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CHURCH & STATE

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The International Lutheran Council held its 8th World Seminaries Conference from June 11-14, 2024, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The papers in this volume represent some of those which were delivered during the conference, and are presented here in the order in which they were given.

THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHURCH AND STATE

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Introduction

"Fear God. Honour the emperor" (1 Peter 2:17). Thus the Apostle Peter writes to Christians on how to be submissive to the authorities. He repeats the teaching of the Lord: "Render to Ceasar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:18). The Apostle has the priorities in the same order. Fearing God means holy reverence and obedience in faith, love, and hope. Peter describes Christians living in fear of God under the grace of Christ: "Conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile knowing that you were ransomed… with the precious blood of Christ… your faith and hope are in God" (1:17-22). Christians are to live in the fear of God under his under-shepherds, who exercise spiritual authority in love and care among the flock (5:1-3).

The fear of God also causes Christians to honour earthly rulers—and the emperor during Peter's time happened to be the notorious Nero. Peter writes: "Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme or to the governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise who do good" (2:13). For the Lord's sake, Christians are to be submissive and obedient to human authorities. Peter further instructs Christians how they must live according to one's vocation in marriage (3:1-7) and in service for others (3:18). Christians are called even to suffer—not for breaking civil laws as evildoers but instead as Christians for the sake of righteousness, all the time "having a good conscience" (3:13-17, 4:15).

The question of spiritual and earthly authority and how they relate to each other has been an issue for every Christian generation. The question of church and state is a modern and narrower expression of the historical question of two kingdoms, which we find already in the New Testament (John 18:36). The church father Augustine famously made the distinction between the "city of God" (*civitas Dei*) and the "earthly city" (*civitas terrena*). This distinction was made between God's and the Devil's kingdom. Martin Luther develops the idea further with his doctrine of the two kingdoms. Unlike Augustine, Luther problematized the concept of the "Christian state" as against heretics, stressing not flight from the world but Christian activity in the world for the sake of others. The "two governments" describes God's ruling authority over men through both spiritual and secular governments.[1] It is self-

1 Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology: It's Historical and Systematic Development*, (Fortress Minneapolis 1999), 316-320.

evident that the reformers were not addressing modern liberal democratic concepts of state in terms of rulers and subjects. This does not mean, however, that the two kingdoms doctrine is somehow irrelevant today; the need to distinguish human existence in its vertical reality "before God" (*coram deo*) and its horizontal reality "before men" (*coram mundo*) always remains.

The spiritual and temporal realms cover the whole of our existence. Nothing slips out of God's right-hand and left-hand work. The comprehensive duality deals with our vocation in the three estates: church, family, and government. These all are holy orders commanded and instituted by the Word of God.[2] The scope of temporal authority is much wider than simply national, state, and civil government, but also includes the realities of the first article of the creed. The spiritual realm meanwhile includes our standing before God in the second article due to the person and work of Christ. The third article points not only to this present time of the Spirit gathering the Church before the eschaton but also to the eventual eschatological unified reality.[3]

Basic problems and guiding principles

In this God-created and redeemed world of two kingdoms, the two governments exist always side by side. Historically, however, their relationship between the two has sometimes changed, and various theological arguments have been given in support of each solution. How differently is the question addressed in a pre-Constantine era of minority position and persecution (before 325 A.D.) than in the long Constantinian era with the idea of a pious Christian king or ruler, and the symbiotic relationship between the crown and the altar. How differently again is it addressed in our 21st century post-Constantinian era, when traditional Christian faith and Christians are marginalized in individualistic and multicultural secular societies impacted by global political structures, companies, and NGOs.

To put it simply, we can trace three models of how the state and the church should relate to each other. In the first one, the state exists over the Church. This means that secular authority is superior to spiritual, and the state rules over the Church at the expense of her freedom. In the Byzantine era in Eastern Christendom, caesaropapism was in practice common although not theologically accepted. Due to the war in Ukraine, the same question is very much present today in Russia. Patriarch Kirill of Moscow has been called in the West President Putin's altar boy, and the Eastern Orthodox Church is theologically divided on the heresy of ethnophyletism, the identification of the Church with a nation.

The second solution to the relationship between Church and state is that the Church should have authority over temporal authorities. The idea is the Lordship of Christ over the earthly kingdom. Medieval papalism is an example of the elevation of the Church

2 "The holy orders and true religious institutions established by God are these three: the office of priest, the estate of marriage, the civil government. … For these three religious institutions and orders are contained in God's Word and commandment; and whatever is contained in God's Word must be holy." AE 37: 364-365." It is not because labour, marriage, government and church are that they are commanded by God, but it is because they are commanded by God that they are." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, (Macmillan New York 1965), 208.

3 "The government and the Church both are fully swept up into this comprehensive duality. But so is everything else. Marriage and family, sexuality, education, environment and climate, economics, science, art and music, medicine, diplomacy, friendship, leisure and sports: all of these pursuits and every other pursuit are all encompassed in the distinction between God's two discrete methods of operation within and on behalf on God's creation." Joel Biermann, *Wholly Citizens: God's Two Realms and Christian Engagement with the World* (Minneapolis 2017), XXIII-XXIV.

over state, but we have to remember that even today the pope is not only the primate of the Holy See but also the head of the Vatican City State. In Zurich, Ulrich Zwingli is depicted in a statue holding both Bible and Sword. Today, the theocratic question may not surface in western societies as a question about Christianity so much as about Islam, which is necessarily and always a political power. Islam has a growing presence even in Western countries and Sharia law becomes increasingly more influential.

The third model of the relationship between Church and state says spiritual and temporal authorities should be separated from each other drastically. They live—so to say—on different planets. Christians can view the state with hostility, as in the Reformation era when some of the anabaptist movement saw civil service as evil and escaped to isolation from surrounding society (*e.g.*, the Schleitheim Confession of 1527). A more nuanced version of this view is the modern secular and widely accepted simplistic belief that churches have no right to publicly criticize government decisions. Church and state have no point of contact, and thus church bodies should not address moral questions in society because of the separation of church and state, faith and politics. We can also see that some Christians become so frustrated with their political leaders that they withdraw themselves from voting and serving in civil offices.

Where do we as Lutherans stand? There are two guiding principles. First, according to the Augsburg Confession, the three estates—church, marriage, and the civil state—are all instituted by God and are his good gifts. Article 16 is written against the radical movements and medieval monasticism, both of which withdrew from civil life for the sake of their faith. The Augustana does not see temporal authority as negative or even a "necessary evil" but instead as God's good ordinance. Both spiritual and temporal governments are under God. The three estates ought to be preserved, and Christians should be active in their vocations and obedient to their rulers, always recognizing that the civil state power is not absolute but limited. As Article 16 says:

> Our churches teach that lawful civil regulations are good works of God… For the Gospel teaches an eternal righteousness of the heart (Roman 10:10). At the same time, it does not require the destruction of the civil state (*politia*) of the family (*oeconomia*). The Gospel very much requires that they may be preserved as God's ordinances and that love be practiced in such ordinances. Therefore it is necessary for Christians to be obedient to their rulers and laws. The only exception is when they are commanded to sin. Then they ought to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).

The second principle is that there must be not a separation but rather a distinction between the civil authority and the Church for the well-being of both of them. "Therefore, the two authorities, the spiritual and the temporal, are not to be mingled or confused" (AC XXVIII). It is a question of making a distinction between the Law and the Gospel. The civil power may not interfere with the holy calling of the Church to preach the salvific Gospel of Christ, and the Church must not use sword and coercion in her mission or focus on civic and mundane matters in a way that overshadows her true calling. The Church has, with her Word and Sacrament ministry, different methods and ends than do secular authorities. The moral Law directs and guides life in the world, but only the Gospel of Christ and forgiveness of sins defend us against accusations and condemnation of God's Law in our fallen reality.

Historically we must acknowledge the understandable but unfortunate development during the Reformation time in Germany that, although bishops were rightly denied the use of civil powers, princes as Christians and the first members of church, were given in an emergency situation rights to a certain extent for ecclesial supervision. The outcome

was that under the mask of royal priesthood, combined civil and ecclesial authority in the Lutheran churches was taken back in a different form.[4] In many cases—as in Sweden, for example—Lutheran pastors also became civil servants, promising obedience on the one hand to the Lutheran Confessions in their ordination vows (instead of to the bishop as in the Roman rite), and on the other hand promising obedience to the king.

The theological principles are clear, but the practice has varied a lot also among Lutherans. We can find at least three models from our Lutheran history on how state and church may relate to each other. The first is the "state church" model, where state and church overlap each other. Here the state/ruler plays a significant role in matters of church, and the church likewise has many privileges and obligations in the state. The second model is the "national church," where state and church work side by side, sharing a common national history, joint work, and mutual benefits and goals for the wellbeing of the nation. The third model is that of the "free church," in which state and church (often a small minority and sometimes even persecuted) are clearly separated, sharing mainly legislative points of contact. Almost all of the member churches of the International Lutheran Council belong more or less to category three.

Two Realms: Distinct but not separate gifts of God

In his lectures on Genesis, Luther explains the origins and institutions of the three estates of church, marriage, and government. Moreover, he expounds on the scope and purpose of church and temporal government:

> *"Eat from every tree of Paradise but not from the tree of knowledge of good and evil do not eat"* [Genesis 2:16-17]. Here we have the establishment of the church before there was any government of the home and of the state; for Eve was not yet created… Thus the temple is earlier than the home, and it is also better this way. Moreover, there was no government of the state before sin, for there was no need of it. Civil government is a remedy required by our corrupted nature. It is necessary that lust be held in check by the bonds of the laws and penalties… Because the Church is established by the Word of God, it is certain that man was created for an immortal and spiritual life.[5]

The Church and temporal authority originate from God. However, they differ from each other in several ways. The foundational difference is that the Church is created by the Word of God before home and state. The question is not only about sequence in time but moreover about the order, means, and goal. We can draw from here four important conclusions about church and state.

First, man is created for spiritual life with God from creation to eternity. The civil government as temporal authority is truly temporal. It is instituted for a period of time—from the fall until the end of the world. The Church instead prepares men for heaven with the Gospel of Christ. The goal is eternal life with God. Secondly, it reveals that the Church has different means, and her primary task is to address with the Word of God the

4 "When in the dire situation the church faced, Luther appealed to the love of a Christian brother in the person of the ruler of the land, he did not realize that this very appeal itself, if correctly understood by pious princes, could only serve to strengthen the longstanding tendency to subordinate the church to the state." Hermann Sasse, "Church Government and Secular Authority According to Lutheran Doctrine" (*The Lonely Way: Selected Essays and Letters*. Vol. 1. CPH St. Louis 2001), 195.

5 AE 1: 103-104.

matters of the human soul and immortality—unlike the government, which implements laws and rules dealing with the body and earthly life and possessions with force. The state can demand subordination (Romans 13:5) but man's conscience in Christ-given freedom belongs to God and is bound by His Word.

Thirdly, the order of the Church being first reveals necessary priorities. Christian obedience to the First Commandment and the Word of God supersedes vocation as citizens or even among family. The *Clausula Petri* (Acts 5:29) flows out of this reality. The Church is ultimate and the state penultimate. The real story and identity of a human being is to be a baptized child of God, not a matter of race, nationality, or personal achievements. The real story of world history is the life of the Church, not of earthly powers, cultural developments, and scientific innovations.

Fourthly, since the Church and family were instituted prior to the civil government, the state does not confer the Church rights to confess and practice faith. The state does not stand above marriage and should not interfere with parental rights. The state is called to recognize, respect, and protect the rights of the Church and natural family in society. The Church maintains her integrity and freedom in every situation since what the state does not grant cannot be taken away by it.

God ordered temporal government due to sin and our fallen nature. The purpose of the government is to control and act as a medicine (*remedium*) to sin-driven fallen humanity. How is the civil government to do this? By two ways: by curbing and punishing evil, and by protecting and promoting what is *bonum commune*. This is the classical understanding of the natural law: good is to be done and evil avoided.

The civil government rules with the law, guided by reason and justice grounded on man's moral nature written in one's heart (Romans 2:14). Thus, morality is not a matter of religious beliefs but belongs to our human nature and the created order. The content of the natural law agrees with the Decalogue and cannot be against it.[6] In every culture, we can trace the second table of the Decalogue and the law of creation. This means that the state can be governed well even by unbelievers and pagans as agents of God. Even bad and ungodly rulers are better than anarchy. God is sustaining and governing in his love our fallen world through the sword punishing evil and protecting life. Civil and national legislation based on the natural law should express God's care towards men and all creation. All human beings serve each other through their different vocations. Thus, God is providing for his creation and the Church. The temporal authority comes from God but Luther in the Large Catechism's explanation of the Fourth Commandment how the civil government receives its authority from the parents and also duties to secure life.[7] It is well known even in Luther's time, for example, how the civil governments had social responsibilities. In close cooperation with congregations, cities took care of the poor and the sick, promoted education for children, and prevented begging.

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6 "We for our part maintain that God requires the righteousness of reason. Because of God's command, honorable works commanded in the Decalogue should be performed." Apology; IV, 22. For more, see: Roland Ziegler, "Natural Law in the Lutheran Confessions" in *Natural Law: A Lutheran Reappraisal* (CPH, St. Louis 2011), 65-78.

7 "For all authority flows and is born from the authority of parents… The same should also be said about obedience to civil government. This (as we have said) is all included in the place of the fatherhood and extends farthest of all relations. Here 'father' is not one person from a single family, but it means that many people the father has as tenants, citizens, or subjects. Through them, as through our parents, God gives to us food, house and home, protection, and security. They bear such name and title… that it is our duty to honor them and to value them greatly as the dearest treasure and most precious jewel upon the earth." Large Catechism. 4th Commandment, 141, 150. (*Concordia Reader's Edition*, 375-376).

Mission of God by both hands

Luther expounds in greater detail both the distinction and the interdependence of the two realms in his treatise *Temporal Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed* (1523).

