperback. $29.99.

Colin Duriez. *The J. R. R. Tolkien Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to His Life, Writings, and World of Middle-Earth.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992. 316 pages. Paperback.

Peter Toon. *Spiritual Companions: An Introduction to the Christian Classics.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990. 210 pages. Paperback.

Millard J. Erickson. *Does It Matter What I Believe? What the Bible Teaches and Why We Should Believe It.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992. 192 pages. Paperback.

Ronald H. Rottschafer. *The Search for Satisfaction: Getting More for Yourself and Giving More to Others.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992. 221 pages. Paperback.

Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks, editors. *The Re-forming Tradition: Presbyterians and Mainstream Protestantism.* Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1992. 355 pages. Paperback. $16.99.

William C. Placher and David Willis-Watkins. *Belonging to God: A Commentary on a Brief Statement of Faith.* Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press. 214 pages. Paperback. $9.99.

Marvin Olasky. *The Tragedy of American Compassion.* Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1992. xvii + 299 pages. Hardback. $21.95.

Harold Johne and Ernst H. Wendland, editors. *To Every Nation, Tribe, Language, and People: A Century of WELS World Missions.* Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1992. 340 pages. Paperback. $9.99.

An additional list of "Books Received" by the *Concordia Theological Quarterly* is to be found on page 244 of this issue.

Preaching the Passion of Christ on the Eve of the Reformation

Franz Posset

In the history of Christian preaching few have done more to promote a specific focus on the sufferings of Christ than Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) through his immense personal and professional influence as well as his own sermonizing. The theme of the passion of Christ has recently become an object of study by those interested in the literature and art of the late Middle Ages.[1] Such research helps to shed light on that which a preacher who was well known in the early sixteenth century had to say as he tried to fulfill the most central task of Christian proclamation, preaching the passion and the cross of Christ.

I. General Considerations

Historians have already investigated what was preached during the "early years" of the Reformation,[2] but pay little attention to the years immediately prior to the beginning of Luther's Reformation in 1517. Centering on the cross of Christ is not, in fact, a development distinctive to preaching following 1517, and Luther's own "theology of the cross" is best appreciated in the context of late medieval trends. The occurrence of cross-centered preaching on the eve of the Reformation will be demonstrated here in regard specifically to the spring of 1512. The sermons were delivered in an important central European city of that time, namely, Salzburg, which was the seat of the oldest monastery located in German-speaking lands, St. Peter Abbey, and the seat of an archbishop with several suffragans.

For the first time in English, some samples are presented here of sermons of Johann von Staupitz (who died in 1524), which originally were delivered in Early New High German and which were first published in a critical edition in 1990.[3] Staupitz was Martin Luther's superior in the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine and the leading officer of the Reformed Augustinian Congregation in all German-speaking lands.[4] Staupitz usually spent the winter months at Salzburg, where he was invited to preach a series of Lenten sermons in 1512. The significance of these sermons is properly understood, however, only in the context of the peculiar ecclesiastical institution of the late Middle Ages known as the "preacher-position" (*Prädikanten-Stelle*) which had been established in many

places and, above all, in the free imperial cities of the Holy Roman Empire, including Wittenberg, where Staupitz was a professor of Holy Scripture and Luther a graduate student. It is precisely through this institution of endowed preaching posts that a few years later the way was paved for the rapid spread of the Reformation in the German-speaking lands.

II. The Preacher-Positions in the Late Middle Ages

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries preaching was a highly esteemed activity, and good preachers were in demand everywhere. People listened to sermons by good preachers gladly, and the financing of such preachers was apparently no problem. Preaching posts had been established in many central European cities since the late fourteenth century, usually well endowed by gracious donors. Within the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation virtually every free imperial city had established such endowed posts at one of their churches. The oldest such positions are found in the city of Nuremberg, where the endowment for the preacher-position at St. Sebaldus Church is assumed to be as early as the year 1397 and the position at St. Lorenz Church dates from the year 1423. Following the example of St. Sebaldus Church, other cities in southern Germany, such as Riedlingen (1414) and Giengen on the River Brenz (1420), had already instituted similar positions prior to the one in St. Lorenz Church. The preacher-positions in the southern cities mentioned were funded by a wealthy physician.[5] The small free imperial city of Isny in the deep south of the German-speaking lands received its endowed preaching post in 1462, when a son of Isny, John Guldin, a canon at Constance (then the seat of a diocese), provided the necessary funds to St. Nicholas Church. The endowment was meant "for instruction unto eternal salvation." Three years later, in 1465, the same donor provided funds for the erection of a separate chapel, a house for the preacher, and even a private library for him. In the preacher's library at Isny one may find yet today, for instance, an edition of 1490 of Bonaventure's *Meditationes in Vita Christi*, printed in Paris, and an edition of 1519 of a book in Hebrew by David Kimchi.[6] The most famous preacher of that era was probably Johann Geiler von Keisersberg (who died in 1510), who held the preacher-position at Strasbourg, the major

city in the south-west of the German-speaking lands.[7] Johann Geiler knew well the burden of preaching during Lent and Holy Week, especially on Good Friday; the preacher was expected to speak for an hour or so in delivering the so-called "long passion," which Geiler mentioned at one point.[8] The preacher-position at Wittenberg in Electoral Saxony had also been created already in the fifteenth century; subsequent to 1512 it was filled by Martin Luther, probably after he had received his doctor's degree in theology in October of that year and after Staupitz had departed from Wittenberg for good. Luther's preaching role in the city of Wittenberg ought not be confused with the one which he filled in the Holy Spirit Chapel of the Augustinian friary of Wittenberg, nor with his preaching activity in the Castle Church. The town of Wittenberg had attempted for a long time to gain control of ecclesiastical affairs, and thus a preacher's post was created and financed by the city council at the city's church. The city council was under the control of the various craft-guilds, as there were no patrician burghers in the city (as was the case, for instance, at Nuremberg). There was virtually no dominant family which would have been able to make a large enough gift to endow a preaching post.[9] The cities of Altenburg, Eisenach, and Allstedt in Thuringia also had such preachers' positions by this time.[10] There is no intention here, of course, to give a complete list of cities in the German-speaking lands that had endowed pulpits. Those already mentioned, however, may serve as representatives of their regions.

These positions were not identical with the offices of the pastors of parishes. The pastors of parishes were normally not very much inclined either toward reform in general or toward the gospel of the Reformation in particular. When the magistrates of the cities wanted to introduce religious reforms, and later on the Reformation as such, they had to use the institution of the preacher-position and not the pastorate, since in the late Middle Ages the hiring of preachers had come under the control of the city governments rather than that of the pastors or even of the local bishop. Thus, the "secular" authorities used the channel of the preacher-position to achieve the reforms which they desired. Obviously, moreover, the work of preaching was not closely tied to the traditional and well-established ecclesiastical organization of the administration of the sacraments,

which usually was in the hands of the pastors. A city was thus able to attract a qualified preacher who was independent of the pastors. Such a preacher had to have, first of all, an advanced degree, usually a doctorate in theology, and secondly he needed personal credibility as far as his life style was concerned. The donor, for instance, of Isny's endowment stipulated that the preacher to be hired be a person "whose words and deeds correspond to each other."[11] Very often these preachers came from the ranks of the so-called mendicant orders, such as the Dominicans (whose official name was the Order of Preachers, *Ordo Praedicatorum*), Franciscans, and Augustinians. Thus, preacher-positions which were held by the most reform-minded friars (at that time the Augustinian Order and the Reformed Congregation to which Luther belonged) became in the free imperial cities of the German-speaking lands the prime agents of the propagation of spiritual reform and, later on, the thinking of Reformation.[12] What, then, was preached by such a preacher on the eve of the Reformation in a significant city such as Salzburg?

III. The Lenten Sermons of 1512 of Johann von Staupitz

At Salzburg an endowed preacher-position came into existence in 1399, funded by two citizens, Virgil Säppl and Ott Hofpekch, with the stipulation that the preacher—first called "chaplain" and later on "foundation-preacher"—had to celebrate mass daily, preach on Saturdays during the year as a whole, and preach daily during Advent and Lent. This endowed preacher-position (*Stiftsprädikatur*) was under the control of the city government, not of the church's pastor or even of the archbishop. The salaries may tell more than words how highly esteemed such preachers were in the late Middle Ages. As to the preacher's salary in Salzburg, we know that it was higher than the income of the archbishop's personal physician. In 1477, likewise, the professors of medicine at the neighboring University of Ingolstadt received eighty gulden, while the preacher in Salzburg earned eighty-four gulden. The names of the preachers in Salzburg are known from 1446 on. They are not to be confused with the guest preachers who came into town on the occasion of the collection of alms (*terminarii*) and who were members of the mendicant orders. From 1482 to 1510, for twenty-eight years, the position was held by Father Nicholas Vitzthum.[13] Subsequently, Paul

Speratus (1484-1551) held the post for some time, perhaps already from 1511 (at first perhaps without tenure) until 1517, when he married a lady of Salzburg and joined Luther's Reformation, becoming a Lutheran bishop in Prussia in 1529.[14] Johann von Staupitz filled the preacher-position for the Lenten season of 1512, on the basis of an untenured contract, for a honorarium of twenty-one *pfund pfennig*. At that time Staupitz was in the process of winding down his reforming efforts within the Augustinian Order, and by the autumn of 1512 he gave up his professorship in Holy Scripture at Wittenberg, when Luther was installed as his successor. Staupitz had already been in Salzburg since the end of the year 1511 when, during the Lent of 1512, he delivered a series of twelve sermons on the passion of the Lord. These sermons of 1512 show Staupitz to have been a gifted preacher. His message was so attractive that local Benedictine nuns (the so-called "St. Peter's Ladies") began to record them. The manuscript so produced has, fortunately for us, been preserved.[15] These sermons of 1512 are the first of which we know to be delivered by Staupitz in the vernacular, and they are the only extant sermons subsequent to his first set of Latin sermons of 1498, which he had delivered at the friary of Tübingen on the first verses of the Book of Job.[16] We possess no sermons from Luther's monastic superior from the period between 1498 and 1511, a time-span which includes his tenure as professor of Holy Scripture at Wittenberg, when, we may assume, he was a significant influence on Luther.