> Here we must divide the children of Adam and all mankind into two classes, the first belonging to the kingdom of God, the second to the kingdom of the world…
>
> God has ordained two governments: the spiritual, by which the Holy Spirit produces Christians and righteous people under Christ; and the temporal, which restrains the un-Christian and wicked so that—no thanks to them—they are obliged to keep still and to maintain an outward peace…
>
> One must carefully distinguish between these two governments. Both must be permitted to remain: the one to produce righteousness, the other to bring about external peace and prevent evil deeds. Neither one is sufficient in the world without the other. No one can become righteous in the sight of God by means of the temporal government, without Christ's spiritual government. Christ's government does not extend over all men; rather, Christians are always a minority in the midst of non-Christians. Now where temporal government or law alone prevails, there sheer hypocrisy is inevitable, even though the commandments be God's very own. For without the Holy Spirit in the heart no one becomes truly righteous, no matter how fine the works he does. On the other hand, where the spiritual government alone prevails over land and people, there wickedness is given free rein.[8]

Church is for Christians, but all men—both Christians and non-Christians—live under civil authority. Here we find also Luther's famous idea of the two kinds of righteousness, which he had explained extensively in his *Sermon on Two Kinds of Righteousness* (1518/9). The first and inward righteousness comes from Christ's spiritual government in the Church given by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel. Christ's righteousness declared and given as a gift makes a Christian. The second righteousness is outward, under the civil authorities by the obedience to the commandments of God. In the sight of the spiritual government, the outward work-based righteousness is hypocrisy. But for God's desired order and justice, this outward righteousness of obeying the moral law and national legislation is very much needed for the sake of peace and the love of neighbour.

Christians could live without the law and government. As baptized and regenerated children of God, they in freedom want to live in peace and love with each other. However, Christians need both law in its civil and spiritual use and the civil government with its swords for three reasons. First, Christians are new creatures but they still have their sinful nature. For the sake of the *simul iustus et peccator* reality they need themselves to hear God's law and the civil rule of temporal government. Secondly, they are citizens of both kingdoms. They not only live a Christian life in the Church but also fulfill their vocation in the world. Thus, they are subject both to spiritual government and secular governments.[9] Thirdly, because the only power of the Church is to preach the Word to human consciences, the Church and everyone else would suffer without the protection of the temporal sword of peace, civil freedom, and stability. The wickedness that suppresses the Church's freedom for life and mission should have no free rein.

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8 AE 45: 88, 91-92.

9 John R. Stephenson, "The Two Governments and Two Kingdoms in Luther's Thought." *One Lord, Two Hands? Essays on the Theology of the Two Kingdoms*, (CPH: St. Louis 2021), 179-181.

We can summarize God's rule over creation and the Church in the present age before His reign in glory is revealed in the eschaton:

Sovereign rule and the mission of God[10]

In the World (all people)	In the Church (believers)
Left-hand realm	Right-hand realm
General Revelation	Special Revelation
Uses Sword	Uses Word
Interested in ethics	Interested in the means of grace
Behavior ordered by 1. use of law	Freedom and new life in Christ
Civil righteousness (justice)	Christ's righteousness (justification)
Orders of family and civil authority	Order of ministry and spiritual authority
Vocation	Vocation
Goal: right functioning of creation	Goal: full restoration of creation
Works toward peace	Delivers peace now

Christ's eternal Kingdom revealed at the Eschaton

Church and State under attack

Our Saviour, whose kingdom is not of this world, was the faithful and true martyr. He was persecuted and put to death by both religious and secular authorities. In the book of Revelation, both church and civil government are described as taken over by Satan and his servants (Revelation 13:1-2). The *regnum Diaboli* attacks and wants to pervert both the Church with heresy and the state with lawlessness. Since the fall the Church has been a church-militant. The Church has most of all pressure not from the state but from within. There has been and will be a constant struggle between Cain and Abel, true and false prophets, and the true and false church, church in reality and church in name, as expounded by Luther.[11] The life of the Church under the cross is a fight against false doctrine and heretical teachings and teachers; but there is also—due to human pride, weakness, and a lack of Christian love—a continuing task to prevent schisms in matters of church government and ecclesial practices.

There are times that local churches and church bodies have been taken over by Cain, as in Luther's time, and the faithful remnant must suffer for truth's sake. Luther is bold enough to say that, even if a church body bears the name Christian, it can still become a church of Satan, which persecutes the true Church, which holds to the Word of God.[12] If a church does not confess her faith, it becomes easily deceived and turns into a persecutor.[13]

10 Klaus Detlev Schulz, *Theological Anthropology and Sin* (Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics V. Fort Wayne 2023), 229. Biermann, *Wholly Citizens: God's Two Realms and Christian Engagement with the World* (Fortress Press 2017), 110.

11 "God here makes it clear that He judges the hearts and reins. He does not look at the distinction of primogeniture in Cain; instead, He looks at the heart of despised Abel. Moreover, here the church begins to be divided into two churches: the one which is the church in name but in reality is nothing but a hypocritical and bloodthirsty church; and the other one, which is without influence, forsaken, and exposed to suffering and the cross, and which before the world and in the sight of that hypocritical church is truly Abel, that is, vanity and nothing." AE 1, 252.

12 AE 2, 102.

13 Thomas Schirrmacher, *The Persecution of Christians Concerns Us All*, (WEA Global issues Series Vol 5: Oregon 2001), 111.

Similarly, the good gifts and institutions of temporal government and state can abandon their calling to act according to natural law and to protect the life and wellbeing of church, families, and people. The Augustana in a very realistic and sober way underlines how, due to human weakness and the Devil's temptation, civil righteousness is often lost.[14] The temporal government may turn into a lawless kingdom of the Devil, as we saw in the disastrous utopian dreams and bloodbath of the 20th-century ideologies and pseudoreligions of Communist and National Socialist states, and in modern ultranationalist and Islamistic governments. Luther is very well aware of this reality and danger as he guides us to pray the Lord's Prayer.[15] When lawlessness takes over, not only Christians but all people suffer because basic human rights are grounded on the creation narrative that every human being, male and female, has intrinsic value, and all humans are guided and protected by the Second Table of the Decalogue, which reflect God's love toward all men. Instead of propagating truth, beauty, and goodness, tyrannical leaders, parties, and ideologies are driven by the selfish will to power at the cost of human dignity and freedom, propagating lies and causing the destructing of the rule of law in the name of security concerns.

In these extreme situations, the experiences of the 20th-century German *Kirchenkampf* and Confessing Church have been of paramount importance, especially concerning church jurisprudence and ecclesial legality. Churches always relate and operate with and under the control of secular national legal systems. However, neither the will of tyrannical leaders nor legal positivism—which means socially constructed norms made solely by the democratic legislation process—can dictate the life and freedom of the Church. The Church has pre-political and supra-positivist legal grounds based on natural law and the divine revelation of Christ Jesus and his inerrant Word in the Scriptures. Church must have her own ecclesial law (*Kirchenrecht*), which comprises her confession, sacramental-liturgical life, ministry, and constitution. The Church and what belongs to her essence (*esse*) by divine right (*ius divininum*) cannot be ruled over by the national legislation nor by majority vote in church assemblies without conflict and split. In matters of human right (*ius humanun*), there is greater freedom to define what serves the Church and her life in the best way (*bene esse*).[16]

The Church is always living in a fallen world and its flawed systems. When the Church is faced with unjust and authoritarian—even tyrannical—state power, her calling is to walk the narrow path. On the one hand, the Church must be a prophetic voice in society for truth and goodness, and give guidance for her members to fulfill their secular calling with a good conscience and not to live by lies. On the other hand, the Church must be vigilant that her message is not turned into social justice preaching but remains always Christ-, cross-, and salvation-centered.[17] The mundane realities cannot overtake the eternal ones. As one late Finnish professor summarized: The Church is here because we die.

The problem many Christians face nowadays is not only that the state is threatening their freedom of speech and conscience but that most temporal authorities have been

14 "For God wants this civil discipline to restrain the unspiritual, and to preserve it he has given laws, learning, teaching, governments, and penalties. To some extent, reason can produce this righteousness by its own strength, though its often overwhelmed by its natural weakness and by the devil, who drives it to open crimes." Apology IV, 23. (Tappert, 110).

15 "He [the devil] is not satisfied to obstruct and overthrow spiritual order, so that he may deceive men with his lies and bring them under his power, but he also prevents and hinders the establishment of any kind of government or honorable and peaceful relations on earth. This is why he causes so much contention, murder, sedition, and war…" Large Catechism. Lord's Prayer 4th petition. (Tappert, 431).

16 Anssi Simojoki, "Given Justice and Enacted Jurisprudence" in *Niin kuin se kirjoitettu on, niin se paikkansa pitää*, (Suomen Lutehr-säätiö, Vaasa) 204.

17 Klaus Detlev Schulz, *Mission from the Cross: The Lutheran Theology of Mission*. (CPH, St. Louis. 2009), 108-109.

taken over by gender ideology, which has a cultural hegemony of all aspects of life. In many countries, we have seen how media, welfare structures, public schools, universities, companies, the army, sports, and judiciary become hostile and even oppressive with their radical woke ideology and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies and practices. According to critical theory, there is an ongoing struggle between oppressors and oppressed ones, and thus every aspect of life becomes political. It is not enough for Christians to fulfill their vocation well at the workplace in companies, as civil servants, in professional sports, and so forth. They are often obligated to be part of a political and ideological activism which goes against their conscience. Some speak of "soft totalitarianism." It is a sad thing to see how it tears society in pieces.

This cultural wave is causing historic levels of apostasy and division among church bodies. To give you an example of church and state problems and their different juridical basis, consider the question of marriage (*cf.* abortion, transgender, euthanasia, and conversion therapy laws). The change in marriage legislation and the underlying concept of marriage by opening it up to same-sex couples in many nations has, during recent years, put enormous pressure on churches. There is a push to follow the positive national legislation and to give up supra-positivist justice, by which natural law, divine revelation, and confessional writings define marriage for one man and one woman. Many churches not only struggle with fidelity to biblical teaching on the proper definition of marriage and human sexuality, but at the same time they face the question of right and proper legal norms: Do churches have the freedom to follow their divine right in their liturgical life or must they submit themselves to the state and its legislation and practices? And if the ministers of a church do teach publicly against gender ideology and its practices and are, for that reason, accused of hate crimes, are they at the same time submitting themselves both to the Church's divine right and to secular authorities, ready to pay the price for their confession?

There is a clear distinction between rebellion and disloyalty against the state in matters of conscience. According to Luther, a Christian is not allowed to be rebellious against temporal authorities and oppose the legal government. Luther states: "War and uprising against our superior cannot be right." Good government is a rare gift, and we do not live in a paradise. But to go against legal governance is to rebel against God's ordinance and Word, and thus to go against one's conscience. However, in cases where superiors demand people go to an unjust war or break the natural law and God's commandments, civil disobedience is necessary for the sake of God's truth and one's conscience. We have plenty of biblical examples.[18] Dr. Luther writes:

> If you know for sure that he [the prince] is wrong, then you should fear God rather than men (Acts 5:29), and you should neither fight nor serve, for you cannot have a good conscience before God… If they put you to shame or call you disloyal, it is better for God to call you loyal and honorable than for the world to call you loyal and honorable.[19]

18 The Egyptian midwives disobeyed Pharaoh's command to kill babies (Exodus 1); Rahab saved Israeli spies and resisted her king (Joshuah 2); Daniel refused to obey his ruler's command (Daniel 3; 6); and Peter preached the Gospel despite state prohibition (Acts 4).

19 Luther discusses this theme in his treatise "Whether soldiers, too, can be saved." AE 46:118; 130-131. For more, see: Notger Slenczka, "God and Evil: Martin Luther's Teaching on Temporal Authority and the Two Realms," in *One Lord, Two Hands? Essays on The Theology of the Two Kingdoms*, (CPH: St. Louis 2021), 132-153.

A Christian is called to be ready to pay the price for disobedience and leave matters in God's hand, who can restore it a hundredfold (Matthew 19:29).

The Constantinian Challenge in a Post-Constantinian World

The economist Adam Smith (1723-1790) famously coined the term "the invisible hand," by which he meant the unseen force that moves the free market economy, namely, individual self-interest, which causes common good for the whole of the economy. When we discuss the relationship of the Church and the state, we can use the same image of an "invisible hand" guiding the life and decisions of churches. We confess, of course, that the Holy Spirit gathers and enlightens the Church; but in this case, I mean a different force, namely, our Constantinian heritage—the inseparable bond between crown and altar, state and church. Although there have been and still are plenty of good things from this long period of time—the Christianization of the great part of the world and Christian rulers and nations—this "invisible hand" has nevertheless done and is still doing great damage to the Church and her calling. To put it briefly, churches have depended on the resources, legislative power, and prerogatives granted by the temporal kingdom to promote the spiritual kingdom, at the cost of her freedom and identity. The interference of state in the church to offer benefits, as opposed to threats and the sword, has been much more effective and widespread. But even sweet poison is still poison after all.

We realize that the Constantinian model of state and church overlapping each other in a Christian nation has been over for a long time. Up until the 20th century, many countries and states held publicly and by legislation to Christian (Lutheran) faith, holding almost a monopoly and in which no true religious freedom existed. This Constantinian model broke, however, with the rise of modernism and individualism, and the elevation of the self to the centre of the cosmos, separation of church and state, promotion of individual rights, and growing secularization and multiculturalism during the 20th century. However, there was an ongoing presence of *cultural Constantinianism*, with the hegemony of Christian people and Christian cultural customs, the Christian moral majority, and the respected place of Christian teaching and churches in society, schools, and on the national legislative level. In the 21st century, however, we live in a post-Constantinian era and post-Christian times. Many churches have gone from an unchallenged majority position to a challenged majority position and now to a challenged and oppressed minority position, especially in terms of classical doctrinal and moral teachings.

How does the "invisible hand" affect even those churches that have not state or national church status but instead a free church background? Firstly, the Constantinian mindset has the idea that the Church is big and a small church is therefore a sect. The champion of this model was the German theologian Ernst Troeltsch (1865-1923), who with the Church-Sect typology critically reflected on churches and their relation to public life. However, this model plays completely with sociological and not theological categories. The idea of being big and influential has caused many churches desperately to hold on to people by asking primarily how a church body remains *relevant* and *influential* in the eyes of a secular society rather than faithful to her confession. Churches may become more fearful of being marginalized than of deviating from their doctrinal heritage. The real enemy is not the Devil but the media's dislike and large numbers of church members threatening to leave a church body. This is a temptation in a small church body as well.

This unspoken presupposition cannot be without effect on theology. According to widespread teaching in modern Scandinavian Lutheran theology, natural law is now interpreted to mean simply a command to love one's neighbour; it is up to each Christian or church body to decide with reason what love means in any given situation. Thus, natural law can be emptied of clear biblical teachings and even the Decalogue.[20] This was one of the main lines of argumentation behind the acceptance of women's ordination and implementing the sexual revolution in church life in Finland. I would argue that behind this is not only theological factors but the Constantinian "invisible hand." The established Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland had to find some rationale to hold on to secularized members when people's religious sentiments and morals changed and pressure from society with a secularist equality agenda grew. As one bishop in Finland put it: The national church cannot have different morals than the people.

The second Constantinian heritage is that the Church must hold on to privileges and work opportunities. Traditionally, there have been many such privileges, even if formally state and church are separated: schools, universities, army chaplains, taxation, public celebrations, government support for social programs and historic church buildings, and so on. Church bodies can in freedom use many opportunities in the state—we are called to be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16)—but not at any cost. Often the "invisible hand" motivates churches to justify their silence on controversial ethical issues or their readiness for doctrinal modification on the basis of noble reasons: the opportunity to reach out to people with the Gospel or serve in love through diaconal programs.

Joel Biermann points out that, even in the United States where the state and church are historically separated, the aroma of Constantinianism has always been present. Churches can defend in theory state supports with the slogan "cooperation without confusion," but in reality the church's privilege of tax-exempt status causes systematic dependence. Parochial schools, teachers, church councils, denominational boards, pastors, and so forth are affected by it, and it may cause them to be compliant and hold back from speaking the word of truth.[21] The "invisible hand" is all over the place without anyone even realizing or admitting it.

No matter how small a church body is, the Constantinian aroma is there. Churches must be vigilant and ask constant questions when dealing with state and governmental actors: What is the frame in which we are placing ourselves? What does it do to our independence? What strings are attached to these benefits? Are we able to cut them if necessary and still be able to carry out our mission? Do we in our churches build on or hold on to an old-time Constantinian mindset with costly and grandeur structures (buildings, institutions, and programs) or are we prepared to scale down to post-Constantinian realities? Whatever the questions are, churches must try to make the "invisible hand" visible and be aware of its seduction and the danger of blind spots.

The hard lesson especially for those churches coming from a strong Constantinian background is learning to be in the minority, to be poorer with fewer prerogatives, and even to be ridiculed and oppressed in society. The post-Constantinian church must learn

20 Ziegler mentions the Swedish theologian Holsten Fagerber as an example of this position. Ziegler, "Natural Law," 65-71. Dr. Simojoki points out: "It was the fatal error of Luther School of Helsinki since the mid-1980s that they adapted an early modern conception of natural law in relation to human reason. The early modern concept was devoid of Christology. Thus, the boundary between the perennial and the contingent in Christian doctrine was erroneously placed between Law and Gospel and not between divine right and human right where it properly belongs… Dr. Mannermaa's argument for the ordination of women: the office of the ministry falls into the category of the Gospel and, thus, is perennial. The sex of the office bearer, on the other hand, falls into the category of Law and, thus, is mutable." Simojoki, "*Given Justice*" 238-239.

21 Biermann, *Wholly Citizens*, 118-121.

to live a pre-Constantinian church life. In our post-modern society, we can neither go back to Constantinian collectivism, in which everyone shares the same Christian heritage and moral norms, nor we should fall into the trap of thinking individualism's customer-driven free religious market is the right mentality for the Church. When there is no Constantinian legal or cultural obligation to live as Christians, when the Church enjoys no accepted authority and place in a hyper-individualistic culture, we must rethink how we do our mission. We have to learn to live as a community, the family of God gathered around the altar and pulpit to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, share life and love together, take care of our home together, and do missions as pastors and laity together according to our callings.[22]

Conclusion

The question of church and state cannot be decided once and for all, but theological principles and practical conclusions in the life of the Church must be confessed and lived out. Hermann Sasse points out that neither correct theory nor good civil-ecclesial legislation can permanently solve the question of the two realms. It is a question that every generation has to face. It is a matter of obedience and disobedience, faith and unbelief, in respect of the immutable commandments of God and the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The main challenge for the Church is not how to cope with and live with the state but how to live as the Church, the Bride of Christ, who loves more the Bridegroom and his Words than the world. The Church has the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her (Matthew 16:18). As those sent out by our Lord Christ, we cannot allow the freedom and the mission of the Church to be blurred. Only the Church has the means to prepare men for eternity and the last judgment. It is always a question about the purity of the saving Gospel. Let the Gospel of Christ—justification of the ungodly for the sake of Christ's atoning work on the cross—be the centre. Let the modest appearance of the tools of the Spirit—water, bread, and wine—be the true treasures of the Church. Let the Church be the Church; and let it be not a mere slogan but a reality among us. Let the Church confess boldly the faith once delivered and be prepared to pay the price for following Christ. Let us teach and form a new generation of faithful pastors. Let church members find joy and hardship in their vocations loving their Lord and building up their families and countries. Let us engage ourselves in the public arena to defend natural law and the Decalogue's way of life, as well as civil liberties. Let the family of God in our post-Christian age gather in joy together to receive the life-giving gifts of Christ in the divine service, which is both the safe haven for Christians and the mission centre for inviting people from the secular kingdom to be served and saved by the King of Kings—Christ Jesus, who rules heaven and earth with his grace and power now and forever.

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22 Jari Kekäle, "Lähetyshiippakunta, reformaatio ja seurakunnan istuttaminen: näköaloja postkonstantinolaiseen todellisuuteen" in *Seurakunta lähellä ja kaukana: Piispa Risto Soramiehen juhlakirja*. (Suomen Luther-säätiö Lahti 2016).

THE KOREAN SITUATION AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Jun Hyun Kim

Christianity has never been a major religion in South Korea. The beginning of modernized education in Korea was initiated by missionaries. Every dynasty had a system for selecting officials and an education system to become officials. However, Western-style educational institutions were started by missionaries.

Korea's first encounter with a missionary was Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff, a German Lutheran missionary. He was ordained as a pastor in July 1826 and did missionary work in Thailand and East Asia. He stayed in Korea for about a month in July 1832, but returned because he did not receive permission from the Joseon dynasty.

Christian schools in Korea were started by American missionaries who officially entered the country in 1885 with a visa from the Joseon dynasty. Appenzeller established the Baejae School, Mrs. Scranton built the Ewha Womens' School, and Underwood established the Underwood School. The government expected that the missionaries' educational work would fit well with the enlightenment policy. The task of Christian schools at this time was to cultivate talented individuals for the modernization of Joseon.

As Christian schools spread at the end of the 19th century, the Presbyterian Mission promulgated an education policy in 1897. "Our educational policy" is to "grow students into workers, and to this end, schools must educate students to promote their faith and cultivate their spirit. Above all, students must become the main axis of the church and the indigenous church." "We need to organize a (native church)," he said. He also said that in the future, students "must become active evangelists who spread the gospel, whether they become farmers, blacksmiths, doctors, teachers, or government officials." Christian schools during this period sought to nurture people who believed in the Gospel in order to cultivate talented people for the church and society.

From around this time, not only missionaries but also Korean church leaders from the Korean Empire established Christian schools. In 1895, the Joseon government organized a department within the government (today's Ministry of Education) to promote modern education. At this time, Saemoonan Church in Seoul established Youngsin School. Churches across the country have established Christian schools—modern educational institutions. A Christian school was established next to the church. In addition, women's schools were established to educate women who had been excluded from school education at that time. As Christian schools established by the church spread and developed throughout the country, elementary schools, middle schools, and even a university (Pyongyang Soongsil

University) were established. Christian schools focused on nurturing workers for the church and society and also prepared the next generation of the church.

According to statistics from the second meeting of the Presbyterian Church in 1908, 542 churches, or more than 60 percent of the 897 churches nationwide, established elementary schools. The operation and management of Christian schools established by the church were shared among local churches. In 1909, the Presbyterian Church General Assembly (Dok Presbytery) established the 'Academic Affairs Bureau', a department that oversees schools. The Academic Affairs Bureau, comprised of five members, was responsible for managing schools established by Presbyterian churches across the country.

Now, we would like to look at the characteristics of Christian schools in the early 20th century. In 1904, Russia and Japan went to war on the Korean Peninsula, and Japan won. Japan's victory in the war was a repeat of Japan's victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, and it had been much of a shock. At the same time, Japan's ambition to colonize Korea had now been revealed internationally, causing the entire country to become anxious. Due to this shock and anxiety, the Education Nation Movement arose in our country. The training of talent through the establishment of schools was a movement to protect the country from foreign forces and protect the country's sovereignty. To make matters worse, the Eulsa Treaty in 1905, the following year—in which Korea's diplomatic rights were lost to Japan—created a sense of crisis in society. Accordingly, the national education movement progressed as a patriotic enlightenment movement. The patriotic enlightenment movement was promoted with the conviction that in order to regain the lost national diplomatic rights, the country's strength must be increased, and that strength comes from nurturing human resources through education. A movement to establish private schools arose across the country. Christian schools participated and led this movement.

During the March First Movement in 1919, the leading forces in the independence demonstrations were teachers and students from 21 Christian middle schools across the country affiliated with the Presbyterian Church. There were a total of 21 middle schools across the country: 15 boys' schools and 6 girls' schools. The number of middle school students was 1,681 and there were 129 teachers. As a result, middle schools suffered the most damage. The reason why middle schools led the independence demonstration was to put into practice what was taught and learned at school. The core of school religious education was the Bible and worship. Also, the core of Bible education is teaching and learning about biblical characters such as Moses, David, Esther, and Daniel, and through this, national consciousness was created. To the students, characters from the Bible were set as leaders of the Korean people. In particular, Osan School and Daesung School instilled in their students a nationalistic spirit based on religious education. Kyungshin School in Seoul taught modern scientific thinking and rational civic consciousness and provided training in representative democracy. The representative democracy that we learned and trained clashed with the imperialist Japanese system in the March First Movement.

The Japanese colonial rule of forcing people to worship at shrines first started in Christian schools before moving to churches. On November 14, 1935, Yasudake, the governor of Japan's South Pyongan Province, convened a meeting of principals of secondary schools in the province and ordered them to go to the Pyongyang shrine and pay their respects. Then, the principals, including McQueen, the principal of Soongsil Middle School, rejected it. The Presbyterian Church of America's Northern Presbyterian Mission also decided to refuse worship at the shrine through a countermeasures meeting. Accordingly, the Japanese Government-General of Korea sent an official letter threatening to replace the person in charge of the school that did not attend the shrine visit and to close

the school as well. In the end, Yasudake had his approval as principal of Soongsil Middle School revoked. In addition, the Japanese Government-General of Korea revoked the approval of the dean of Soongsil College in Pyongyang on January 20, 1936, the following year. Christian schools that refused to visit shrines were on the verge of closure.

Christian school leaders were in serious trouble and agony. Regarding the issue of visiting the shrine, we entered into a dilemma between maintaining the school and closing it. Finally, on October 29, 1937, Pyongyang's Soongsil College, Soongsil Middle School, and Soongui Girls' School submitted a petition to the authorities to close their schools. Shinsung Middle School in Seoncheon, Boseong Girls' School, Yeongsil Middle School in Ganggye, and Myeongshin School in Jaeryeong followed. Japan's enforcement of shrine worship was a serious challenge that violated the first commandment of the Ten Commandments. Refusing to visit a shrine was a decision of faith to reject idol worship.

By February 1938, eight middle schools managed by the Mission of the Northern Presbyterian Church in the United States and ten schools managed by the Mission of the Southern Presbyterian Church in the United States were closed due to refusal to visit the shrine. Next, Japan's enforcement of shrine worship was directed at churches and denomination general meetings as if a knife was pointed at a person's neck.

Because Christian missionaries played a very important role in Korea's independence, there were no major difficulties in establishing and creating Christian educational institutions in Korea until the 1960s.

The Lutheran Church began in Korea when The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod sent three missionaries in January 1958 and Dr. Ji Won-yong in September. In 1966, the Korean Lutheran Church also established and operated a seminary.

It can be said that the period from the 1960s to the 1990s was a time when there were no major difficulties in Christian education. At this time, Korea was focusing on economic development, and because the church and the schools it established did not oppose these things, it was a time when church development was also taking place.

During this period, the church began to actively participate in social issues. Some, but not all, churches actively participated in social movements, and as a result, churches began to be viewed as political gatherings. Politicians began to think that church education was not of much help to them, and they have recently created a system where local superintendents of schools, rather than school founders, hire teachers for elementary, middle, and high schools.

This is a phenomenon in which the church is harmed by secular politics, and universities are also prohibited from stipulating that they select Christians.

It is true that the church must strive for social development. However, these are secondary things compared to the primary goal of the church: praising and serving God. Therefore, the church should continue to have a humble and steady attitude and practice of being loyal to the small tasks entrusted to it first rather than leading the development of the world. We were created to change the world. However, we must remember that if the church continues to declare that it will 'change the world' too easily, it is no different than exposing itself unprepared to the temptations and attacks of the world. The Exodus and Resurrection events, which are God's methods that actually changed the world, are good examples.

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HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHURCH AND STATE AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:

Countries That Were Once Majority Christian But Now Are Not

Clécio Schadech

The proposed theme for this presentation challenges us in at least two aspects. First, it presents the challenge to identify those countries that were once majority Christian but now are not. In terms of a global religion such as Christianity, this is a task almost impossible to accomplish in the scope of a 30-minute presentation. I will, therefore, mention some of these regions and remark on some aspects of their history, especially focusing on the experience of Christianity as both official and unofficial religion.

The second point is to derive the implications of this historical perspective and think about the task of theological education. It seems that part of the task, besides learning from the past and asking the question of how the relationship between church and state have been lived throughout the history, is also to understand theology as a public voice in our current society. In another words, we should think in terms of proclamation for and in the world.

The History of the Church

The first challenge is to identify where Christianity has been an important presence and to what extend this presence was influenced and benefited by the state. Philip Jenkins points out that "for most of its history, Christianity was a tricontinental religion, with powerful representation in Europe, Africa, and Asia, and this was true into the fourteenth century."[1] According to him, the notion of western "Christendom" sometimes has clouded the historical perspective to the point of neglecting the former history on the East.

1 Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity: The Thousand-Year Golden Age of the Church in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia—and How It Died*, (HarperOne, 2008), 3.