The sermons of 1512 were delivered to the ordinary parishioners of Salzburg. His audience included, however, the nuns of St. Peter's Abbey (a "double monastery" comprehending both monks and nuns—in separate quarters, of course). Staupitz may have begun his series already on Ash Wednesday, but none of the sermons were recorded until the Tuesday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent (Laetare) when the nuns began to write them down. On that day, March 23, 1512, Staupitz began to preach on the narrative of the passion, and he continued his daily preaching for twelve days until Wednesday of Holy Week, April 8, except on Sundays and feast-days.[17] The scarlet thread that is woven through the first three of the extant sermons is the concept of "departure." The first of the sermons has as its topic Jesus' departure from His mother at Bethany. The

second sermon deals with His departure from His disciples after the Last Supper. The third sermon focuses on the scene on the Mount of Olives where Jesus departs "from Himself." The following sermons no longer feature "departures," but certain encounters. The topics are divided along the lines of the biblical narrative: Peter's denial (sermon 5), Jesus before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin (sermon 6), Jesus being led from Caiaphas to Pilate (sermon 7), Jesus before Pilate and Herod (sermon 8), His flagellation by the Romans and condemnation (sermon 9), His flagellation by the Jews and the way to the cross (sermon 10), His crucifixion with Mary beneath the cross (sermon 11), and His death and burial (sermon 12).

Staupitz follows along the lines of the biblical accounts of the passion of the Lord, but he embellishes the narrative with scenes not found in the biblical text. The tendency to fill in some details and add legendary material to the biblical narratives is a typical trait of late medieval "passion-literature."[18] Staupitz lets Mary follow Jesus all the way to the cross; he lets Jesus be scourged twice (of which Staupitz thought he had evidence in the gospels of Matthew and John), and he lets Christ heal a legendary blind soldier beneath the cross by the name of Longinus. Yet at several points the preacher and former exegetical professor conscientiously relates his sermons back to "the text" or to "the story." He does not appear, however, to follow any one specific gospel. He seems, instead, to have had in mind the narrative of the passion in some sort of harmony of the gospels. All in all, however, the chief source of his preaching is the Bible, which is not surprising as Staupitz had been professor of Holy Scripture in the University of Wittenberg during the previous ten years. Staupitz lays special emphasis, moreover, on the immense suffering which Christ endured in the course of His bloody passion.

A. The Opening Sermon on Christ's Passion

The overall goal of his preaching is meditation on the salvific suffering of Jesus Christ, as Staupitz states in the opening passage of his first extant sermon of 1512:

> I want to present to you your Captain, Jesus Christ, who will lead you to victory over your enemies. Therefore, be happy and rejoice, the triumph is won and death is over-

> come and gone. Trust in your righteous God will never depart from your hearts.
>
> The first main point [is this]: All our suffering and all our illness is completely tied up and overcome in His suffering. We need to contemplate [His suffering] in great gratitude. Truly, if one does not contemplate His suffering, it does not taste, it does not taste sweet; then, what would serve for one's salvation is not pleasing.[19]

Staupitz communicates the salvific "sweetness" of bitter suffering of Jesus Christ in traditional devotional language.[20] In doing so his preaching is completely centered on Christ; His suffering alone brings about the believer's "deification": "Who would not want to be glad knowing that the mercy of God swallowed up one's sin completely? Christ's suffering deified man. There is nothing more blessed on earth than Christ's suffering, because all salvation depends on it."[21]

The preacher's second point is this: "Nobody who contemplates will receive any sweetness from it unless that person enters into full contemplation of the body of Christ, then arrives at [His] soul and passes through it and [finally] arrives at His divine nature."[22] Staupitz operates here with the strange concept of "three natures" of Christ, which is used as a structural principle for most of his sermons of 1512:

> The divine person has three natures—body, life [soul], and divinity—in which body and soul are united and make a happy being, but remain one person. If you want to meditate well and rightly on the suffering of Christ, you must look at three aspects today and in every suffering of which I shall speak.
>
> Firstly, [let us look at] His holy body and, in looking at it, at the strokes and painful marks, and let us pray to God: "O Thou tender God and my Lord, how art Thou torn up because of me, cut up, scourged, and crowned!" Only a hardened person would not feel sorry and take [these things] to heart; if it were a little dog or animal that you saw tortured in this way, you would have mercy with it.

> Take note: Eagerly meditate upon the suffering of Christ; do not stop until you find in your heart some compassion or motion of your heart. When you feel that, do not stand still, but proceed to the soul [of Christ] and think—this is the second point: "O Thou most noble soul, how art Thou? The body is already maltreated. What do I notice in Thee? [I see] a complete, perfect obedience to the Heavenly Father; and Thou didst not want to walk away from suffering, but to be obedient unto death. O, my God, grant that I may follow Thee obediently as is Thy will.[23]

Staupitz in a prayerful way leads his hearers to speak to God in Christ directly. He then turns to his hearers with this exhortation:

> And do not stand still here either; penetrate through the suffering of the soul and see what the divinity adds to it: the third [essence]. Thus you will find that the suffering of the body and the obedience of the soul flow out together from God's fountain of mercy. "O my God, now I see Thy love; I recognize Thy grace and Thy mercy; as I was Thine enemy, Thou didst this [for me]. Was there ever anyone who suffered death for his enemy? Who deserved this from Thee since we all were Thine enemies?" But it flows out [from Thee]; there is nothing but mercy; and finally it was mercy which devoured sin, hope [which devoured] fear, joy [which devoured] sadness, triumph [which devoured] suffering and grief, strength [which devoured] weakness, life [which devoured] death, and God [which devoured] man.
>
> See, my child, and learn from it, what use and fruit come to you from [His] suffering. If someone meditates in one's heart upon the suffering of Christ and really sinks into it, then he must be filled with more joy than with sadness. O what sweet tears flow from the loving soul who in contemplation enters into God. If you taste the body's [suffering] alone, it is a bitter taste; but if you look at the soul's [suffering], it brings some joy. But when you enter into the Godhead, it is the most sweet thing. You should not remain with the meditation of the suffering of His body, but come forth and enter into discipleship: He suffered, and so we

> suffer, too; He struggled, and so we struggle, too. Keep in mind the three points: Fellowship in suffering is in the body, discipleship is in the soul, joy is in the Godhead.[24]

At this point Staupitz makes a critical reference to a contemporary devotional practice, and in doing this he probably follows the advice of spiritual leaders of his time[25] to be careful with the use of depictions (and with rhetorical devices capable of leading hearers to fantastic flights of imaginations):

> Many people make holy cards for themselves. I do not condemn this practice, but I also do not praise it. Such things are useful for becoming mindful [of Christ's suffering]. But, as soon as you are enkindled in your contemplation, close your eyes, but do not remain there. The external picture of the [tortured] body only shows you Christ's suffering in the body, while contemplation of the soul [of Christ] makes this suffering fruitful to you, and it is in the divinity [of Christ] where one finds hidden the kernel of sweetness. It is to be sought deep down in the well of mercy. Once you have found it, it is your's and nobody else's.[26]

The sermons of Staupitz are clearly, then (in the sense indicated), christocentric and grace-centered; and they aim at the hearts of the listeners who are urged to taste the "sweetness" which is to be found only in the suffering of Christ. The preacher wants to lead his hearers beyond the external observation of depictions of this suffering to a spiritual understanding of the religious meaning of the suffering of the Son of God for us and our salvation.

B. The Fifth Sermon

Among the total of the twelve extant sermons of Staupitz in 1512, the fifth is of special interest to students of the Reformation by reason of its concluding passage. In speaking of Peter as "the sick rock" the Augustinian preacher anticipates the typical Lutheran interpretation of Matthew 16:18 (". . . and on this rock I will build My church"). There are several diverse topics knit into this sermon. As usual, Staupitz addresses his hearers with the opening phrase, "Friends of Christ," and then he makes a brief connection with the

previous sermons before he enters into the exposition of his new topic, the imprisonment of Christ and His denial by Peter. Staupitz ties these points together with some openly anti-Jewish sentiments, talking about the role of "the Jews" in the suffering of Christ. He also utilizes mystical terminology as he has Christ speak to the mystical "bride" who is the individual believing soul:

> You have heard how Christ, our Savior and strong hero, stood up at the arrival of the Jews who wanted to capture Him—how Christ showed them in seven ways His true divinity: in the order and measure within which they were to capture Him and in no other way, in power, in wisdom, in goodness, in mercy, and in patience. Today look at His imprisonment; there are three points to it. Firstly, Christ, our Lord and God, gave courage to the approaching Jews, who at that time had been beaten down, so that now they would stand up and regain their evil will as before. For He wanted to offer Himself as a sacrifice, give up everything that would belong to a man of strength, have His eyes closed, let His hands be tied, and become silent like a lamb.
>
> Three things took place at His imprisonment: the devil was depressed and imprisoned; the devil regained his strength; and, thirdly, the disciples fled. Firstly, He caught the devil in the net of the fear of God. Record in your heart that the devil has recognized God (in Christ), but the people did not. When the Lord convinced the people with one word—"It is I" (John 18:5)—the devil thought: "Now the truth is out: He is true God; no human being could have done what He did." And the devil gave up his efforts to bring about His death. He [that is, the devil] gave it a rest and remained quiet in the hearts of the Jews. Secondly, however, when the evil spirit saw that He let Himself be captured and tied so miserably, he started up again and thought to stir up again the devilish hatred. Therefore, the hearts of the Jews were awakened again to envy and hate of the Lord. My God and my Lord, how lettest Thou Thyself be caught so infamously by the Jews? Why doest Thou so? Response: "O My child, who gave you the strength to sin?