In this regard, Jenkins explains that when one think about Church history, especially the account of Acts of the Apostles, one must acknowledge that "while some early Christians were indeed moving west, many other believers—probably in greater numbers—journeyed east along the land routes, through what we today call Iraq and Iran, where they built great and enduring churches."[2] He also points out that "in terms of the number and splendor of its churches and monasteries, its vast scholarship and dazzling spirituality, Iraq[3] was through the late Middle Ages at least as much a cultural and spiritual heartland of Christianity as was France or Germany, or indeed Ireland."[4]

The followers of Jesus were spread in all direction, especially to the east, across the Persian Empire. In this regard, "by the end of the first century, Christians speaking Aramaic, Syriac, Latin, and Greek were found not only in the Roman regions of Asia, but also deep in the Persian (Parthian) Empire."[5] Expanding on the presence of the Christian church in that region, Jenkins describes how Timothy I (about 780) had been an important church leader that helped the church to spread eastward. According to Jenkins, "Timothy himself presided over nineteen metropolitans and eighty-five bishops… Just in Timothy's lifetime, new metropolitan sees were created at Rai near Tehran, and in Syria, Turkestan, Armenia, and Dailumaye on the Caspian Sea… Arabia had at least four sees, and Timothy created a new one in Yemen. And the church was growing in southern India, where believers claimed a direct inheritance from the missions of the apostle Thomas."[6]

In this context of what was only slowly becoming the "Muslim world," Eastern Christians played a critical role in politics and culture. Jenkins points out that "their wide linguistic background made the Eastern churches invaluable resources for rising empires in search of diplomats, advisers, and scholars." He also explains that "Syriac-speaking Christian scholars brought the works of Aristotle to the Muslim world: Timothy himself translated Aristotle's Topics from Syriac into Arabic, at the behest of the caliph."[7] On the other side, "Timothy lived in a universe that was culturally and spiritually Christian but politically Muslim, and he coped quite comfortably with that situation. As faithful subjects, the patriarch and his clergy prayed for the caliph and his family. The catholicos was a key figure at the court of the Muslim caliph, and when the city of Seleucia itself went the way of ancient Babylon, fading into ruin in its turn, the caliphate moved its capital to Baghdad; and Timothy naturally followed. Most of his patriarchate coincided with the legendary caliphate of Harun al-Rashid,

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2 Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity*, (HarperOne, 2008), 6.

3 Iraq and Syria were the bases for two great transnational churches deemed heretical by the Catholic and Orthodox—namely, the Nestorians and Jacobites.

4 Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity*, (HarperOne, 2008), 16.

5 Scott W. Sunquist, Ancient Eastern Christianity Syria, Persia, Central Asia, and India, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 43. Sunquist also points out: "The school which he established was very ascetic in its Christian life, highly critical of Western religion (as seen in his Oration to the Greeks) and focused on the life of Jesus as viewed through a single gospel narrative: the Diatessaron. The Diatessaron, probably composed by Tatian in Syriac (and immediately translated into Greek, or vice versa) became the standard life of Jesus for over two centuries in the Syriac speaking world. Later, Ephrem of Edessa would write a commentary on the Diatessaron. Tatian, the first real Asian theologian was proud of his Asian heritage, although his scholarly abilities all came from his academic sojourn in the West" (p. 47).

6 Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity*, (HarperOne, 2008), 10.

7 Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity*, (HarperOne, 2008), 18. It is interesting to note that, although the earliest Asian Christianity outside of the Roman Empire was diverse in language and cultural expressions, it was led by the Syrian forms and teachings and by the Syriac language (see Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 46.

the era of the Arabian Nights."[8] Sunquist also explains that "the Arab Caliphs needed help in ruling this new Persian Empire and they found the Christians the best educated and most trusted citizens. Persian Christians served as accountants, managers, and jailors, and, for their part, they were pleased to help fellow monotheists who had crushed their persecutors."[9]

The situation changed after the death of Timothy. A new era of hostile treatment against Christians, especially by Muslims authorities, brought a difficult time for them in all Asia Minor and the Middle East. In Asia Minor,[10] for instance, "in 1050, the region had 373 bishoprics, and the inhabitants were virtually all Christian, overwhelmingly members of the Orthodox Church. Four hundred years later, that Christian proportion had fallen to 10 or 15 percent of the population, and we can find just three bishops. According to one estimate, the number of Asian Christians fell, between 1200 and 1500, from 21 million to 3.4 million. In the same years, the proportion of the world's Christians living in Africa and Asia combined fell from 34 percent to just 6 percent."[11] Sunquist indicates that "the pattern of Asian Christianity has followed the general story of ascetic missionaries, growth under tolerant rulers, and then sudden changes in fortune under a new regime or dynasty."[12]

By contrast, at the same time Christianity was being tolerated (and somehow succeeding) by the rulers in the East, "the year 782 marked one of the worst horrors of Charlemagne's reign, the reputed beheading of forty-five hundred Saxons who resisted the Frankish campaign of forced conversion to Catholic Christianity."[13] O'Sullivan explains that the unified and institutionalized church provided more advanced mechanisms for effective governance, "and—in theory, at least—Christianity could provide a common bond which would enhance loyalty to the ruling dynasty."[14] He also indicates that such state-sponsored evangelization could have a dark side. According to him, "at some point in the earlier part of this decades-long campaign, Charlemagne issued his *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae* (Boretius 1883), a series of legal ordinances aimed at nothing less than the enforced Christianization of this pagan people. These laws mandated infant baptism and required the Saxons to attend church on Sundays, to pay ecclesiastical tithes, and to bury their dead in church cemeteries rather than traditional tumuli."[15]

However, it seems that this effort to "evangelize" is related to the pre-Constantinian *Pax Deorum*, the occasional persecution of all groups deemed a threat to the well-being of the empire. Tabbernee explains that "after Nicaea (Christian) emperors sought to maintain the "peace of God" (the *Pax Dei*) by persecuting all (Christian) groups suspected of heresy."[16] According to Huffmann, "in this Carolingian synthesis, the empire itself was Christendom with Charlemagne and his successors ruling over it alone; the church was

8 Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity*, (HarperOne, 2008), 16.

9 Scott W. Sunquist, Ancient Eastern Christianity Syria, Persia, Central Asia, and India, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 50.

10 Ephesus, Galatia and Bithynia, the seven cities of the book of Revelation.

11 Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity*, (HarperOne, 2008), 23.

12 Scott W. Sunquist, Ancient Eastern Christianity Syria, Persia, Central Asia, and India, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (JohnWiley&Sons Ltd, 2016), 44.

13 Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity*, (HarperOne, 2008), 6.

14 Tomás O´Sullivan, Christianity and the European conversion, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 61.

15 Tomás O´Sullivan, Christianity and the European conversion, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 61.

16 William Tabbernee, *Early Christianity in Contexts: An exploration across cultures and continents*, 318.

only one institution—albeit a critical one—within Christendom and one to be employed as the emperor saw fit."[17]

Internal pressures and external invasion ultimately disintegrated the Carolingian empire. Monasteries and local churches became the private property of warlords and, as such, "were bought, sold, and given to allies and family members."[18] Huffmann explains that, in this context, a popular lay movement joined by reform-minded bishops called for a change. According to him, "the only power available to those, both lay and clergy, who sought an end to the plundering of churches was spiritual condemnation. Hence individual abbeys' bishops joined their humble lay populations and began to issue threatening anathemas against predatory barons."[19]

Part of this reform included also the implementation of the vow of perpetual celibacy[20] and the renewal of the papacy as the supreme authority. The appointment of Pope Leo IX was the culmination of this effort. Huffmann point out that "Pope Leo IX was the first reformed pope, and as such he avoided the mire of Roman politics as much as possible and instead took the mantle of highest clerical patron of reform by traveling to numerous reform councils throughout western Europe."[21] As a consequence of the strength of the papal authority, the supreme authority of the emperor over Christendom was questioned; after all, it was the popes who crowned the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire. Huffmann explains that "popes could exercise a pastoral *de facto* veto over the candidates for imperial office if they wished to find them morally deficient."[22] Finally, in 1075 Pope Gregory VII issued a canon law decree *Dictatus Papae* which stated radically and unequivocally the papacy's moral and constitutional superiority over emperors, kings, and bishops as the supreme pastor of Christendom and sole possessor of *Romanitas*.[23]

Such a development also created and strengthened the gap between the "sacred" and the "profane." "Sacred" activities were so called because they were developed by the clergy, while the laity practiced the ordinary and "profane" works of daily life. In the same way, works done for the church and by the church were qualified as "holy works." Everything related to daily life was considered secondary and even inferior work. The ideal life in this context was the contemplative life of a monk. Now the Church itself was Christendom, the person of the pope the supreme authority, and the state an instrument for the church.

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17 Joseph Huffmann, The medieval Synthesis, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 79.

18 Joseph Huffmann, The medieval Synthesis, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley &S ons Ltd, 2016), 81. Huffmann also explains that "clergy at every level were often worldly aristocrats in priests' clothing, with Pope John XII (956–963) as the ultimate but by no means exclusive exemplum for a clergy gone bad – he was among a series of Roman pontiffs who were poisoned, smothered, strangled, stabbed to death, and even exhumed and tried for heresy while propped up in the defendant's chair".

19 Joseph Huffmann, The medieval Synthesis, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 82.

20 Huffamm explains that "since a clergy that did not sexually reproduce would be freed from (1) the monastic anxiety about worldly lust associated with sexual activity and (2) the worldly ability to pass on church property and offices as a private family possession", in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), p. 83.

21 Joseph Huffmann, The medieval Synthesis, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 84.

22 Joseph Huffmann, The medieval Synthesis, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 85.

23 Joseph Huffmann, The medieval Synthesis, in Sanneh, Lamin (Ed.); McClymond, Michael. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 85.

The Reformation of the 16th century vehemently questioned this paradigm and confessed that human beings are "justified by faith." The fundamental aspect of human life is that the person receives everything from his Creator and lives in God´s creation as his creature. To restore his creature that fell from this original plan, God has sent his Son, who became flesh, and through him reconciled the world to himself. Christ's incarnation, suffering, death, and resurrection reveal the love of God and his desire to save his creation from the terrible mistake of escaping from its creatureliness. Suddenly, each vocation becomes important and fundamental as a "mask" of God, through which he continues to give life to the world. Such a view brought a distinction between church and state, since each one was identified as responsible for a distinct task: the Church preaches the Gospel; the State rules the world. Such a distinction, however, did not mean to create a divorce where one realm should not talk to the other. In fact, we can see how the Reformers, including Luther, were, on the one hand, protected by civil authorities on many occasions and, on the other, had to exhort them with the Word of God regarding many social issues. The implementation of the Peace of Augsburg (1555) was important for the establishment of Lutheran territories. What before was applied to the entire empire, now applied to the states: *Cuius regio, eius religio*.

It is interesting to note how such a development went even further centuries later with modernism and, later, post-modernism, especially in the west. Jenkins points out that "the greatest change is likely to involve our Enlightenment-derived assumption that religion should be segregated into a separate sphere of life, distinct from everyday reality. In the Western view, religion may influence behavior in what is often, revealingly, termed the real world, and faith might even play a significant political role, but spiritual life is primarily a private inward activity, a matter for the individual mind."[24] In this regard, "the Enlightenment offered 'rational' critiques of traditional governments and new accounts of how society should be governed rationally. These would influence both the radical French Revolution and the more conservative American Revolution. The nineteenth century saw a number of socialist schemes intended to bring on a utopian society."[25]

Eventually, we are now living in a "post-secular" context of "devaluated values," where everyone is invited to voluntarily construct his own spirituality, while in the public arena the "norms" of society must prevail. Every "tribe" is now searching for a way to reach the power in order to establish its right to live in this world. Polarization is the word we are used to hearing, and we all must watch what we do and what we say, lest we get into trouble. Expressing disapproval of some way of life *is just not done* in polite society.[26] In this regard, the question about God is not even part of the public discussion, but only a personal preference.

Implications

Finally, based on this brief account of different patterns of relationship between state and church, we should offer some observations and implications for theological education:

1. The first observation is related to the continual presence of Christianity on the world. Jenkins explains that, "rather than asking why churches die, we should rather seek to know how they endure for so long, in seemingly impossible

24 Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity*, (HarperOne, 2008), 141.
25 Veith, G. E., Jr. *Post-Christian: A Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture*, (Crossway, 2020), 126.
26 Veith, G. E., Jr. *Post-Christian: A Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture*, (Crossway, 2020), 121.

circumstances. The fate of Middle Eastern Christians is particularly impressive in this respect: as late as 1900, after all the coercion and disdain, they still made up some 10 percent of the region's population." The promise of Christ is that he will be with his church to the last day (Matthew 28). He also affirms that the church which is built on him will endure forever (Matthew 16).

2. The second observation is related to the relationship between church and state. On the one side, Jenkins understands that, although alliances with states sometimes represent a dangerous option, "such a political linkage might have been the only way of surviving through the long ages when all states had some religious affiliation and did their best to promote particular faiths." He concludes that, without church-state alliances, "Christianity might be a footnote in Islamic or Chinese history textbooks, alongside Manichaeanism. Conversely, lack of political power potentially posed a lethal danger when the state was in the hands of a rival determined to reshape culture to institutionalize its own ways of belief and practice." On the other side, he also remarks that Christians must be suspicious when a specific characteristic or nationality is required, since Scripture nowhere offers "any assurance that they will hold political power, or indeed that salvation is promised to descendants or to later members of a particular community. Perhaps the real mystery of Christianity is not in explaining failure or eclipse at particular times, but rather in accounting for the successes elsewhere."

3. The correct understanding of Christian life embraces life in God´s creation. It means that man is to live in this world and take care of God´s world. Fundamental to this is the right comprehension of his identity as "justified by faith." This means that God is the active giver and sustainer of life in this world. He works, although not directly but through means. The redemptive work of Christ is given us through specific means such as Word and Sacraments by which the Holy Spirit works in us faith. The creative work of the Father is done through means or "hands," as Luther calls them, such as parents, neighbours and all God's creation. The civil authorities are, as well, "hands" through which God maintains order in this world. This means that we need to bring God back into all spheres of social activity—that is, proclaim that God's creation with all its diversity of vocations is the place where his creature should work. In other words, Christian individuals are motivated by their faith and called to be active on the political and social arena. Theological education must be concerned with how to prepare them to live their faith in this challenging "posthuman" context.

4. As a Christian community, we should pay attention to the "structures of interpretation" given to us. The Creeds of the Church lead us to the centre and the heart of the Christian message. They help us to see that Christians have a specific and particular account of the world, whose grammar is oriented and centered on Jesus and on the fact that he is our Lord. In a culture of "devaluated values," Christianity must not engage in dialogues as God's advocate, but proclaim God's word, distinguishing faithfully Law and Gospel, believing that the Word of God creates what it promises.

5. Sasse calls the church the ecclesia migrans and points out the danger of

stabilitas, that is, the condition of being tied to a certain locality. He explains that "the church can influence the world only when it actually enters the world, as its Lord and master did and as he expects his church to do, without losing, as is evident, its identity as God's wandering people who find themselves in a strange land." In terms of theological education, this implies we must train people to proclaim faithfully the Word for and in the world, without being so much concerned with the temporal structure of the church.

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GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE IN SEMINARY EDUCATION

James A. Kellerman

When Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary was founded, we met in a church building just down the hill from Brock University, a growing public university. They and we agreed that it would be mutually beneficial to both parties for us to become an affiliated institution. We would govern ourselves, but we would share resources with Brock, and they with us. The university would grant our degrees, and our programmes would have to meet their academic standards. We would get the backing of a university, while they could boast of a graduate school affiliated with them, at a time when they had few graduate programmes. And so they gave us a hundred-year lease for land upon which we could build our seminary.

Since then the relationship has been largely harmonious. There have been times, though, when administrators were less than welcoming, often because they did not know what to make of a religious institution affiliated with them. But our relationship changed more dramatically a little over a year ago. They had asked us to submit our two degree programmes for one of their periodic reviews, and we had complied by submitting over five hundred pages of documentation for each degree. A committee met with us and told us that we had an outstanding curriculum but, nonetheless, we would need to seek our own degree-granting status. The committee said that they knew that the university senate would not approve our programmes any longer because our board of directors was independent of their university.

We were puzzled. The University of Toronto has seven affiliated seminaries, ranging from Roman Catholic to mainline Protestant to conservative Protestant. They are able to maintain their independence while still having their degrees granted by that public university. Did Brock have a problem with us because we were the only affiliated school in their experience, and they just didn't know how to handle us? Or was there something deeper going on, such as hostility to the idea of a conservative Christian school on their property? Was this a sign that we might face hostility not only from Brock, a government-run school, but from the government itself? Did this portend that maybe in ten years or so a conservative Christian seminary might not be allowed by the government to give any degrees at all?

Shortly after this, I was asked to speak on "government interference in seminary education" as exemplified in my region. I have taken my region to be primarily the secularised or secularising portions of the world, what has been called the North Atlantic

world (Europe and North America). I initially expected to find governments constantly interfering in seminaries throughout the world, including in the North Atlantic. But that is not what I discovered.

Yes, seminaries *are* attacked and closed by governments. But such events usually occur under regimes hostile to the idea of freedom of religion. Even then, it is rarely seminaries that bear the brunt of anti-Christian persecution. A father who is angry because a local pastor baptized his daughter won't lead a mob against a seminary located five hundred kilometres away. Instead, he will attack the pastor who did the baptism and go after the members of the congregation and its building. That is why there are few seminary deans on the list of martyrs.

But we in the North Atlantic world still wonder if things might get more difficult for us in years to come. Is secularism merely a prelude to persecution of Christian organisations? Could the government interfere with seminaries in lands where freedom of religion has been deeply cherished for ages?

This paper will try to answer those questions, using Canada as a model. I have chosen Canada not merely because it is where I live but because it embodies the secularising trends of the North Atlantic. First, Canada shares Europe's decline in religiosity. The number of Canadians who reported they attended a religious gathering at least monthly has dropped from 42.5 percent in 1985 to 23.3 percent in 2019.[1] COVID drove attendance sharply downward, and most of that drop is apparently permanent.[2]

Second, Canada's secularism is not counterbalanced by having an established church or having had one in the past, as is true in Europe. There is no Canadian equivalent to the United Kingdom's Archbishop of Canterbury who could be the conscience of the nation. Yes, Protestant Orangemen once dominated Ontario's politics, and the Roman Catholic Church did the same in Quebec, but even in that bygone era there was less blending of church and state than elsewhere on either side of the North Atlantic. You cannot tell a politician's religion by his or her policies. God's name is not invoked in Canadian politics the way it is routinely done in the United States.

Third, Canada has intentionally become a microcosm of the world. This has been positive in some ways. Canada welcomes immigrants from around the world, most of whom are more religious than native-born Canadians.[3] Canada strives to be a truly multi-cultural mosaic, where immigrant cultures and languages are valued rather than amalgamated into a giant melting pot. But all is not rosy. Canada welcomes new immigrants but assumes that their children will be corrupted by its secular values and become as indifferent to religion as native-born Canadians are. And when the

1 https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2021001/article/00010-eng.htm. In the same period, affiliation with a religious denomination dropped from 89.5 percent to 68.3 percent, the lowest since polling began.

2 The evidence at this point is anecdotal, but attendance in the congregations of Lutheran Church–Canada has not bounced back since the COVID shutdowns the way it has in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Given how church attendance has always been higher among conservative church bodies than liberal ones (such as the Anglican Church and the United Church), I would expect even less of a bounce back in the liberal denominations.

3 According to Statistics Canada, a slim majority of immigrants (51 percent) are Christian. Immigrants are more likely to engage in monthly group religious activities compared to those born in Canada (36 percent versus 19 percent). Even more importantly, younger immigrants (those born between 1980 and 1999) are significantly more likely to be religious than their Canadian-born peers; 57 percent of these immigrants are affiliated with a religious group and say that their religious beliefs are important to them, compared with only 32 percent of Canadian-born people of the same age. See https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2021001/article/00010-eng.htm.

government thinks of "diversity," it is thinking of diversity of sexual practices as much as it is thinking of ethnic diversity. The government, the media, and schools all strongly push the LGBTQ agenda. By other metrics, Canada rivals or exceeds the anti-Christian attitudes of Europe.[4]

Finally, Canada has seen a decline in the number of religious colleges, mainly due to financial reasons. Undergraduate tuition at public universities is strictly capped. Private institutions may charge whatever they like, but Canadians have no appetite to get into serious debt for an undergraduate degree. Unless a religious university is extremely well endowed, financial necessities will force it to close or hand itself over to the province to run. Thus, it is not unusual for Canadian seminaries to be housed at a university that once belonged to a Christian denomination but is now publicly owned.

If you put all these factors together, you see that Canada is a perfect storm of secularism. Actual practice of religion (and especially Christianity) has sharply declined. Religion plays a small role in post-secondary education and none in politics. And everywhere you turn, you find virulent anti-Christian propaganda.

So, what rights do we have by law as Christians living in such a secular society? Section 2 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* lists four "fundamental freedoms"; the very first one is "freedom of conscience and religion."[5] These four rights are deemed more important than the rights that follow: democratic rights, mobility rights, legal rights, and equality rights.[6]

Canadian law recognises that religion is inherently communal, and thus churches and other religious communities are accorded protection. Also, Canadian law recognises that "religion" involves more than formal worship services. In a court case heard shortly after the Charter became law in 1982, the Supreme Court of Canada stated: "A truly free society is one which can accommodate a wide variety of beliefs, diversity of tastes and pursuits, customs and codes of conduct… The essence of the concept of freedom of religion is the right to entertain such religious beliefs as a person chooses, the right to declare religious beliefs openly and without fear of hindrance or reprisal, and the right to manifest religious belief by worship and practice or by teaching and dissemination."[7]

Are there any limits to these fundamental rights? Section 1 of the Charter "guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it *subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society*."[8] There is no such thing in Canada (or probably anywhere) as an absolute freedom. "Reasonable limits" need to be imposed, the *Charter* acknowledges, but by law, not by an official's fiat. Furthermore,

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4 In Quebec, MAiD [or "Medical Assistance in Dying," the Canadian way of saying euthanasia] accounted for a greater percentage of deaths (5.1 percent) than anywhere else in the world. In some regions of that province, as much as 9 percent of all deaths were due to MAiD. See https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/maid-quebec-increase-1.6681630.

5 Hereafter called the *Charter*. https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-12.html. The other three fundamental freedoms are "(b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication; (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and (d) freedom of association."

6 *Charter*, Sections 3–5, 6, 7–14, and 15, respectively. Sections 16–23 describe the official status of English and French at the federal level and in New Brunswick. Section 24 explains how these rights are to be enforced, and sections 25–31 deal with how the enumerated rights affect aboriginal rights, denominational schools, and other pre-existing institutions at the time that the *Charter* was ratified.

7 From the Supreme Court of Canada decision, R. v. Big M Drug Mart, Ltd, paragraph 94. The text of the decision can be found at https://decisions.scc-csc.ca/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/43/index.do.

8 *Charter*, Section 1, emphasis added.

for such a law to pass constitutional muster, it must be shown that a free and democratic society absolutely requires such a limit.[9]

Section 1 is not a major threat to the practice of religion, but the same cannot be said about section 33. This is sometimes called the "notwithstanding" clause, and it seems to be unparalleled in constitutional law. This section states: "Parliament or the legislature of a province may expressly declare in an Act of Parliament or of the legislature, as the case may be, that the Act or a provision thereof shall operate notwithstanding a provision included in section 2 or sections 7 to 15 of this Charter."[10] Such a law "shall cease to have effect five years after it comes into force or on such earlier date as may be specified in the declaration."[11]

To put it in plain English: Parliament or a provincial legislature may pass a law that would violate one of the fundamental freedoms or a legal or equality right. But it has to explicitly invoke this "notwithstanding" clause of the *Charter*, and it may be in force for a maximum of five years. Thus, the legislature could decide for the next five years to curtail some key aspect of your religious freedom, and you would have no redress in the courts.

The "notwithstanding" clause was enacted because some provinces feared that the Supreme Court of Canada could do something bizarre, such as rule extremely pernicious forms of pornography to be protected "freedom of the press." The clause would allow Parliament to correct matters, but such a law could last no more than five years because no federal or provincial legislative body can meet for more than five years. A parliamentary election would in effect serve as a referendum on the law.

You may ask: Is this "notwithstanding" clause just a rhetorical threat? The federal government has never passed a law invoking it, but four provinces have. Alberta has passed one such law; and Ontario and Saskatchewan, two each. None of them directly touched on freedom of religion.[12]

Meanwhile, Quebec has outshone all the rest of the provinces combined. It passed *An Act Respecting the Constitution Act*, 1982, which applied the "notwithstanding" clause to all previous legislation. From then on, until 1985, every bill invoked the "notwithstanding" clause, whether it was relevant or not. Needless to say, Quebec's behaviour annoyed the rest of Canada, and in 1985 Quebec was told to stop it.

9 The major ruling that outlines the limits of invoking section 1 is R. v. Oakes. See especially paragraph 69: "Two central criteria must be satisfied to establish that a limit is reasonable and demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society. First, the objective to be served by the measures limiting a Charter right must be sufficiently important to warrant overriding a constitutionally protected right or freedom. The standard must be high to ensure that trivial objectives or those discordant with the principles of a free and democratic society do not gain protection. At a minimum, an objective must relate to societal concerns which are pressing and substantial in a free and democratic society before it can be characterized as sufficiently important. Second, the party invoking s. 1 must show the means to be reasonable and demonstrably justified. This involves a form of proportionality test involving three important components. To begin, the measures must be fair and not arbitrary, carefully designed to achieve the objective in question and rationally connected to that objective. In addition, the means should impair the right in question as little as possible. Lastly, there must be a proportionality between the effects of the limiting measure and the objective the more severe the deleterious effects of a measure, the more important the objective must be." The text of the decision can be found at https://decisions.scc-csc.ca/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/117/index.do.

10 *Charter*, section 33(1). https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-12.html.

11 *Charter*, section 33(3). https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-12.html.

12 Two of the five were quickly repealed, and another two were struck down as unconstitutional for violating other rights. The Supreme Court of Canada struck down Alberta's Marriage Amendment of 2000 because only the federal government, not provinces, has the right to define marriage. An Ontario act in 2021 that tried to redefine the number and boundaries of Toronto's wards was found to interfere with democratic rights. In addition, one such law in Ontario has just come into force.

Since then, Quebec has passed sixteen laws (not counting their many renewals), six of which are still on the books. Seven of them have touched on the freedoms of religion, mostly on educational matters. This is because Quebec maintained publicly-funded Roman Catholic and Protestant schools, long after the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s and early 1970s had secularised the province in other aspects.[13] In 2000, all of Quebec's schools were deconfessionalised, and many of the previous exemptions to the *Charter* were no longer needed.

Perhaps the most noteworthy example of a law invoking the "notwithstanding" clause is Quebec's *Act Respecting the Laicity of the People*,[14] first passed in 2019 and renewed in 2024. It forbids provincial employees, including teachers, to wear any overt religious clothing, headgear, or jewellery. The French word *laïcité* (translated "laicity" above) is a bit tricky. You might think that it means that clergy should not be employees of the state or exercise undue influence upon the National Assembly. But *laïcité* means more. Not only should clergy stay out of the state, so too should overtly religious people. To be more accurate, nobody acting in any governmental capacity should wear or do anything that would hint at their religious affiliation. The law underscores Quebec's hostility to religion in the public sphere, but it does not directly interfere with church or seminary operations.

Because of the *Charter*, seminaries have not seen legislation or court cases that have trimmed their rights. The 150 laws that mention seminaries deal with mundane matters such as granting incorporation, a name change, or dissolution to a particular seminary. There have been 450 court cases or municipal administrative hearings that involve or mention a seminary, the vast majority of which deal with property tax exemptions or zoning changes. A few, sad to say, have had to deal with the sexual abuse of some seminarians. In none has any great legal principle been at stake, and no court case involving a seminary has made its way to the Supreme Court of Canada.

If we broaden the scope of our investigation and look for any religious educational institutions, we see that there have been four major cases that have appeared before the Supreme Court of Canada.[15] All involved the question of whether a school's curriculum satisfied the standards the government had established to ensure the flourishing of a diverse, secular society. One case involved a high school: *Loyola High School v. Quebec*.[16] Three involved Trinity Western University (hereafter TWU), an evangelical university with campuses in British Columbia and Ontario. The three TWU cases considered

13 Technically, Quebec had no grounds to fear because section 29 of the Charter guaranteed the continued operation of denominational schools. Ontario and some other provinces had the same setup, but both Roman Catholic and Protestant schools lost their religious moorings decades ago. Many in Roman Catholic schools are not even Christian, and their religion content is minimal. Meanwhile, most Ontarians do not realise that their local "public schools" used to be called Protestant schools. They assume that they have always been secular schools.

14 *Loi sur la laïcité de l'État* in French.

15 A more recent court case, although not going up to the Supreme Court of Canada, was *Redeemer University College vs Canada (Employment, Workforce Development and Labour)*. RUC had applied for a summer jobs grant from the federal government. The Canadian agency responsible deemed the university ineligible because it had a moral covenant among the students that would discriminate against LGBTQ individuals. But rather than address that question, the agency asked the university for unrelated additional information. The court found in favour of RUC on procedural grounds. Because the Supreme Court of Canada has instructed lower courts to ignore constitutional issues if plaintiffs can get relief based on other issues, we do not know what would have happened if the case had been tried on the merits of religious freedom. The court speculated that RCU may have had the *Charter* on its side (paragraph 47). The judgment can be found at https://www.canlii.org/en/ca/fct/doc/2021/2021fc686/2021fc686.html.