Who gave you the mouth to speak evil words? I did it, because all strength is of God. Why should I not provide also that by which you would be cleansed? I gave My hands to be tied, so that your hands might be cleansed from evil works. I took spit in the face, so that your face might be cleansed. Let it be, My bride; I must pay the debt which you ran up." Yes, my Lord, if this is so, that it was Thy will, then it is all right, because Thou hast really helped to bring it about. Therefore, my God and my Lord, much has been written of Thee by the prophets, how men beat Thee, torture Thee, and cause Thee pain. If it is so written, we must do it. Therefore, my Lord, be patient. We must do it, as the truth must be fulfilled completely in Thee, the truth that is prophesied of Thee. Thirdly, as the Lord now prepared His head and His entire body to be delivered, the disciples realized that it was all over: "O Peter, He is going to die!" As soon as He let them, these hungry dogs grabbed Him as if they wanted to tear Him totally apart already in their first attack. As they attacked Him, the disciples fled from the garden.

This imprisonment was so pitiful because among all those scoundrels there was none not full of hate. What is this perverted hate? Such a hateful person hates even a dead body and beats or pushes it although it no longer feels anything. But the Jews do so without reason. For no one punishes someone so hatefully whom one wants to seize legally for his debts and evil deeds; but such a person is punished leniently and reluctantly. Therefore, his pain is all the less. But when it happens out of hate, it hurts beyond measure. Thus, the hate and envy of the Jews against the Lord was most painful, a pain afflicted on Him externally. If it had been for a debt or in mercy, it would have been easy to take. Secondly, the hate of the leaders is even greater yet. Thirdly, the hate of Judas was the greatest [of all] and his concern was that He might escape."[27]

The embellishment of the story of Judas within sermons on the passion was especially popular since the twelfth century when the

"Judas Legend" came into existence.[28] Staupitz, apparently, is not untouched by this popular tendency. The preacher continues as follows:

> O what misery have you seen when watching them all gang up on Him! It was impossible for Him to stay on His feet; He had to fall. O devout Child, Thy Father deserted Thee! Here Thou liest below Thine enemies: One lies on Thy neck, the other on Thy heart. O Thou strong God, how Thou must suffer and let this happen to Thee. Here the most noble being in heaven and on earth lies in so much pain. O stop this struggle! It is enough! All participated in this thing; no one wanted to miss it. They shouted: "Seize the evildoer! Seize Him!" And their leaders, who came with a great crowd, grabbed Him; every one wanted to hurt Him. Look, here He lies, poor Lazarus, tied up and in fetters![29]

At this point in his sermon Staupitz reminds his hearers that the church of Christ "meditates on His imprisonment at midnight and gives Him thanks and praise." The "midnight" refers to the monastic observance of the "canonical hours" (*horae canonicae*). Staupitz then dramatizes Christ's suffering as follows:

> The second aspect [is this]: When the Lord Jesus was imprisoned thus, they took Him first to Annas, and here He suffered the greatest blow on His head. Note: Jesus was bound and a prisoner when they brought Him with loud noise. At times He walked; at times He was dragged. One could see the blood on the stones [in the street and on the stairs] when they brought Him to Annas and without mercy jostled Him up the stairs. "Up, up, we bring you the scoundrel! Hurry, hurry!" And they accused Him of misleading the people with His teaching.[30]

In order to make the situation better understandable, Staupitz speaks of the Jewish leader (the high priest) in the story of the passion as the "bishop." He simultaneously calls to people's minds the primary task of bishops in general, a task which he apparently sees often neglected in his own time:

> The bishop asked Him what He taught in His presumption—since it is the bishop's task to question anyone on what his sheep are being taught, so that they are not fed poison and death, that they may not perish. Nothing should concern me except the passion of Christ. Hear Thou, my God, Thou Thyself are the truth. Teach that dog about his questioning! He [that is, Christ] did not talk about the disciples; they were all of no use at this point anyway. He wanted neither to praise them nor to reprimand them. . . . "I have taught nothing in secret. You should have joined in listening to what I had to say! Why do you ask Me [now]? Ask those who listened; they can tell you." The bishop was a fool; therefore he fell silent with his foolish question and could no longer say anything."[31]

Staupitz incorporates further parallels to his audience's contemporary experience as he calls to mind what would happen if someone treated the emperor in the way in which the Son of God was treated:

> One of the servants who captured Him . . . started to hit Him from behind in His holy face. O what a miserable blow! He was so fierce, so without compassion. The prophets knew it beforehand and felt it. Hosea 3 [actually Micah 5:1] said: "They hit the holy judge of Israel in the face." This blow echoed in heaven, in hell, and on earth. The blow was so hard that not only Christ's cheek but also His teeth were wrecked. If you want to measure Christ's suffering, you must first take into consideration the noble nature of Christ, the person of Christ. [He was] not a peasant, but the son of a noble king—yes, of the highest emperor—the Son of God. What a sacrilege would it be to hit a bishop, an emperor, or a pope in the face? Such a man would loose his life instantaneously. What about in this situation? The righteous God, the emperor of emperors, was hit in the face by a servant, by a dog who was not worth being called a human being. One reads of this blow: "You have broken My teeth" (Lamentations 3:16). Furthermore, the prophet has written: "I offered My cheek to be struck" (Lamentations 3:30). It was a blow that should

never have been motivated by a human heart.[32]

Staupitz then describes the universal protest of the entire created world which should have occurred at the witnessing of the sufferings of God:

> Lord, my God, I wish to speak of Thine encounter. I see that Thou wantest to remain silent. All you elements, look at the Lord, the Law-giver of everything and Creator of all creatures. You earth, where is your power, you who long ago swallowed up Dathan and Abiram because they disobeyed the commands of their superiors? Where is your power now? You, water, take . . . them under, as you drowned the Pharaoh with his entire army when he tortured the people of God. Fire, where are you who burns up those who act against God? Where have you left your power? Do you sleep, you angels in heaven? And you, heaven, think how to revenge the blow. Man, think how much the Son of God is shamefully beaten . . .! It is a certain sign that we are to be saved. Nature says: "Do not seek revenge at the time when one should do penance." O Thou eternal and merciful God, see this blow on the sweetest of cheeks. It is, however, a blow dealt in order to give strength to everyone who is beaten. If your teeth hurt, if your mouth hurts, Christ was beaten for you!
>
> Here is a question: Why did Christ not take the blow in silence so that we could take Him as our example. The answer [is this]: Yes, it is true, the Lord suffered and so He showed us how to suffer. But God cannot tolerate that the divine truth and doctrine should be suppressed or that the opinion should arise among people that He did not preach rightly or that His doctrine was wrong, so that people should be led into error and perish. God cannot and will not tolerate this [eventuality]. Therefore, He said: "If I said anything wrong, produce the evidence, so that one may know what I did wrong" (John 18:23).[33]

Finally Staupitz arrives at the scene of Peter's denial which gives him the opportunity to clarify what is meant by the "rock" in

Matthew 16. From the patristic and medieval interpretations preceding him Staupitz had received the following options: the rock was Christ, the rock was faith, or the rock was Peter.[34] Staupitz opted for the first of these options:

> Peter's denial hit the Lord much harder in His heart than the Jew hitting Him on His cheek. "O Peter, Peter, what are you doing? Are you the rock on whom to build? You are a sick rock up to this day. . . ."[35]

Staupitz repeats: "O Peter, Peter, what are you doing to your good God? Why do you dare this thing when you are so afraid?"[36] Staupitz emphasizes the graveness of Peter's denial since Peter was not just any ordinary man: "O how much this [behavior] hurt the Lord! . . . This was not done by an ordinary man, but by a rock of the church."[37] Staupitz offers this explanation for Peter's weakness as he concludes his fifth sermon with words which could not be more christocentric: "Peter fell [by denying Christ] in order that no-one should think that the church is built on him," but that, instead, "one might see and recognize that one must build on Christ alone, who is the Rock, and on no one else. . . . Amen."[38] Christ alone is the Rock!

IV. Concluding Remarks

Several observations may serve as the conclusion to this study. Firstly, preaching enjoyed great esteem in the late Middle Ages. Preaching demanded much more of a priest than simply to be able to mumble his way through the missal. Doctors of theology usually assumed the responsibility for preaching in the vernacular. In order to obtain a more accurate picture of the religious situation on the eve of the Reformation, we must take note of lively late-medieval preachers and of a genuine religiosity which conflicts with the simplistic but popular myth of a total absence of pastoral care and preaching in all German-speaking lands until Luther came on the scene. One can no longer generalize and say that prior to Luther there was nothing but deformation. The poor quality of preaching before Luther is sometimes emphasized, so that the preaching of the Reformation may shine all the brighter against such a backdrop. Such a view misses, however, much of the religious reality at the

beginning of the sixteenth century. The lack of good preaching may have been true of many rural areas in Europe but not of the imperial cities and cultural centers. They, instead, took great pride in the endowing of preaching positions, such as the ones at Salzburg, Wittenberg, and Strasbourg (with Geiler von Keisersberg). There were abuses, it is true, and Staupitz and Luther pointed them out. But it is a mistake "to brand everything as corrupt and abusive."[39] The years on the eve of the Reformation and during the Reformation itself up to about 1524 were years in which the official preaching positions were the means by which reform-minded preachers could call for spiritual reforms and advocate unconventional theological ideas. The reform-minded preachers of the period before 1524 were so numerous and of such variety that one scholar has spoken of a "wild growth" (*Wildwuchs*) of religious ideas in the early years of the German Reformation.[40] One may see the sermons of Staupitz as contributing to this "wild growth," or one may actually count Staupitz among the first preachers of the Reformation as such.

Secondly, it is significant that these sermons of 1512 include some critical thoughts which were delivered not to a select or academic audience, but to the general population of one of the most significant ecclesiastical centers north of the Alps. Evidently Staupitz's sermons in the vernacular were perceived as being of such significance that the local Benedictine nuns made special efforts to preserve them. Staupitz's fifth sermon, in particular, demonstrates the possibility of interpreting Matthew 16:18, even before the Reformation, in such a way as to identify Christ as the "Rock" in which we are to trust. Thirdly, Staupitz's sermons of 1512 demonstrate the high quality of preaching on the passion on the eve of the Reformation, and they support what has been pointed out by scholars of late-medieval sermonic literature, namely, that there were at the time sermons which centered on Christ and which fostered the spiritual imitation of Christ, without any emphasis on human merits or work-righteousness.[41] The distinctions between the preaching of the Reformation and medieval preaching need more discrimination when one takes into consideration the christocentricity of these sermons.

Fourthly, one notices that Jesus is often spoken of as "God" in

Staupitz's sermons of 1512. The medieval conception of "three natures" in Christ (body, soul, and divinity) is a characteristic of these sermons. Fifthly, Staupitz attempted an actualization of the story of the passion by speaking of "bishops" when he was talking about the leaders of the Jews. With this actualization some criticism of the contemporary scene enters the sermons as the preacher delineates clearly a conception of the office of a bishop which, however, he does not see realized in his own time. Sixthly, despite his christocentricity and his attempts to remain close to the text (the biblical "story"), Staupitz is still medieval inasmuch as he draws from legendary material to embellish the biblical text. In the seventh place, his sermons display an anti-Jewish tendency which is especially strong when he contends that the Jews were responsible for not merely one flagellation, but two flagellations of Christ. (A detailed study of "the Jews" in the sermons of Staupitz would be useful but is, of course, impossible to undertake here). In the eighth place, finally, we do well to keep in mind that these sermons were delivered by the vicar general and superior of the religious order of Martin Luther more than five years before the Great Reformer posted his Ninety-Five Theses in 1517. One can, therefore, easily believe what Luther himself said about his monastic superior, namely, that his own christocentric teaching stemmed from him: "My good Staupitz said, 'One must keep one's eyes fixed on that man who is called Christ.' Staupitz is the one who started the teaching [of the gospel in our time]."[42] "I have everything from Dr. Staupitz."[43] Staupitz was a "preacher of grace and cross."[44]

The Endnotes

1. One may see the entire volume *Die Passion Christi in Literatur und Kunst des Spätmittelalters*, edited by Walter Haug and Burghart Wachinger (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1993), which is dedicated to this subject, especially Ulrich Köpf, "Die Passion Christi in der lateinischen religiösen und theologischen Literatur des Spätmittelalters," 21-41, and Georg Steer, "Die Passion Christi bei den deutschen Bettelorden im 13. Jahrhundert," 52-75.

2. One may compare Bernard M. G. Reardon, *Religious Thought in*

the Reformation (London and New York: Longman, 1981), 10-14; Bernd Moeller, "Was wurde in der Frühzeit der Reformation in den deutschen Städten gepredigt?" *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 75, (1984), 176-193, covering the later years (1522 to 1529); Susan C. Karant-Nunn, "What Was Preached in German Cities in the Early Years of the Reformation? *Wildwuchs* Versus Lutheran Unity," *The Process of Change in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of Miriam Usher Chrisman*, eds. Phillip N. Bebb and Sherrin Marshall (Athens, Ohio: University Press, 1988), 81-96. On a more general note, one may see Bernd Moeller, "Piety in Germany around 1500," *The Reformation in Medieval Perspective*, ed. Steven Ozment (Chicago, 1971); idem, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays* (Durham, North Carolina: Labyrinth Press, 1982). Popular piety in Germany around 1500 is studied also by Christoph Burger, "Volksfrömmigkeit in Deutschland um 1500 im Spiegel der Schriften des Johannes von Paltz OESA," *Volksreligion im hohen und späten Mittelalter*, eds. Peter Dinzelbacher and Dieter R. Bauer (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöning Verlag, 1990), 307-327.

3. Johann von Staupitz, *Salzburger Predigten 1512. Eine textkritische Edition*, ed. Wolfram Schneider-Lastin (Tübingen: Neuphilologische Fakultät, 1990). This edition was published independently from the planned complete edition of the works of Johann von Staupitz.

4. On the study of the life and works of Staupitz, one may see *125 Years of Staupitz Research: An Annotated Bibliography of Studies on Johannes von Staupitz (approximately 1468-1524)*, eds. Rudolf K. Markwald and Franz Posset, Sixteenth Century Bibliography, 31 (St. Louis: Center for Reformation Research, 1994, forthcoming).

5. One may compare Julius Rauscher, "Die ältesten Prädikaturen Württembergs," *Blätter für Württembergische Kirchengeschichte* (1921), 107-111.

6. One may compare the entry "Isny" in *Handbuch der historischen Buchbestände in Deutschland*, volume 8, ed. Wolfgang Kehr (Hildesheim, Zurich, New York: Olms-Weidmann, 1994), 17. A depiction of the title page of 1490 of Bonaventure's *Meditationes* occurs in *Praedikaturenbibliothek der evangelischen*

Nikolai-Kirche Isny im Allgäu (Munich and Zurich: Verlag Schnell und Steiner, 1976), 15; a depiction of the title page of Moses (presumably David) Kimchi (printed in Hagenau in 1519) is found on page 10. The author acknowledges with gratitude the help which he received from the Lutheran Pastor Johannes Ringwald (of Isny) in regard to the secondary literature on Isny.

7. One may compare Bernard M. G. Reardon, *Religious Thought in the Reformation* (as in note 2), 11.

8. One may compare Burghart Wachinger, "Die Passion Christi und die Literatur," *Die Passion Christi in Literatur und Kunst des Spätmittelalters*, 1.

9. One may compare John C. Jeske, "Luther the Preacher," *Luther Lives. In Commemoration of the Five Hundredth Anniversary of Martin Luther's Birth*, eds. Edward C. Fredrich, Siegbert W. Becker, and David P. Kuske (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1983), 21-32; Helmar Junghans, "Wittenberg and Luther: Luther and Wittenberg," *Martin Luther in Two Centuries*, eds. Terrence Dinovo and Robert Kolb (St. Paul, Minnesota: Lutheran Brotherhood Foundation Reformation Research Library, 1992), 17.

10. One may compare Irmgard Höß, "Humanismus und Reformation," *Geschichte Thüringens*, eds. Hans Patze and Walter Schlesinger (Cologne and Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1967), 1-145, here 51.

11. ". . . das sine wort und werk ainander glich seyn," as quoted in *Handbuch der historischen Buchbestände in Deutschland*, volume 8:17 (as in note 6 above).

12. A large number of later reformers were members of the Augustinian Order, while very few came from the Order of St. Dominic or the Order of St. Francis.

13. One may compare Johann Sallaberger, "Johann von Staupitz, die Stiftsprediger und die Mendikanten-Termineien in Salzburg," *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktiner-Ordens und seiner Zweige*, 93 (1982), 223-237.

14. One may compare Sallaberger, 244-254.

15. One may compare Schneider-Lastin (as in note 3), "Introduction,"

9-11.

16. A plan has been announced to make the writings of Staupitz available in a new critical edition of seven volumes in total. So far the first two volumes have appeared in reverse chronological order: Johann von Staupitz, *Sämtliche Schriften: Abhandlungen, Predigten, Zeugnisse*, eds. Lothar Graf zu Dohna and Richard Wetzel, in the series *Spätmittelalter und Reformation: Texte und Untersuchungen*, ed. Heiko Oberman (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter). Volume 1 (1987): *Lateinische Schriften I. Tübinger Predigten*, bearbeitet von Richard Wetzel. Volume 2 (1979): *Libellus de Executione Aeternae Praedestinationis*, bearbeitet von Lothar Graf zu Dohna und Richard Wetzel, mit der Übertragung von Christoph Scheurl; *Ein nutzbarliches Büchlein von der entlichen Volziehung ewiger Fürsehung*, bearbeitet von Lothar Graf zu Dohna und Albrecht Endriss.

17. One may compare Schneider-Lastin, "Introduction," 8-9.

18. One may compare Burghart Wachinger, "Die Passion Christi und die Literatur," *Die Passion Christi in Literatur und Kunst des Spätmittelalters*, 7.

19. Schneider-Lastin, 25.

20. On God's sweetness according to Augustine, Bernard, and Staupitz, one may see Franz Posset, "The Sweetness of God," *The American Benedictine Review*, 44 (1993), 143-178; idem, "Christi Dulcedo," *Cistercian Studies*, forthcoming.

21. Schneider-Lastin, 25-26. On the late medieval spiritual-theological concept of "deification," one may compare Franz Posset, "'Deification' in the German Spirituality of the Late Middle Ages and in Luther: An Ecumenical Historical Perspective," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 84 (1993), 103-126. One may note also the recent debate on *theosis*-deification in Luther's thought coming out of Finland.