16 The ruling can be found at https://decisions.scc-csc.ca/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/14703/index.do.

whether a provincial certifying body could deny accreditation to TWU's programmes because of their conservative stance on sexual issues. To make things simpler, I will cite the cases using just the name of the opposing side. The first case, *British Columbia College of Teachers*, which was ruled upon in 2001, decided that the province could not refuse to certify TWU's teacher education programme because the school rejected homosexual behaviour.[17] But when TWU tried to open up a law school and faced similar provincial opposition, the Supreme Court of Canada this time ruled against it in 2018 in two cases that were paired: *Law Society of British Columbia*[18] and *Law Society of Upper Canada*.[19]

The *Loyola* case established that religious schools have the right to teach their faith to their students as they see fit.[20] Although a province may have some legitimate secular goals in ensuring that all high school graduates—wherever educated—have a fair and unbiased understanding of all major religions and mandate that such a course be taught in all schools,[21] it cannot insist that a religious school teach its own faith in a neutral, objective manner. As the Supreme Court of Canada noted: "Freedom of religion means that no one can be forced to adhere to or refrain from a particular set of religious beliefs. This includes both the individual *and* collective aspects of religious belief… Religious freedom under the *Charter* must therefore account for the socially embedded nature of religious belief, and the deep linkages between this belief and its manifestation through communal institutions and traditions."[22] It added, "[A] secular state does not—and cannot—interfere with the beliefs or practices of a religious group unless they conflict with or harm overriding public interests… A secular state respects religious differences, it does not seek to extinguish them."[23]

Seminaries can take heart. Unlike seminaries, elementary and secondary schools have certain obligations to the government to train children to become responsible citizens. Now, if even those schools have the right to teach their faith in a non-neutral manner, how much more seminaries have that right!

The three Trinity Western University cases together show how difficult it may be for a theologically conservative university to train students to serve in the public sphere, such as public-school teachers or lawyers. That is not our calling as seminary leaders, but it does underscore the secularisation that the North Atlantic world is experiencing. The first case, the one against *British Columbia College of Teachers* (BCCT), stipulated that schools like TWU could espouse all sorts of doctrines that the province might object to, as long as its graduates did not act on those beliefs in a discriminatory way in the public sphere: "The proper place to draw the line… is generally between belief and conduct. The freedom to hold beliefs is broader than the freedom to act on them. Absent concrete evidence that training teachers at TWU fosters discrimination in the public schools of [British Columbia], the freedom of individuals to adhere to certain religious beliefs while

17 Hereafter, *TWU v. BCCT*. https://decisions.scc-csc.ca/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/1867/index.do.

18 Hereafter, *LSBC v. TWU*. https://decisions.scc-csc.ca/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/17140/index.do.

19 Hereafter, *TWU v. LSUC*. https://decisions.scc-csc.ca/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/17141/index.do.

20 In fact, a higher percentage of Quebeckers attend a private (usually religious) school than anywhere else in North America. Moreover, such schools are as likely to serve people of little and modest means as the wealthier. Quebec may be extremely secular, but those who are not are more likely to avail themselves of such an education than Canadians in other provinces.

21 *Loyola v. Quebec*, paragraph 48. Specifically, it noted: "The state has a legitimate interest in ensuring that students in all schools are capable, as adults, of conducting themselves with openness and respect as they confront cultural and religious differences. A vibrant, multicultural democracy depends on the capacity of its citizens to engage in thoughtful and inclusive forms of deliberation."

22 *Loyola v. Quebec*, paragraphs 59–60. Emphasis in the original.

23 *Loyola v. Quebec*, paragraph 43.

at TWU should be respected… For better or for worse, tolerance of divergent beliefs is a hallmark of a democratic society."[24] The court then added that the BCCT could discipline any public-school teachers (including TWU graduates) who engaged in discriminatory conduct while on duty or whose off-duty conduct "poisons the school environment."[25]

The Supreme Court of Canada was less willing to grant the same leeway for TWU's proposed law school. In the paired suits *Law Society of British Columbia* and *Law Society of Upper Canada*, the court acknowledged that "the decision not to accredit TWU's proposed law school represented a limitation on the religious freedom of members of the TWU religious community. Evangelical members of TWU's community have a sincere belief that studying in a community defined by religious beliefs in which members follow particular religious rules of conduct contributes to their spiritual development… By interpreting the public interest in a way that precludes the accreditation of TWU's law school governed by the mandatory Covenant, the LSUC has interfered with these beliefs and practices in a way that is more than trivial or insubstantial."[26] Nonetheless, the justices acknowledged that freedom of religion had to be balanced by other legitimate interests, including the need for a diverse bar.[27]

The opinion of one particular justice is worth noting. He concurred with the decision of his six colleagues in the majority, but he did not believe that TWU's religious rights had been violated at all, mainly because evangelicals do not require that people study only at evangelical institutions but merely find it advantageous for them to do so.[28] He also argued that only individuals, not religious institutions, have the right to religious freedom, and religious freedom empowers the individual from coercion and cannot be used to bind the consciences of others, such as by forcing students (not all of whom may be Christians) to agree to a code of conduct.[29] That line of reasoning, of course, is worrisome to us, but, fortunately, it seems to be a decidedly minority opinion.

Having looked at both the constitution and case law, we can conclude that seminaries in strongly secular countries do not necessarily face a great threat from direct government interference. Nonetheless, there are still dangers for our seminaries, dangers likely to come from non-governmental entities that may have no legal authority but can still muster great power. One example in my context would be the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), a federation of labour unions covering university and college professors. They are a power to be reckoned with because eighty percent of Canadian university professors belong to a labour union. And if an institution of higher learning voluntarily gives up certain of its rights by entering a contract with CAUT or some other union, there is nothing that the courts can do. You cannot complain that your rights are being violated if you willing waived them by signing a contract.

CAUT got its start when Harry S. Crowe wrote a letter to a colleague complaining about his college's leadership and the outsized influence he felt religion played in his small Presbyterian school. His letter ended up in the administration's hands, and he was

24 *TWU v. BCCT*, paragraph 36.

25 *TWU v. BCCT*, paragraph 37. Full context: "Acting on those beliefs, however, is a very different matter. If a teacher in the public school system engages in discriminatory conduct, that teacher can be subject to disciplinary proceedings before the BCCT. Discriminatory conduct by a public school teacher when on duty should always be subject to disciplinary proceedings. This Court has held, however, that greater tolerance must be shown with respect to off-duty conduct. Yet disciplinary measures can still be taken when discriminatory off-duty conduct poisons the school environment."

26 *TWU v. LSUC*, paragraph 33.

27 *LSBC v. TWU*, paragraphs 42–43.

28 *LSBC v. TWU*, paragraphs 231–33.

29 *LSBC v. TWU*, paragraphs 219–21, 250–51.

dismissed. The newly formed CAUT rallied to Crowe's defence. Since then, CAUT has maintained an absolutist position on academic freedom.

But don't confessional seminaries like ours have a right to exist and raise our independent voice? Well, yes, "but…". To quote their own statement on the matter: "Academic freedom must not be confused with institutional autonomy. Post-secondary institutions are autonomous to the extent that they can set policies independent of outside influence. That very autonomy can protect academic freedom from a hostile external environment, but *it can also facilitate an internal assault on academic freedom. Academic freedom is a right of members of the academic staff, not of the institution.* The employer shall not abridge academic freedom on any grounds, including claims of institutional autonomy."[30]

So, if you use your seminary's confessional status as a way to assure independence from external coercion, that is all well and fine. Half a cheer for you. But it isn't ultimately about the freedom of your institution. It's about the freedom of your professors. And if you require them to subscribe to the Lutheran confessions, then CAUT will insist that your professors' rights trump your rights as a seminary.

If you read their policies more carefully, you also discover that CAUT loves some academic free speech more than others. For example, they argue that there should be no policies against abusive language. But it is not because they want all kinds of ideas to be explored and believed.[31] Rather, "Academic freedom and free expression are fundamental to *confronting entrenched power and systems of oppression, including, but not limited to, racism, sexism and homophobia*. When censorship through respectful workplace policies becomes acceptable, *dissident voices from marginalized populations are made even more vulnerable, hegemonic perspectives thrive, and society as a whole suffers*."[32] In other words, free speech works, but only if it can be used in a way to tear down traditional structures, including the church. Just ask Jordan Peterson, a tenured professor who challenged some cherished ideas of feminism and found he could no longer work at the University of Toronto.

Most chilling is their statement about how universities where CAUT is present may interact with institutions like ours. Remember that I said that most Canadian seminaries find themselves housed in a once religious university that is now publicly owned and whose faculty are unionised by CAUT. That creates a problem, they think: "Although in most Canadian post-secondary institutions academic freedom is protected by collective agreements or policies that are consistent with CAUT principles, and academic freedom is considered an essential aspect and enabler of academic activity, some Canadian post-secondary institutions nevertheless fail to provide this protection. For example, institutions that require faith tests as a condition of initial and/or continuing employment thereby impose forms of institutional censorship that are inconsistent with academic freedom as defined by both the accepted academic norm and by CAUT policy."[33]

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30 CAUT Policy on Academic Freedom (section 6 of 6), emphasis added. The statement can be found at https://www.caut.ca/about-us/caut-policy/lists/caut-policy-statements/policy-statement-on-academic-freedom.

31 CAUT Policy on Academic Freedom and Respectful Workplace Policies. https://www.caut.ca/content/academic-freedom-and-respectful-workplace-policies. It states in part, "When institutions elevate politeness to a regulative principle of academic life—codified in respectful workplace policies, enforceable by discipline, and justified by the subjective responses of complainants—they are posing a grave threat to academic freedom and free expression…Respectful workplace policies should not be implemented by post-secondary institutions and their terms should never be negotiated into collective agreements. In those institutions where respectful workplace policies are in place, they should be revoked."

32 Ibid. Emphasis added.

33 CAUT Policy on Academic Freedom in Relation to Joint Academic Programs. https://www.caut.

In response, they have adopted this policy: "No post-secondary institution should enter into any joint programs with another university or college where the academic staff in those programs do not enjoy fully protected academic freedom."[34] Although I have no direct knowledge of the deliberations that went on at Brock University, I believe that this CAUT policy was what landed us in trouble with them. Their University Senate includes ardent supporters of CAUT. They may have been uncomfortable about their university granting degrees to people from an institution that did not observe CAUT's protocols on academic freedom and was not unionised by CAUT, either.

Powerful institutions like CAUT can cause us grief. So too can the media, who know well how to whip up public opinion against their enemies. I do not have time to address this fully, but I will simply state that the media may be more potent than the government in making our lives miserable. Redeemer University in Ancaster, which is run by the conservative Christian Reformed Church, is just an hour's drive from our seminary. It has been repeatedly attacked by the media, including the government-funded Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, because it is not "with it" when it comes to LGBTQ matters. Alumni and others have threatened to sue the university because of its conservative moral code, but so far, no lawsuit has been filed, probably because they would not win. But, meanwhile, the university has faced a lot of scorn and hatred.

To conclude: A bit to my surprise, my research has indicated that the government is not out to get all the seminaries in the North Atlantic world. Once my own seminary set out to get degree-granting status from the province, we found everyone in the government to be supportive. We have a solid seminary and have documented that fact. Those in the government's educational bureaucracy have scrutinised us fairly and have acknowledged that we offer a good programme. Thus, when I gave this paper in June 2024, every indication was that we would be approved for degree-granting status when the province's Post-secondary Education Quality Assessment Board met on the following Tuesday—and my expectations were met. This is secularism in its best meaning: religiously neutral, not religiously hostile.

But our seminary's recent positive experience with the government does not mean that churches, church schools, and individual Christians won't sometimes face difficulty navigating the secular world in which they live. Thus, part of our task as seminaries is to train pastors to guide their flock in a world increasingly hostile to the Christian faith. But, at the same time, we can rejoice and thank God that extreme secularisation has not yet meant the government prevents seminaries from fulfilling their calling.

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ca/about-us/caut-policy/lists/caut-policy-statements/caut-policy-statement-on-academic-appointments-held-jointly-in-a-university-and-a-related-institution-.

34 Ibid.

CRUCIFIXION OF IDENTITY: RESURRECTION OF +

Boris Gunjević

Once we were persons, now we are reduced to identities. How did this happen? Is there any trajectory of thought that can help us understand the strange and painfully humiliating reduction of personhood to the banality and coldness of identity? In this paper I will try to provide one possible genealogy of such a process. My intention is not to retrieve or repristinate the good old days of the golden past, since this attempt can be seen only as nostalgic projection and romantic phantasmagoria. My intention is to provide the origins of problems that we are now facing. And subsequently to provide, perhaps, possible solutions primarily relating to Lutheran theology and practice. This is part of a larger project currently in process that I am researching so your criticism is welcomed.

In the first part of the paper, I will try to problematize the trajectory of how it is that once we were persons and now we have become identities. This is the longest and perhaps most abstract part of the paper with lots of technical details. I will try not to read every sentence but rather I will go to the most important points and most important paragraphs. In the second part, I will critically evaluate this narrative and present briefly where we are now. In this part I will ask some questions about identity and why it is theologically important without going into political ramifications of present-day culture wars. In the third part of this paper, I will try to delineate a theological critique from a Lutheran perspective and a possible exit from the ideological deadlock.

The Oxford English Dictionary provides a typically circular definition of *identity*. Such a definition hides more than it reveals. It makes murky waters murkier. But instead of throwing out the dirty water to save the child, let us for a moment observe and investigate what is in the dirty water in definition of the word *identity*: "A phenomenological sense of oneself as a separate individual being with a distinctive personality and a 'true self' persisting over time; a self-image." What do we have in this definition? Some obvious entangled and complicated things:

- The phenomenological sense of self—referencing true self (which suggests that there are also different versions of untrue self).
- separate individual being
- distinctive personality
- and all that persists over time....

Once we were persons and now, we are identities. The concept of person has complicated genealogy, and it is related to the Greek word *prospon*, as the French anthropologist M. Mauss has shown. According to Mauss, the Roman concept of *persona* was considered a basic fact of Roman law. The classical Latin etymology of the word *persona* is a Hellenistic derivation that is invented quite late. This interesting but unreliable etymology of *persona* comes from *per/sonare*. It is a mask through which (*per*) resounds a voice (*sonare*) of an actor.

Most classical scholarship supports the theory that *persona* comes from the old Etruscan root *persa — prosopon* that was borrowed from the Greek language. Etruscans as a pre-Roman population on the territory of present-day Italy were known as a mask civilization. There is plenty of archaeological evidence that Etruscan homes were decorated with masks of ancestors related to ritualistic worship.

The legal meaning of the word *persona* came from early Roman juridical practice. *Personae* represented specially acquired social status. For example, the *pater familias* will transfer certain household or family authority to his son and the son will legally receive the status of *personae*. In some other later cases, an individual becoming a Roman citizen would acquire the status of a *personae* in specifically designated ritual recognition. Or, if some privileged family were to officially adopt a son, he would be promoted to the status of *personae* with all the benefits of belonging to this family.

Such *personae* will receive a forename (or sacred name), surname, and then a nickname in a highly sophisticated legal procedure that will be celebrated with making a wax mask image of the face. The mask would be placed in the hall near the *prosopon* of the dead ancestors. Here we can see the family name of the person and image, legal status and personage corresponding together.