22. Schneider-Lastin, 26.

23. "Die götlich perschon hat drei natur—ainen leib, ain leben und ain gothait . . .," Schneider-Lastin, 26-27. The concept of the three essences-natures of Christ may have been inspired by Bernard of Clairvaux's *Sermo 3 in Vigilia Nativitatis Domini*, 9: "Verbum enim, et anima, et caro in unam convenere personam;

et haec tria unum, et hoc unum tria, non in confusione substantiae, sed unitate personae"; *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, IV:217: 29-218:2. The concept is used also by the fourteenth-century author Marguerite Porete (who died in 1310) in chapter 14 of *The Mirror of a Simple Soul*, trans. Ellen L. Babinsky (New York and Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1993), 96. It is found again in the Augustinian Henry of Friemar (who died in 1350), who explicitly relies on Bernard in this regard in his *Tractatus de Incarnatione Verbi*, ed. Zumkeller, 136-137: "Hae autem tres substantiae fuerunt substantia Verbi, animae rationalis et ipsius carnis. Quae quidem tria sunt ita distantia, quod secundum Bernardum nequam possent misceri, nisi ea coniungeret 'glutinum Spiritus Sancti.'" Ludolf of Saxony (who died in 1378) also has the concept in *Vita Jesu Christi* I, 43a-44a, as identified by Schneider-Lastin, 26, note 12; Schneider-Lastin, however, does not take the Bernardine matrix of this concept into consideration. In his sermon 3 in Salzburg of 1523, Staupitz uses the concept again as quoted by Steinmetz, *Misericordia Dei: The Theology of Johannes von Staupitz in Its Late Medieval Setting* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 147, note 3: "alle drey natur."

24. Schneider-Lastin, 27-28.

25. One may compare Fritz Oskar Schuppisser, "Schauen mit den Augen des Herzens," *Die Passion Christi in Literatur und Kunst des Spätmittelalters*, 169-210, here 183-184. Artistic depictions as aides to meditation were not uncommon, as can be seen from Philip E. Webber, ed., *A Late Medieval Devotional Anthology from Salzburg ("Nonnberg Passion": Huntington Library HM 195). Commentary and Edition* (Göppingen: Kümmerle Verlag, 1990), which includes pictures allegedly stemming from the SalzburgNonnberg nunnery.

26. Schneider-Lastin, 28.

27. Schneider-Lastin, 57-59.

28. One may compare Wachinger, "Die Passion Christi und die Literatur," *Die Passion Christi in Literatur und Kunst des Spätmittelalters*, 8.

29. Schneider-Lastin, 59.

30. Schneider-Lastin, 60.

31. Schneider-Lastin, 60.

32. Schneider-Lastin, 60-61.

33. Schneider-Lastin, 61-62.

34. One may compare Karlfried Fröhlich, *Formen der Auslegung von Mt. 16,13-18 im lateinischen Mittelalter* (Tübingen, 1963); one may also compare John E. Bigane, III, *Faith, Christ or Peter: Matthew 16:18 in Sixteenth-Century Roman Catholic Exegesis* (Washington: University Press of America, 1981).

35. ". . . ain kranker fels pistu auf den tag . . .," Schneider-Lastin, 62.

36. Schneider-Lastin, 63.

37. Schneider-Lastin, 63.

38. "Die ganz welt ist verfüert; das man nit gedächt, auf Petre stuendt die kirchen, darumb ist er auch gefallen, das man säch und erkent, das alain auf Christum, den fels, zu pauen ist und sünst auf nimet," Schneider-Lastin, 64.

39. Jared Wicks, *Luther's Reform: Studies on Conversion and the Church* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1992), 7.

40. One may compare Franz Lau, *A History of the Reformation in Germany to 1555*, trans. Brian A. Hardy (London: Black, 1969). The author agrees with S. C. Karant-Nunn's defense of F. Lau's description against B. Moeller's reservations in this regard (on "wild growth").

41. See Adolar Zumkeller: "Das Ungenügen der menschlichen Werke bei den deutschen Predigern des Spätmittelalters," *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*, 81 (1959), 265-305.

42. ". . . Staupitz had die doctrinam angefangen," WA, TR, 1: 245:9-12 (no. 526); LW, 54:97.

43. "Ich hab all mein ding von Doctor Staupitz," WA, TR, 1:80, 6-7 (no. 173).

44. ". . . gratiae et crucis praeconem," WA, BW, 2:264, 48 (no. 376).

Pastoral Letter on the Ordination of Women to the Pastoral Office of the Church

Dear Esteemed Brothers in the Ministry, Fellow Laborers, and Fellow Christians:

In Christendom generally unrest prevails. The question as to whether women can be admitted to the pastoral office of the church—whether access to service as pastor or priest, traditionally denied them, should now be opened up—is the subject of lively discussion. But a commonly agreed answer is not forthcoming. The discussion of this question has been going on for a long time in the mainline churches as well as in smaller fellowships. The discussion has its point of departure and center in Europe and North America, where social change is most advanced and traditions are being challenged more vigorously than anywhere else. It is evident that the desired goal of ending the widespread discrimination against women in professional and public life is what has really ignited the discussion of women in the pastoral office. And where women in the pastoral office is contested, there the usual suspicion is that nothing much more is involved than the aftermath of the traditional downgrading of women and the attempt to perpetuate male positions of power.

I. The Eastern and Roman Catholic Churches

Remarkably enough, the ancient Oriental churches have not been at all influenced by any contemporary thoughts on the ordination of women. Now, as always, they are far removed from making any accommodation to the prevailing Protestant practices. For them the ordination of women is so totally excluded that no intra-church discussion is going on.

In the Roman Catholic Church, by contrast, there have been many voices raised that advocate an "opening up" and that see no doctrinal question in the admission of women to the priestly office, but rather consider it a problem to be evaluated in terms of canonical law. And canonical law, as a matter of principle, is subject to revision, open to change. Thus, in an essay published at the beginning of April 1994, the Roman Catholic theologian Basilius Streithofen predicted "a new ecclesiastical split in German Catholicism in the coming years" which "in its extent would not take a back-seat to the apostasy of the Reformation era."[1] Pope John Paul II has endeav-

ored to check this development with the apostolic release *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* which he issued on 22 May 1994. In this document, appealing to Holy Scripture and two thousand years of the tradition of the church, he declared consecration to the priesthood reserved to men: "So that every doubt regarding this significant matter, which involves the divine constitution of the church itself, may be swept aside, I declare by virtue of my office . . ., that the church must abide by this decision."[2] This authoritative word of the pope will not, of course, stifle all discussion, but it does lay down the official position of the Roman Catholic Church in unambiguous terms.[3]

II. The Anglican and Evangelical Territorial Churches

The Anglican Churches, by contrast (the Church of England and her daughter churches on other continents), have experienced considerably more turbulence. In November of 1992 the general synod of the Church of England voted in favor of the introduction of the ordination of women. In consequence, as expected, hundreds of pastors, bishops, and entire congregations converted to the Roman Catholic Church, because they believed that only in this way could they remain true to their consciences. The Anglican Church, traditionally marked by two different directions—an Anglo-Catholic wing and a more liberal wing (high-church and low-church)—will presumably change markedly in its profile, since the high-church wing has now been definitely weakened.

In the evangelical territorial churches of Germany the admission of women to the pastoral office has gone through a longer period of development. When, in several churches, women, for the first time, took over the functions of pastors, it was in time of war and immediately thereafter. The extreme emergency—the lack of ordained clergymen—seemed to justify dispensing with all prior rules. There was often, in addition, a lack of clarity regarding office and ordination. Later on this emergency situation was felt to be a pioneering movement in an overdue re-orientation. Without further theological justification the practice of opening the pastoral office to women was extended with increasing vigor. The action of "commissioning" was placed alongside ordination. Commissioning conferred genuine functions of the pastoral office, also on women. In society

at large those vocations which had hitherto been the domain of men were increasingly opened up to women. Such being the case, who wanted to be so old-fashioned and alienated from the world as to refuse to agree to women in the pastoral office? As soon as no basic difference is seen between "worldly" callings and the calling of a pastor, when successfully completed study and examinations are considered sufficient, and when ordination itself is regarded as a ritually inflated official act, then opposition to the ordination of women must of necessity appear as nothing more than anti-feminine traditionalism. Ordination in the context of a divine service seemed to many to be placing too high a value on the action. An administrative directive, a written commissioning transmitted by mail, could on occasion replace it.

When one territorial church after another decided in favor of the ordination of women, they at first provided safeguards for the consciences of pastors who regarded the ordination of women as irreconcilable with Scripture and the confessions. What was initially assured, however, has today, in point of fact, been eliminated. These developments have swept along all the territorial churches in Germany. Bishops have resigned because of decisions made by synods. In July of 1992 the Chamber of Theology of the Evangelical Church of Germany tersely declared: "Criticism of the ordination of women as a matter of principle forsakes the basis of the doctrine prevailing in the evangelical church"; "the exclusion of women from ecclesiastical office [is] not to be categorized as one of the basic rules regulating this office, but rather it is to be considered a matter of custom and social ruling with limited historical significance"; the ordination of women cannot be contrary to Scripture because "the call of Jesus is extended equally to women and men"; and such texts of Holy Scripture as seem to be opposed to women in the pastoral office must be read "precisely in their heterogeneity and temporal conditioning."[4] Here the spear was now turned around: all those who up to this time had voiced accusations or suspicions that the ordination of women clashed with Scripture and the confessions now suddenly found themselves accused—yes, condemned; their position was alleged to be contrary to Scripture and the confessions.

Also in the Lutheran World Federation and the Ecumenical Council of Churches more and more voices are heard which declare that the exclusion of women from the pastoral office is a position to be rejected. For the sake of the Eastern Orthodox Churches and Rome reserve is still exercised. Already, however, at the meeting of the Lutheran World Federation in Curitiba in 1991, a female theologian of India proposed that the rejection of the ordination of women was an expression of discrimination which had to count as "sexism" (and thus as a species of racism). With all these developments, then, the judgment of "ethical heresy" has virtually been pronounced.

In this jumble of divergent voices and positions one must ask who is right and how one is to decide. Which path should any church, here or elsewhere, follow if it is intent on taking the Holy Scriptures and the confessions seriously? There should be no doubt that with the question of the ordination of women we are involved in an area involving doctrine. What is at issue is not an adiaphoron concerning which opinions may vary. The significance of the ordination of women is of such importance that it has, understandably, caused churches to separate and, indeed, to divide. It touches, therefore, the doctrine and practice of ecclesial fellowship. The ordination of women involves, indeed, the very gospel itself, for it belongs to the very nature of the gospel that it should be proclaimed and handled legitimately and authoritatively. The question, therefore, of the authority and legitimation of the one occupying the office of the ministry of the gospel is clearly of vital significance.

III. Problematic Areas in the Current Discussion

There are primarily four areas of theology on which the ordination of women impinges in a problematic way: (a.) the understanding of Scripture; (b.) the understanding of the church and the pastoral office; (c.) the understanding of christology and the Holy Trinity; and (d.) the understanding of the order of creation and the order of salvation. The problems involving these four areas will be briefly sketched in what follows.

A. The Understanding of Scripture

The so-called "classic" passages of the Bible which are connected with the ordination of women are found in 1 Corinthians 14:33-40 and in 1 Timothy 2:9-15. Consideration is due beyond these to 1 Corinthians 11:1-16, where it is taken for granted that a woman prophesies or speaks. In the exposition and application of these biblical references we dare not oversimplify our task, but we must exert special care to see that "the biblical bases in matters of the ordination of women are not more manipulated by internalized cultural-sociological role-concepts than controlled by the biblical pronouncements themselves."[5] It is not only those interpreters who understand these Scripture passages as opposed to the ordination of women who are exposed to this danger, but equally those interpreters who advocate the ordination of women and who cannot find anything in the biblical texts that would speak against it.

The interpretation of the designated passages continues to be controversial in points of detail. A description of this exegesis in detail with critical evaluation would exceed the limits of the comments here and will, therefore, have to be omitted. Without question, however, that which leaps out of the texts is a certain difference between the affirmation of 1 Corinthians 11, according to which women speak prophetically and pray, and the "command of silence" in the "congregational assembly" of 1 Corinthians 14. Questions, however, which need investigation are whether the superscription which some editions of the Bible assign to 1 Corinthians 11, "The Woman in Divine Service," is really fitting and whether the "congregational assembly" in 1 Corinthians 14 is identical with what we today call "divine service." It seems of less importance whether the texts refer solely to married women (since in that case one would also have to ask at what age people then married and who would still have remained among the unmarried). It is, on the other hand, of significance that in 1 Corinthians 14:37 the apostle makes this appeal: "What I am writing to you is a command of the Lord." A mere feeling of respect for contemporary customs and modes of behavior—doing what was appropriate to the time and adjusting to the expectations of society—can hardly be presented as "a command of the Lord."

Nor can we escape the fact that, from among all his female and male disciples, Christ chose only twelve males to form the smaller circle of His apostles. They are not arbitrarily interchangeable functionaries; He associated them with Himself and His mission in an immediate and personal way: "As the Father has sent Me, even so I send you" (John 20:21). Although Christ broke through and invalidated many usages relative to the position of women and the contacts between men and women as they prevailed in the Judaism at the time, He nevertheless included no woman in the call to be His apostles. Nor in the upper room, at the institution of His Supper, did He entrust any woman with the administration of this gift (when He told the apostles, "This do in remembrance of Me"). Nor does a single biblical reference indicate that, in their turn, the apostles, in the placing of pastors and laying on of hands, took part in the call of a woman. To do things differently today would be to depart from the procedure of Christ and the earliest Christians, which would be a weighty and, indeed, momentous decision. The earliest Christians evidently knew nothing of women in the pastoral office, even though the pagan milieu with its many priestesses would have provided a model for such inclusion.

Whoever advocates the admission of women to the office of the ministry is obligated to provide proof that he is operating within the framework of Christ's institution and in harmony with what He did. If this proof is lacking, then we have no authorization to ordain women, even if the contemporary social position of man and woman makes such ordination seem fitting, even if the emancipation of women seems to demand it, and even if women bring with them natural gifts which could be profitably employed in pastoral service. The decisive question always remains as before whether we are operating within the framework of Christ's institution. This approach, to be sure, presupposes that the office we transmit today with ordination is rooted in Christ's institution and in the call of the apostles. If "in the pastoral office Jesus Christ today provides representatives for Himself among men in the same way as He did at the beginning of the church in the case of the apostles,"[6] then, despite the differences between the foundational apostolate and the on-going office of the ministry, a clear line of continuity brings home to us the responsibility we have when we make decisions

relative to ordination.

In expounding the scriptural references and applying them to the contemporary situation, we shall have to be perfectly clear as to what status the New Testament texts have for us. Are they to be newly interpreted in the light of the contemporary situation with all its shifting of values and changes of fashion? Such an interpretation will have to be tested in every particular situation. Can texts, however, which were written down at a certain time and for the people of that time (and to that extent are therefore historically conditioned) still provide timeless and "situation-free" principles? Most assuredly they can—and we must commit ourselves clearly to this proposition. Can such texts adequately answer questions that arise anew today? This question must be answered; in no way can the possibility be simply excluded. Does a text speak on its own or only when the interpretation—and thus a subjective element—is added? What is to prevent us from twisting the text around by means of its interpretation? The interpretation we propound must be evaluated critically—to be sure we are not reading into texts things which are not at all said there. Here we come to the problem of the clarity and sole validity of Holy Scripture—and thus to the problem of its authority. This problem has been with the church constantly, but in the Reformation found an answer from which we have no release: *Sola Scriptura* ("Scripture alone").

B. The Understanding of the Church and the Pastoral Office

The Lutheran Confessions view the "pastoral office" (*Predigtamt*) as the institution of God or, more precisely, of Christ, as in Article 5 of the Augsburg Confession. The commission conferred on those occupying the office—"to preach the gospel, to remit and to retain sins, and to distribute and administer the sacrament"—is seen in connection with the word of Christ in John 20: "As the Father has sent Me, even so I send you: . . . Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained . . ." (Article 28 of the Augsburg Confession).[7] Those occupying the office "represent the person of Christ because of the church's commission; they do not represent their own person according to the word of Christ: 'He who hears you, hears Me.' When they offer the word of Christ or the sacraments, they do so in

Christ's place and stead" (Article 7 of the Apology).[8]

However different the exercise of the office in apostolic times may seem from its exercise today, however divergent the contemporary pastoral office (*Pfarramt*) may appear from the office in the earliest church through the narrowing down of the biblical multiplicity of gifts and powers to the "evangelical pastoral office" (*das evangelische Pfarramt*), these offices are clearly related in such a way that the pastoral office (*Pfarramt*) is the "one office of proclaiming the word and administering the sacraments instituted by Christ,"[10] which is conferred with ordination and exercised in pastoral service. This conception we must emphatically uphold. From where else could we derive the certainty that we are acting in the name and with the commission of Christ? And the question of certainty is of fundamental significance. "What the called servants of Christ are doing when they deal with us according to divine command"—as we have learned from the "Office of the Keys" in the catechism—that must "be as valid and certain in heaven also as if our dear Lord Christ were dealing with us Himself." He, the Lord of the church, is the one who calls, blesses, and sends His ordained ministers. The office conferred is so far removed from human manipulation that there is no legal "claim" (*Anspruch*) to ordination and the pastoral office on the basis of studies completed or examinations passed or any other such qualifications.

The Chamber for Theology of the Evangelical Church of Germany has declared in its position-paper of 1992, "Women's Ordination and the Office of Bishop," that "all Christians are equal and called in the same way through baptism to be members of the church and of the priesthood" (with reference to the office of the ministry).[11] In defense of this position there is an appeal to words of Luther, which actually, however, occur in a different context. The conception of the EKD leads logically to the conclusion that the conferral of the pastoral office is only a legalizing act (*Rechtsakt*), while the office itself is realized in the execution of functions which, as a matter of principle, could be carried out by any Christian. In actuality, however, the pastoral office is no mere sum of functions which anyone at all who has the "gift" can carry out. It is clearly of no small significance that Christ chose only men to compose His inner

circle—as His apostles. In so doing He in no way downgraded the dignity of women. Quite the contrary, He elevated the dignity of women in that He chose a woman—Mary, the Mother of God—as the portal through which to enter the world in His incarnation. But what must not be overlooked is that it pleased the divine wisdom to appear in the form of a man and in this form to become a human being. We must, to be sure, be very careful with all "assumptions" in interpreting the "meaning Jesus may have attached to His selection of twelve Jewish men to be His apostles."[12] Also to be assigned, however, to the category of assumptions is the opinion that the Lord and His apostles did not decide the question of ordaining women "because at that time the question of ordaining women did not yet arise."[13] Even if no word of Christ establishing the reason for binding His official representation to males has been preserved to us, the fact that He did so still counts and, indeed, denies us the freedom of choice to decide anew and differently now.