Apart from legal status, there is another parallel meaning of the concept of *personae*, and this relates to the image of character or personality. The mask represents a person playing a role in the public context of theatre as well. This means that the image is representing the real character behind the mask. Not that someone is only hiding their hypocrisy behind a mask but, as in theatre, they are the one who is revealing true nature of an individual.

This second meaning of *personae* as a character will be taken by popular moral philosophers in second century B.C. onwards. It represents a mode of being autonomous agents of their own actions capable to receive honours or offices, and to exercise rights and obligations. This second meaning of *person* will be important in stoic philosophy because they will develop the concept of consciousness or conscious (*syneidesis*) and classical Roman law will absorb this as *conscientia*. Stoics will talk about moral person.

For example, Marcus Aurelius will talk about accepting a role that is given to us according to providence and to fulfil our duty as human beings to become good human beings. He used the phrase of carving your own mask, which means to build up your character through a set of ethical modifications of self.

However, only with Christianity does the metaphysical concept of *person* become articulated in a long, slow, and painful discursive process. To explain who is Christ in relation to God the Father and us humans, patristic theology will introduce new metaphysical concepts, and person is one of them—however, in a very specific sense. God was understood and presented as one substance in three persons, but that late Western explanation is not as precise and clear as we used to think it is.

The Greek language is more subtle and more polished, as Gregory Nazianzen famously noticed in his *Orations*. Easterners talk about one *ousia* and three *hypostases*.

According to Nazianzen, *ousia* is the nature of divinity and the three *hypostases* are descriptions related to the "triplicity of individuated properties." Latin-speaking Christians are not able to distinguish *hypostasis* from *substance,* and that is the reason why they use the word *person*, Nazianzen claims. Gregory assures his readers that, if the Latin explanation sounds different, it is not different doctrine or different faith. It is merely a different expression of the same faith, because Latin has a poor, inadequate, and restricted vocabulary.

Hypostasis is a Neoplatonist concept, but it originates from stoic ontology. *Hypostasis* is not mentioned by Plato. Aristotle uses it only sporadically when he talks about physiological processes in humans or animals. *Hypostasis* means sediment, foundation, or base. It can also mean production of something solid—to reach a solid state. In stoic philosophy, it designates a "passage" from being as such to existence.

What is interesting is that Nazianzen talks about *hypostases* as a triplicity of individuated properties. This is an entirely Christian modification of the concept of *hypostasis*. Cappadocian redefinition of the concept is *novum* and it is fundamental for the understanding of the inseparability of person and individuality.

The concept of *indivium*, which is one aspect of a person, is a collection of distinctive characteristics. The Neoplatonist philosopher, Porphyry, explained that an individual is one who is composed of a collection (a bundle) of uniquely distinctive characteristics. He uses the Greek word *idiotetes,* which Boethius will translate into Latin as *proprietates*. These uniquely distinctive properties will be a designation of identity later.

It is interesting that the words *idiot* and *identity* come from the same etymological root. As I already alluded, the Cappadocian Fathers, and later Augustine as well, were devoted readers of Neoplatonist philosophers like Porphyry and Plotinus. From their text they precisely extrapolated the concept of *hypostasis*, polished, adjusted and reconceptualized for the purposes of the articulated language of Trinity.

Let me show this in the case of Gregory of Nyssa, the youngest of the three Cappadocians. Gregory of Nyssa will for example talk about individual human bodies as bundles of God's ideas (*sundromai*). This subtle, very often pedantic shift will have strong repercussions in the late patristic period not only in the East but more profoundly in the West where Augustine and his understanding of the Trinity will introduce a relational model of substance of the Trinity.

In Book VII of *De Trinitite*, there is a famous and often-quoted sentence: "Every Essence that is called something by way of relationship is also something besides that relationship." The essence of God is relational. His essence is not exhausted by relationality, but it is a substantial presupposition of being God. It means that relation reveals always more than simple relation. In Augustine's case, we talk about subject, object, and relation. (*Please bear with me. I have not lost my plot.*)

God's substance is relational and in some specific sense we participate in the relationality of the Triune God. This means that we become persons (or, as Easterners will say, *enhypostasized*) with all unique distinctive characteristics that are important as building blocks of identity. Person and identity are intertwined since person is a metaphysical category and not only a psychological category as we are used to think in late modernity.

An important contribution was made by the Latin church father Boethius. In a very different and more polemical context, Boethius famously defined a person as "an individual substance of rational nature." That creates a certain problem in the application of his definition to Trinity; it sounds like Westerners believe in three substances, not in

one substance. Cassiodorus in his commentary on Psalms tried to modify Boethius with a similar definition. *Person* is, according to Cassiodorus, rational substance, indivisible and individual. This is still controversial but we have an idea of identity lurking in his definition more clearly.

Thomas Aquinas, under the strong influence of Augustine and his relational ontology, will try to redefine Boethius and Cassiodor's concept of person. Thomas will provide a simple formulaic sentence: *Persona relatio est*. In his sentence, it is not only God who is a person; his definition clearly implies something else. As human beings, we are made a "person" as well. This will have profound ethical implications in defining what does it mean to be human and how human beings can have access to truth. Thomas will discuss who can become a subject of the Christian virtues of faith, hope, and charity, and he would conclude that it is neither male nor female nor master or servant but person.

From patristic times to the end of Middle Ages, an immoral and impure person was not able to know truth and was unable to act truthfully or virtuously. A certain form of *askesis*, a certain practice, was required and needed to be person. In another words, the infusion of grace was a constitutive force of personhood.

The Reformation will not only criticise late medieval scholasticism, it will provide a new method of doing theology with a "*pro me*" emphasis that will create an additional perspective on conscience and self as interiority of person. The Reformation will modify late medieval theology, particularly on the problem of authority and how to understand the action of grace. However, the Reformation will also open an additional context for Cartesian critics of scholastic theology and philosophy. Descartes provides a new method of philosophical thinking that will create unintended consequences with a conglomerate of political ramifications. Descartes' "Discourse on Method"' and "Meditations" will produce significant shifts toward a new understanding of *subject*, not *person*.

With Descartes, we become the subjects. The Descartian shift is primary epistemological. We moved toward epistemological theory where the subject is found in practices of knowledge. The subject is relocated in the practice of knowledge of self that is based on evidence. Such an epistemological shift began during the traumatic experience of the Thirty Years War.

The Thirty Years War made a profound impact on the separation of church and state, and most importantly provided a new legal framework where subjects of the state under a secular rule will become legal entities simply called "*corpi*"—bodies. Subjects become "disciplined bodies" under the authority of the state and in a legal sense will be called *corpus*. There is the body of the criminal in the courtroom—*habeas corpus*.

It is almost echoing the facts of old Roman law in a secular modern version. Bodily subjects become part or members of the body of the sovereign state (which can be understood as parody of the body of Christ). A different way to put it is that subjects become politically highly individualized as part of the new secular state and its new political practice.

When individual subjects in their legal, territorial, and linguistic context share the same characteristics, we are witnessing the birth of some specific social identity. When individual subjects accept such imposed identification with groups on the same territory with the same language on a political level, we are witnessing the production of collective identity. However, this is not yet the birth of the personal identity modern psychologists talked about in the twentieth century.

Descartian modern subjects will undergo at least one more great modification. It is very specific ethical-aesthetical shift. Not ethical in the sense of following certain

rules, regulatory principles, duties, or obligations. It is ethics with a strong emphasis on constructing subjectivity against substantiality of subject. This project is strongly tied to the work of Michel Foucault.

Instead of a subject founded in knowledge of self like Descartes, Foucault offers a process of subjectivation. For Foucault, there is no subject or substance as such but only a process of subjectivation transposed in the sphere of ethics. Foucault claims that the subject is constructed as a process of subjection whether it is subjected to law, state, science, or religion. Foucault proposes liberation from subjection in the form of ethical practices of self or, as he sometimes called them, technologies of self. He proposes liberation, or some kind of emancipation of self through certain techniques of self. He calls it art of life, art of living or in some places aesthetics of living. It is interesting that ethics of self, practices of self on self, is called aesthetics because aesthetics and the concept of life as a work of art is always related to the question of style or even manners.

Foucault's strategy is to return to Greek thought where the art of living and technologies of self were synonyms for philosophical practice and philosophy in general. He argues that the intellectual imperative of Greek thought is articulated in the maxim 'know yourself.' To know means at the same time to take care, he claims. To know yourself and to care of yourself will slowly go separate ways at the end of Middle Ages, thinks Foucault—especially in early modernity.

He also claims that Christianity preferred care of self in different pastoral forms. Post-cartesian philosophy prioritises knowledge without care. Foucault's project is to establish ethical practice of self in the form of care of self. This Foucauldian attempt failed, as Pierre Hadot showed in his profound but friendly criticism of Foucault's account of self in Greco-Roman thought. It is intellectual dandyism, thinks Hadot.

What is at stake in Foucault's return to Greco-Roman thought (particularly to the stoics and to some highly selected early texts of Plato) is something more important than what can be seen at first sight. With the delineation of the Foucault project, we make a full circle from the Greco-Roman world. Our journey from legal prescriptions of Roman Law, from patristic ontology, mediaeval Christian ethics, epistemology, up to art of living did not finish. Following this trajectory, we briefly presented contours of Foucault's life project and his attempt to constitute subjectivity through ethical practice of self.

The process of transformation of person into subject and subject into self from one point of view and the process of individual becoming identity under the auspices of the birth of the modern state and technology is one process observed from different points of view. What emerged and what characterized this process is unresolved tension of reducing person to identity. I am convinced that Lutheran theological discourse can provide an adequate criticism of the present moment.

Firstly, following the first route of returning to the classical thought of Greco Roman philosophy, patristic synthesis, and medieval popular folk theology.

Secondly, with our confessional strategy of devotion enriched with underdog thinkers usually called radical pieties like Hamann, Kierkegaard, Novalis, etc. who were the first ones to recognize and radically criticize modernity in its beginning.

And thirdly, we have taken a bold risk not to repeat old formulas and slogans but to dare to anticipate future theological readings of reality, particularly the ability to offer fresh and profound imaginative interpretations

Let me try to make a few steps in that direction since it is not enough to criticize what other people did wrong, if we are not able to offer a viable alternative. Such an alternative is always open to accepting help from unexpected sources and to find new

allies and sojourners. We can walk with them and learn from them humbly and critically and depart from them with blessings and encouragement when it is needed.

Identity: it is a strange concept and an awkward word with ambiguous meaning and prehistory. Identity is something that distinguishes us from others. However, the word *identity* refers to sameness and comes from the Latin word *idem* which means "same." Identity refers to something that is enacted again and again through repetition. It is in repetitive action that identity is made of sameness. What we do again and again is something that makes us different from others. A generic pattern of our sameness can offer some guidance and perhaps preserves us from chaos but at the same time marks our differences from others. Paradoxically, the more we want to be different, the easier we become the same as someone else.

There is something else in the word and in the concept of identity that can explain the irritating fascination with the concept. In the word *identity*, we have the important one syllable word *id* and the additional expression *entity*. "*Id*" is part of the Freudian psychoanalytic trinity with *Ego* and *Superego*.

Id is part of Freudian psychic apparatus, and it represents dark psychic energy related to pleasure principle. *Id* is an unconscious psychic force that motivates the subject to seek immediate satisfaction of needs, desires, and urges. It is an impulse driven part of the subject that is contained in the unconscious part of memory, and it is driven by instinct and sexual or aggressive drives. No wonder that the linguistic root of the words *identity* and *idiot* are so close.

Part of the problem of becoming identities is the two-fold process of identification that we all have, whether it is individual or collective identities. Let me explain. I can identify myself as Croatian, male, or a punk rocker. This identification sets me into a web of certain relations that defines my simultaneous multiple belongings. I am also a father, husband, and theologian. And at the same time, I am identified by others, by other people or groups, as a priest and as a male with a specific accent, tone of voice, and pattern of behaviour. It is not only how I "feel" but what others "feel" about me. How they perceive me, identify me very often against my will.

It is interesting that all identification processes characterised by proponents of identity politics, when we peel back all of the arguments, are always reduced to feeling—"because I feel like a man or women or non-binary... or because I feel like a particular identity".

There is some sort of institutional recognition with which I must comply even if I think it is morally wrong, offensive, or simply unacceptable. I am identified by institutions against my own will or against my better judgment. Identification is imposed.

One attempt to argue in my case is prevailing in social media, and it sounds almost convincing but it is not. "I am a minority," and as such I am immediately oppressed, and that is hegemonic structural violence against minorities. But this kind of argumentation is debunked by one of the most important French philosophers, Giles Deleuze, who said that minority-majority dualism is a false dilemma. According to Deleuze and Guattari, we should rather talk about *becoming minority* (as an act of rejecting and refusing a stable identitarian position) since *becoming* is a more important ontological category then trumpeting into minority discourse.

The process of becoming is something that is more important than the totality of being. As human beings, we are becoming. Especially after incarnation, *becoming* is not some ontological parasite on Being or some unwanted rust preventing our perception of being. Incarnation gives a new ontological status to becoming. It follows

that minority and majority is a false dilemma since we are simultaneously minority and majority at the same.

I can identify myself as much as I want but there is counter-identification imposed on me and I am not capable of avoiding it. Let me give an example from the United Kingdom's National Health Service. When I moved to the U.K., like everywhere in Europe, health service was free but we had to apply by submitting a form to the local General Practice Surgery, as they call it here. In this form, I was asked about my race. I ticked the box "white," but the next question was far more interesting. I was asked what kind of white race I am. Am I British or Scandinavian, sort of German "proper white," or am I white like Romanians, Greek, and alike? It was imposed on me that I am not white enough and that my race identity is compromised. I can do respond in different ways. First is to say: "Oh, I am oppressed… am I?" Or I can silently comply and say I am Southern European White. Or I can simply refuse to play this game and try to ridicule the whole system.

As the last part of this long paper, let us discuss and reflect briefly on Galatians 3:25-29, a famous text that we always read when we discuss the problem of identity from a theological point of view.

When Paul organizes his communities in the Mediterranean coastlines, he takes the resurrection of Jesus as the beginning of a new creation which is the birth of new humanity, something that is not seen before. To become a member of God's cosmic household, all social, political, economical, sexual, race, class, gender, or other designations from God's point of view are relative. They should be revoked, refused, and ultimately rejected. Male, Roman, Greek, and free does not make a person automatically privileged. Nor does to be slave, barbarian, female, Jew, or mentally challenged exclude persons from any of God's benefits or privileges.