The pastoral office (*das Amt der Kirche*) is more than the mere execution of functions. The office-holder is himself called by the Lord. He remains, at the same time, a part of the congregation and its spokesman before God, a principle which is expressed by his position when he prays and confesses while facing in the same direction as the congregation. At the same time, however, he is the one who, in the name and by the commission of the Lord of the church, faces the congregation and declares to it the authoritative word of its Lord. In the exercise of this function the office takes on, in addition to its character as service, features of fatherhood as well (in line with 1 Corinthians 4:15); and both aspects of the office serve as safeguards against an "isolated aloneness of hierarchical separation over against the congregation."[14] There can be no talk at all on the basis of the New Testament of a democratically-grounded understanding of equality in rank. "Are they all apostles?" Paul asks in 1 Corinthians 12:28—and obviously means they are not.

If we forget or deny the rooting of the pastoral office in the apostolate and the commission of Christ, if we no longer see its institution as coming from the Lord of the church—but instead consider it only the exercise of certain functions which could logically be passed along to any Christian and which only need some

ordering by common agreement—then we, in fact, forsake our stated confession at a decisive point—yes, at its very foundation in Scripture. For it is Scripture that summons us to confess Christ as the Lord of the pastoral office today. Nor is the church of Christ established and intended as a mere human society in which all have equal rights and equal duties. It is—and is meant to continue to be—the body of the exalted Lord in which He Himself is present through His word and sacraments and in which He Himself distributes His Holy Spirit and wills to work through the office-holders whom He has put in place. That offices and services could at any time be rearranged arbitrarily, according to the possibilities and gifts at hand, conflicts with the Lutheran understanding of Scripture and the confessions of faith and instead has its roots in enthusiasm (*Schwaermertum*).[15]

There is no need to underline that we vigorously reject a priesthood that separates itself from the congregation and lays claim to prerogatives on the basis of a supposedly different and higher status of grace before God. Something of this kind confronted Luther in his day. Neither, however, should we succumb to the danger of flattening out the pastoral office so as to set all services and assignments in the church on the same level, of viewing the church as nothing more than a humanly-ordered union of people with common beliefs. Both church and office are, according to the New Testament, clearly something more. The office of the ministry can by no means be equated with simply bearing witness. The first witnesses of the resurrection of Christ were, according to the Scripture, women. They received the commission to announce the resurrection of the Lord to the disciples—to the disciples, be it noted, not to all the world. It is twisting logic gravely, however, to argue from the appropriate witnessing of women to the legitimacy of women in the office of the ministry.

C. Christology and the Understanding of the Trinity

The introduction of the ordination of women—with the accompanying shift in the understanding of the Holy Scriptures, the pastoral office, and the church—cannot be seen in isolation from the thinking known as feminist theology. The effects of this theology include, above all—sometimes unconsciously and sometimes consciously,

with the goal clearly in mind—a transformation of the picture of Christ and the Holy Trinity which is revealed in Scripture and assumed into the confession of the church. Whether the ordination of women has followed in the wake of feministic theology or *vice versa* is a pointless debate. The fact remains that, even if the one has not developed directly from the other, the close connection of the two phenomena cannot be denied. And feminist theology, without question, adamantly and decisively demands the ordination of women, in line with the striving of feminism in general to achieve "emancipation" from the dominance of the male in all areas. The process, likewise, by which feminist theology seeks to change the male-patriarchal stamp of Holy Scripture and the divine service strengthens and promotes the call to ordain women to the pastoral office.

To speak of God as "Father" is, in the estimation of feminist theology, an expression of thinking which is hostile to women unless "our Mother" be used as well. The Holy Spirit is spoken of as "she," an entity to be treated as female. These are no linguistic games, but rather serious endeavors to transform the biblical picture of God. Together with this transformation come mythical concepts from many non-Christian religions in which female deities play a role. That the picture of the Divine Judge and Father of Mercy has fundamentally changed—since the concept of sin has also changed—has long been evident. In this turning away from presumed "patriarchal values and norms" more lies hidden than we see at first glance. The "theology of fellow-humanity" (*Mitmenschlichkeit*), which has been rampant in the Protestant churches for a long time, has issued in a feminist theology which has also taken on elements of "liberation theology." If the hope is to find and experience God in loving encounters with one's neighbors, then in the female office-holder, with her feminine-motherly disposition, one obviously sees a better administrator of feminist interests than in the male office-holder and the "patriarchal" concept of shepherd and flock.

The picture of Christ as the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (1 Peter 2:25) grows pale if, in His name and by His commission, shepherds no longer speak and function as representatives whom He

has sent forth. Then experiences and wishes, needs and expectations—derived from people and relating to them, especially to women—can quickly form a new picture of God and Christ. This picture no longer derives from His revelation but is projected and transferred to God from His creation. We have to ask ourselves, then, what picture of God we would be promoting by introducing the ordination of women. It would be the kind of transformation which feminist theology seeks to attain. Are we not obliged, however, to stay with the picture of God given in the Bible, seeing how much we would lose were we to veer away from it?

D. The Order of Creation and the Order of Salvation

In the discussion of the ordination of women a considerable role has been played by the question of what conclusions we are to draw from the words of the Apostle Paul in his Letter to the Galatians (3:28): "there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Here, without question, the equal value of woman and man before God is expressed, the same worth as children of God is asserted, and the lack of significance in ethnic or social differences is underlined. For all such differences belong to this aeon, the world whose end has begun with the redemption accomplished by Christ. The differences, however, enumerated by Paul can be understood and interpreted only in part as a consequence of the fall, of the separation of man from God. The difference, at all events, between man and woman derives not from the fall, but rather from the creative will and plan of God: He created them "male and female" (Genesis 1:27). This difference (at least in regard to sexual activities) recedes into the background in the new life of the future world or, indeed, is eliminated: "they are like angels in heaven" (Matthew 22:30).

We may, to be sure, say that what will be realized in the new creation is even now, in a dawn-like way, having its effects among the redeemed. The theology of anticipation, however, reaches into the future and attempts to seize beforehand what is promised us in the "new heaven and the new earth" (2 Peter 3:13). This kind of anticipatory theology plays a considerable role in contemporary responses to almost all ethical questions and even far beyond these. Among Christians and in the church, supposedly, the kingdom of

God has already, as it were, been realized. The well-informed, of course, will easily recognize how far all such thinking is removed from the Lutheran Confessions and biblical sobriety—and how close it comes to the enthusiasm that always wants to rule this world with a "new righteousness" and, in the process generally, distorts the liberating gospel into a new, enslaving law.

In actuality, however, the order of creation is not abolished by the order of redemption, or order of salvation. The words of Paul in Galatians 3:28 speak forcefully, of course, of the order of salvation since he addresses those who "through faith are children of God in Christ Jesus" and "have put on Christ because they have been baptized into Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27). In no way, however, do these words invalidate the order of creation. Nor, by the same token, have all the other statements of Scripture which address the relationship between men and women become suddenly baseless, thoughts we have moved beyond and words to be brushed aside as temporally conditioned. The defining, to be sure, of male-female relationships in terms of the apostolic exhortations brings us many problems when concretely transposed on the contemporary world. But the person who thinks he can brush aside the aforesaid statements of Scripture as being temporally conditioned is making things too easy for himself.

The biblical evaluation of women is, of course, discredited if they are stamped as less gifted, treated as incapable of making decisions, and pushed into the background. All too often such discrimination has hidden behind an appeal to biblical pronouncements, whereas, in point of fact, it was a specific *bourgeois* understanding of roles that was being propagated. In this way the biblical message was made a veil for crass injustice and male arrogance. Such misuse of Scripture should not be allowed to hide in silence, nor should it be excused.

The recognition, however, of the abuse of Scripture cannot be used to eliminate what Scripture clearly teaches—the continuing validity of the order of creation, even when it has long been surrounded by the order of redemptive salvation. Also in the church, what God has established in creation continues to be valid—the difference between men and women who can respectively use their

special endowments to the common good. Meanwhile, however, neither such gifts and endowments nor the equal worth of all the children of God before their Father in heaven provides a basis to claim ordination to the pastoral office. To make a personal claim on the office of the ministry is, indeed, inadmissible. In contradistinction to a "secular" calling, which one can choose for oneself, one is chosen and called by God to the pastoral office, and the church confirms this choosing and calling when it ordains a man to the office of the public ministry. Nor will it do to deny ordination to women without at the same time asserting the biblical and confessional necessity of this denial. We are deceiving ourselves if we think that the practice of restricting the pastorate to men can be sustained in the long haul if the conviction and insistence do not back it up that, in this way and in this way alone, are we acting in faithfulness to the will of Christ, on the basis of Scripture and in accordance with the confessions of the church. In this age and culture we shall need to make continual efforts to attain and retain such certainty of purpose. Adherence to Holy Scripture and so to the Lutheran Confessions is what is at stake here. And these are concerns which could well fracture the church—may God forfend!

What kind of church do we want to be and become? Surely we wish to be a church which stands on the foundation of Scripture "in the unity of the one holy church."[16] Surely we wish to be a church which still has the pastoral office which was instituted by Christ and based on His command and action. Surely we wish to be a church in which "we have introduced nothing, either in doctrine or in ceremonies, that is contrary to Holy Scripture or the universal Christian church" (Conclusion to the Augsburg Confession)[17]—a church which has preserved, in other words, its true catholicity. Among us, then, women are carrying out many services with selfless devotion, for which we thank God from whom every good gift comes. In some places, admittedly, there are still hindrances to be overcome. At the same time, however, we must always remain aware that we have no authority to confer upon a woman the office of an ambassador in the place of Christ, of a shepherd of the congregation. Among us there prevails the "certain doctrine that the preaching office derives from the general call of the apostles" (Tractate 10),[18] and to this office Christ called only men and so He

will continue to do. May God help us to move forward. May He grant us all unanimity and the joyful confidence that He can and will prevent anything which would harm the church. Let us implore such help of Him—from the heart and persistently!

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

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The Endnotes and Editorial Note

1. Basilius Streithofen, "Duerfen Frauen Priester sein?" *Die Welt*, April 12, 1994, G1.
2. The complete text can be found in *Herderkorrispondenze*, 7, 1994, 355ff.
3. Dr. Alvin Barry, the president of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, in a letter of June 1994, specifically thanked Pope John Paul II for his decisive action in this regard: "Our church . . . restricts ordination to the holy office to men only, and we greet your vigorous affirmation of this apostolic doctrine." *Reporter: News for Church Leaders*, August 1994, 7.
4. *Frauenordination und Bischofsamt. Eine Stellungnahme der Kammer fuer Theologie* (EKD Texte 44; Hannover, 1992), 3-5.
5. Volker Stolle, "Neutestamentliche Aspekte zur Frage der Ordination von Frauen," in *Frauen im kirchlichen Amt?* (Oberurseler Hefte 28; Oberursel, 1994), 78.
6. Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, *Apostolat und Predigtamt*, second edition (Stuttgart and Cologne, 1954), 37.
7. *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelish-lutherischen Kirche* (Goettingen, 1952), 121.
8. *Ibid.*, 240.
9. Wilhelm Rothfuchs, "Thesen zu Aspekten aus dem Gebiet der Pastoral-theologie," in *Faruen im kirchlichen Amt?* (Oberurseler Hefte 28; Oberursel, 1994), 86.
10. *Grundordnung der SELK*, Article 7:1.

11. *Frauenordination und Bischofsamt* (EKD Texte 44; Hannover, 1992), 3.

12. Volker Stolle, *ibid.*, 79.

13. *Ibid.*, 73.

14. *Ibid.*, 73.

15. The application of the term "enthusiasm," in accordance with the linguistic usage of Martin Luther and the confessional writings, is made here particularly to that trend in Protestantism which assumes that the Spirit of God can be received without the mediation of the "external word." According to the Smalcald Articles (III, 7, 3), "In these matters which concern the external, spoken word, we must hold firmly to the conviction that God gives no one His Spirit or grace except through or with the external word which comes before. Thus we shall be protected from the enthusiasts—that is, from the spiritualists who boast that they possess the Spirit without and before the word and who therefore judge, interpret, and twist the Scriptures or spoken word according to their pleasure." Tappert, 312.

16. *Grundordnung der SELK*, Article 1:1.

17. *Bekenntnisschriften*, 134.

18. *Ibid.*, 474.

Editorial Note: Bishop Jobst Schöne distributed the original form of his *Hirtenbrief* on the ordination of women to the clergy of the SELK in the course of 1994. It was then slightly expanded by the bishop in its theological argumentation, translated by the Reverend Dr. Armin Moellering at the instance of the president's office of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, then slightly abridged by the assistant editor by removing sentences relating uniquely to the SELK (as suggested by the office mentioned and resolved by the editorial committee of the *Concordia Theological Quarterly*), and has now been authorized by the bishop in the form printed here as the official English version of the letter concerned. D.McC.L.J.

Book Reviews

THE NEW AGE IS LYING TO YOU. By Eldon K. Winker. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1994. 223 pages. Paperback, $10.99.

What do channeling, Wiccan rituals, quartz crystals, ecofeminism, Greek politics, Gaia worship, visualization, Reiki therapy, and Obi-wan Kenobi have in common? There is more than one might have first expected, according to Eldon K. Winker in his tour of the Age of Aquarius come of age in the "New Age Movement." In his first chapter Winker introduces the reader to the New Age as "an eclectic, occult-based, evolution-promoting, man-centered, self-deifying, pervasive world view (philosophy of life) that seeks, through the transformation of individuals, to bring about a transformation of society in order to achieve the ultimate goal of a new world order of complete global harmony" (page 16). The remainder of the book presents compelling data to support this summary. Winker summarizes the New Age world-view in six theses: (1.) All is one; therefore all is God. (2.) Mankind is divine and has unlimited potential. (3.) Mankind's basic flaw is the ignorance of his divinity. (4.) Mankind's basic need is personal transformation produced by consciousness-altering techniques. (5.) Personal transformation is the springboard for global transformation. (6.) All religions are one and lead to cosmic unity. New Age thought is both monistic and pantheistic. It is a denial of sin and the "wages of sin," which is death. It exchanges the Creator for the creation and deifies man, who has the ability to define his own reality and morality. The second chapter tracks the eclectic roots of the New Age through eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism), nineteenth-century theosophism, spiritualism, and transcendentalism, eighteenth-century Swedenborgianism, second- and third-century Gnosticism, ultimately back to the original, self-deifying lie in the Garden of Eden: "You can be like God and will not die." The New Age is nothing less than a celebration of humanity's original rebellion and man's continued desire to be a god in place of God.

Winker devotes the next nine chapters to discussions of New Age influences in various areas of contemporary culture: Occultism, entertainment, neo-paganism, environmentalism, global politics, education, business, health care, and "new age Christianity." The range of topics is impressive and illustrates well the all-pervasiveness of New Age thinking. Winker provides many examples and citations from original sources. Each chapter concludes with a short Christian assessment and response. The analyses are generally objective and well balanced. Winker helpfully notes that the New Age movement has both humanistic and occultic strands (page 47). Many humanistic goals—for example, temporal peace, productivity, health, and proper stewardship of the environment—are shared by Christians and can be viewed positively in the way of God's

creaturely gifts in terms of the first article of the creed and civic righteousness. However, the occultic spirituality and anthropocentric accents of New Age thinking are incompatible with a scriptural view of the relationships among God, man, and the creation.

This reader has two criticisms of this book. First, although well researched, the writing style tends toward the sensationalistic. The "item" news-flashes, which begin each chapter, and the use of the acronym "NAM" for "New Age Movement" create the impression of a "conspiracy theory" and contradict Winker's own observation that the New Age is not a monolithic, well-organized movement (page 16). The reader begins to suspect a demon lurking under every quartz crystal. Secondly, the Christian responses at the end of each chapter are somewhat simplistic. "The New Age says this; the Bible says that." Such an approach may prevent a few people from floating off into the New Age, but it will not anchor them in the wounds of the crucified and risen Savior through the sacramental word, nor will it equip them to speak the truth in love to their New Age neighbors. Holy Baptism is mentioned only twice (pages 155, 195), Holy Communion and Holy Absolution not at all. Yet it is precisely the external, creaturely, sacramental word that anchors the Christian in the Incarnate God and keeps him from floating off into vaporous "spiritualities." The diminution of the sacraments has left much of Protestantism defenseless against *Schwärmerei*, New Age or otherwise. It is not surprising, therefore, to read that of the ninety-five percent of New Agers with religious backgrounds, fifty-five percent come out of Protestantism while only eighteen percent come out of Roman Catholicism (page 177). A stronger emphasis on the liturgical-sacramental dimension of Christianity would have been helpful to counterbalance the literature in this area, most of which is written from a Reformed perspective.

Ultimately, the New Age fantasy is doomed to self-destruction. Self-absorbed hedonism and global harmony are at crossed purposes. Self-indulgence and self-sacrifice are mutually incompatible. The church has a challenge and opportunity in these days of false messiahs and pseudo-salvations to proclaim neither "Pollyanna optimism" nor "Chicken Little pessimism," but the sober realism of living as sinner-saints in the new age which was inaugurated by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Winker's book is a helpful primer on the New Age movement. He has done good work in alerting the Christian reader to various New Age accents within our culture. Ample footnotes from original sources and a good bibliography invite further reading and study. This book is relatively easy to read and would be suitable for study-groups in the parish and for

interested individuals.

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COLOSSIANS: A COMMENTARY. By Petr Pokorný. Peabody, Massachusetts: Henrickson Publishers, 1991.

If a commentary cannot be recommended with little or no reservation, one at least hopes that it will prove to be stimulating or provocative—as is the case with this translation of Pokorný's contribution of 1987 to the *Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament*. Pokorný, Professor of New Testament and member of the faculty of Protestant Theology in Prague, denies the Pauline authorship of Colossians, which often leads him to over-emphasize alleged differences between this epistle and the "authentic" letters of Paul. His conclusion regarding authorship compels him to excuse the deception of the real author as necessary to provide a successful antidote to the problem which he faced and to attribute the place of this pseudonymous work in the canon to the grace of God succeeding despite human failure and literary falsification. The author often engages in a method of interpretation that will remind the reader of the demythologization of Rudolf Bultmann.

Despite these major drawbacks there is significant food for thought in this work. Pokorný offers reasons for thinking that there may be allusions to baptism in a large number of places in the letter; the sacrament is therefore seen to be central to the entire epistle rather than something mentioned to only in 2:12-13 (which, the author argues, is to be understood as the thesis of the letter). The author outlines the letter by means of a chart which, for all its complexity, does point to certain major themes recurring in Colossians.

This volume does not make for easy reading; nevertheless, working through its pages in a dedicated way will pay dividends. After using the commentaries of Bruce (NICNT, 1984) or O'Brien (Word Biblical Commentary, 1982) to get a good basic understanding of Colossians, one may then take up Pokorný. His work is both challenging and provocative enough to take one deeper into the meaning of this letter.

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