Paul claims that uniquely distinctive properties of being a member of a certain class, sex, race, or social status should be questioned in comparison to the new creation that is on the eschatological horizon. These identities are simply deactivated and we say together with Paul they should be crucified to be resurrected. Real human beings in the Roman Empire of Paul's time were members of the messianic collective called *Ecclesia*—Church. Not Roman political, Greek intellectual, or Jewish religious elite, or their respective communities and their practices. Not barbarians on the borders or Spartacus-like slaves ready to start another uprising against a corrupted empire. *Church* is a new practice of life and the predecessor of the universal of humanity; it is the womb where real humans are born.

Alain Badiou gives a great example from the Second World War in occupied France. He asked, in his eclectic and minimalistic reading of Paul, what is the real France during the Vichy pro-Nazi regime? Is it the people in the territory of France who are collaborators with Nazism and structures involved in maintaining such horror saturated with the brutality of violence? Or is the real France a small number of people scattered in cities, villages, and woods all around France in small cells of the resistance movement. The answer is clear. These small groups are the real France and the only true France, not Vichy's France with all the state insignia and ideological apparatus. This is, according to Badiou, the case with the Church of Paul's time. These small communities are the real and universal representatives of humanity and the predecessor of a new creation. They are real human beings.

I think that the logic of "There is no Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free or male and female" should be pushed up to the breaking point as Luther suggested in his

commentary on this text. He said that social status, even those that are divinely ordered, are nothing—like king and subject, teacher and pupil, master and servant. Luther says there are no distinctions of person which is a very important point.

We can add there is no black or white nor employer and employee. But what will happen if we add here the multiplicities of so-called gender identities? The whole project could collapse. Or perhaps we could try to turn things upside down and change the whole game from the inside out—not just changing the rules of the game to be relevant as Church.

What if we read this text as a refusal and rejection of any identity and any identification? When I presented a similar but shorter version of this paper to an audience at College Chapel in Cambridge, where I am a senior member, some LGBTQ+ people did not like my argumentation—especially one person (visibly annoyed by my paper) who was knighted by the queen for promoting gay rights and who was obviously transgender now in old age.

Let me try to conclude this presentation. I proposed a possible genealogy of how it came about that we once were persons and now we have become identities. It is an ideological deadlock, and I have tried to offer some theological reading of it. There is something very undignified to label a human being as an identity—to put him in a box, acknowledge him or her or them, and then tell them how to perform this identity in life. We are much more than our identity since identity is more than a box to tick. It is the simultaneous and multiple belonging not only to myself but others around me, not to mention God.

If I have ever agreed with Michel Foucault in anything, it would be his famous sentence: "I refuse to be identified." To be crucified with Christ as Paul explained is an expression that represents what it means to live from faith to faith. It is a slow process of becoming of a new unknown identity that is neither more nor less than the refusal of any identity and all forms of identification.

As we have seen, identity is the repetition of the same. Why would we want to be like everyone else—same and identical as everyone else? In Christ as a new creation, we received the dignity of true uniqueness, of someone who is singular. I suggested that in the construction of political identity, on the other hand, there is something violent and something that represents irredeemable and irreparable loss because we always must exclude someone to establish our identity. If I am crucified with Christ and I live in the power of his resurrection this means that I crucified my identity with everything that I called mine.

To show how extreme and radical is the Gospel message, it is enough to apply it to LGBTQ+ communities in a very subversive way. Instead of being one or other of these identities, we should choose the "+" ("plus")—since Christ was crucified on the "+".

In the abbreviation LGBTQ+, the "plus" stands for all other identities—particularly for identities that are still not invented or constructed. It is interesting that the plus ("+") is intended to represent all others who are not included in the existing abbreviations. It seems to me a very toxic inclusivity because all identities are related to gender as deconstruction of biological sex.[1] What about other identities,

1 Ivan Illich, the greatest Croatian thinker and youngest monsignor in the Catholic Church in the 20th century, is the person who introduced the word and concept of gender into public discourse in the middle of the eighties, when he published a notoriously famous and difficult book called Gender. He was immediately canceled before cancel culture was invented. He proposed an unheard of subversion of sex and gender dichotomy. He claimed that gender is biology and sex is social construction, and went on to experience a horrible academic witch hunt that ended his career as a public intellectual, at least in some circles.

invisible ones that we are simply not able to see, immigrant identity or refugee identity or underclass identity or neurodiverse identity, etc. I can add more and more to the absurdity of the position.

This " + "is the cross with which we must identify ourselves. As a Church faithful to the preaching of Law and Gospel, we should reject any form of identity politics, any form of identity. We should accept the position that human sexuality, or any form of social, economic, and political relations should be embraced by the cross and crucifixion. As Dr. Miroslav Volf explained in his famous book, *Exclusion and Embrace*, the crucifixion also means Jesus' arms were wide open to embrace us while we were his enemies. We are called to embrace our enemies, which from any human perceptive is not only impossible but suicidal.

We are called to accept the cross with the perspective enacted in two directions (making a cross or " + ") of righteousness: first, an alien vertical righteousness given to us as gift from God; and second, a righteousness described as horizontal or proper righteousness that we do for our neighbours. In times when people are possessed with the problem of identity, the refusal of any identity is perhaps the only identity that we as Christians can claim.

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ILC ACCREDITATION

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The International Lutheran Council (ILC) exists to encourage, strengthen, and promote confessional Lutheran theology and practice centering in Jesus Christ, both among member churches and throughout the world. The ILC recognises that theological education is intentionally missional. Through theological education, pastors as well as other church workers are formed as servants of missio Dei (the mission of God) who carry out Christ's mandate to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19) through preaching, teaching, baptizing, caring, and leading in furthering the Kingdom of God.[1] The ILC is therefore interested in building confessional Lutheran theological capacity around the world, primarily through encouragement and support for theological education.

One general obstacle to the recruitment of students to undertake theological education in many countries is the lack of formal recognition of qualifications awarded by seminaries and theological colleges. This can discourage potential students who would have to commit to four or five years of education, often at great personal cost. One way of mitigating this obstacle is to obtain accreditation for a seminary. Educational accreditation is a process whereby the quality of educational institutions, their programmes, teaching and care for students is assessed against nationally and internationally recognised standards of excellence, providing external recognition of the quality of the education provided.[2,3,4] Accreditation is often a prerequisite for degree awarding powers. For example, in the UK, "the criteria for authorisation for degree awarding powers (DAP) are designed to ensure that a provider with DAPs has demonstrated a firm guardianship of academic standards, a firm and systematic approach to the assurance of the quality of the higher education that it provides, and the capacity to contribute to the continued good standing of English higher education."[5] Often a small educational institution such as a seminary will work with a larger university who will validate the degree programmes offered by the seminary.

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1 International Lutheran Council Accreditation Agency (2022). *Manual For Accreditation*, p. 7.

2 UKAS https://www.ukas.com/accreditation/about/accreditation-vs-certification/.

3 Advantage https://advantageaccreditation.com/what-does-accreditation-mean/#: ~ :text = A % 20 definition % 20of % 20accreditation,by % 20education % 20institutions % 20or % 20organisations.

4 CHEA, https://www.chea.org/about-accreditation.

5 Office for Students (2018/2023). Regulatory advice 12: How to apply for degree awarding powers. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/886c6acc-0316-45ed-b389-f0f82dd7fc0a/regulatory-advice-12-how-to-apply-for-daps-updated-dec-2023.pdf.

Going through the process of accreditation is often very helpful for individual institutions beyond the ultimate goal of obtaining recognition. For example, the British Accreditation Council (BAC) includes in its list of purposes for accreditation the provision of support and advice for institutions regarding maintaining and enhancing their quality of provision and guidance to potential students.[6] Although accreditation can be a lengthy, time-consuming process, the benefits to the institution and its students are significant. In addition to providing external recognition, the process of accreditation contributes to internal quality improvement.[7] External recognition by a national body can be seen as one component of quality assurance in education, the others being institutional self-evaluation, external evaluation by academic peers; and published reports.[8,9] Self-evaluation is an internal process, to measure and improve the performance and quality of the institutional organisation, structure, integrity, the study and research programmes, and accountability to the communities served.

Interest by ILC in the accreditation of seminaries and theological colleges arose initially from discussions at 7th International Lutheran Council World Seminaries Conference in Baguio City, Philippines, October 15-18, 2019, leading to the establishment in April 2021 of the ILC Accreditation Agency (ILCAA). The mission of ILCAA was stated as: "to serve ILC member and non-member confessional Lutheran seminaries and institutes around the globe with theological academic program accreditation, networking, and support services, operating on Christian beliefs and principles based on Holy Scriptures while retaining the integrity of the Lutheran Confessions."[10] An advisory board was established to work with Rev. Dr. Steve Schumacher, who developed an extensive accreditation manual for Lutheran educators. Although a decision has been taken not to pursue a formal ILC accreditation scheme, the manual is now an important resource for institutional self-evaluation. In addition, ILC is willing to consider requests for assistance from seminaries who are working to improve their theological education and/or apply for national accreditation.

Self-Evaluation

The quality of education can be hard to define as it "involves a normative judgment about values", with different views being adopted by different stakeholders.[11] Quality assurance (QA) can be defined as "the process of assuring accountability through the measurement and evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency" of education institutions.[12] Important differences exist among countries and regions of the world with regard to their approach to QA. However, internal quality improvement always begins with self-evaluation, which can be the most valuable part of any quality assurance process as it highlights the strengths and weaknesses of an institution.[13] For

6 British Accreditation Council (2023). Accreditation. https://www.the-bac.org/accreditation/.

7 International Lutheran Council Accreditation Agency (2022). *Manual For Accreditation*, p. 16.

8 Zou, Yihuan. *Quality of Higher Education: Organizational and Educational Perspectives*, River Publishers, 2013, p. 21.

9 Vesce, E., Cisi, M., Gentileb, T. & and Sturac, I. (2021). Quality self-assessment processes in higher education: from an Italian experience to a general tool. *Quality in Higher Education*, 27(1), 40-58.

10 ILCAA (2022). *Manual For Accreditation*, p. 3.

11 Zou, 2013., p. 22.

12 Selesho, Jacob (2012) The Challenge Faced by Higher Education Institutions: A Quality Agenda. *J Soc Sci*, 31(2): 187-192.

13 Ibid.

educational institutions, self-evaluation can be described as "a process, initiated by the school itself, in which carefully chosen participants make a systematic description and appraisal of the functioning of the school, with a view to making decisions or taking initiatives for (aspects of) the overall development of the school and school policy."[14] In addition to determining what is good and what needs to be improved, self-evaluation should also inspire improvement and include the opportunity for students, teachers and others to be involved in the quality assurance and improvement process.[15] It is important for quality monitoring to engage with the learning experiences of students in addition to assessing processes and systems.[16] Ultimately, the institution determines its own quality with the willingness to improve and to be accountable being the responsibility of the institution itself.[17]

Areas of Evaluation

Educational self-evaluation and accreditation generally cover six key areas:

1. Management (including governance), staffing and administration;
2. Financial sustainability;
3. Teaching, learning and assessment;
4. Student welfare;
5. Premises and facilities;
6. Compliance with statutory requirements.

In addition, the ILC Accreditation manual includes a section on 'Confessional Subscription'.

Appendix 1 contains examples of the topics that should be addressed during a self-evaluation, based on the ILC Accreditation Manual and the inspection reports for Westfield House, prepared by the British Accreditation Council (BAC)[18] and Mainland Education.[19] Further explanation and details can be found in the ILC Accreditation Manual. Of note is the fact that the BAC offers accreditation to higher education institutions located outside of the UK, providing the teaching language is English.

Conducting a self-assessment

Frequently, it is easy to underestimate the effort needed to write, edit, and format a comprehensive Self-Evaluation Report. The report must include the criteria that have

14 Van Petegem, P. (2005). Vormgeven aan schoolbeleid: effectieve-scholenonderzoek als inspiratiebron voor de zelfevaluatie van scholen [Designing school policy: school effectiveness research as inspiration for school self-evaluation]. Leuven: Acco. V, quoted in van der Bija, T., Geijselb, F.P. & ten Dam, G.T.N. (2016). Improving the quality of education through self-evaluation in Dutch secondary schools. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 49: 42-50.

15 van der Bija, T., Geijselb, F.P. & ten Dam, G.T.N. (2016).

16 Zou, 2013, 29.

17 Selesho, Jacob (2012).

18 British Accreditation Council (2022). https://www.the-bac.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Westfield-House-of-Theological-Studies-Re-accreditation-Inspection-Report-Mar-22-FINAL.pdf.

19 Mainland Education (2023). https://mainland.education/college-10/.

been assessed as well as evidence for any conclusions. Evidence may include things such as information on the institution's website, promotional material, written documents (policies, procedures, handbooks, minutes of meetings, annual reports, course syllabi), student work and assessments, feedback from students and stakeholders, budgets and financial accounts, safety and risk assessments, staff and faculty CVs and references. Strengths should be highlighted and plans for addressing deficiencies should be outlined. Institutions must focus on those efforts and procedures currently in place when writing their Self-Evaluation Report, rather than what they would like, or aim, to have in place. Future plans must be realistic.

The ILC Accreditation Manual suggests that careful thought should be given as to which stakeholders should participate in the evaluation and how their views will be obtained. Key stakeholders may include graduates of the program, staff, faculty, administrators, board members, church leaders, vicarage supervisors, congregational leaders, and congregational members. Bringing groups of stakeholders together to provide input is effective. It allows for discussion and gives a fuller, richer, and more accurate response than a written questionnaire. It is possible to send questions by email, but responses may be limited. Face to face, phone, Skype, or Zoom interviews will give more valuable information and have the potential to build relationships more effectively."[20] The manual includes an example questionnaire that can be used to obtain the views of stakeholders.

Curriculum

Many different definitions have been attached to the term 'curriculum' in relation to higher education. Some are based on student experiences, some on competencies and others on curriculum content.[21] The ILC Accreditation Advisory Committee discussed the advantages and disadvantages of recommending curriculum content for all seminaries to follow. Bearing in mind the differing national contexts and requirements, the conclusion was that, on balance it would be more helpful to focus on competencies required for specific church work professions. Unfortunately, the Advisory Committee did not have time to develop a list of desired competencies. For guidance, the manual includes recommended core curricula for a Certificate or Diploma in Pastoral Formation and for a Bachelor of Theology or Bachelor of Ministry degree programme. These are summarised in Appendix 2.

Questions for Discussion

Gathering together at conferences such as this provides the opportunity for us to learn from each other and to explore ideas for future improvements. We would like to use the remaining time to share our experiences of quality assurance, continuous improvement and challenges faced in continuing to provide sound theological education based on confessional Lutheran teaching. Questions/topics you might like to discuss include:

20 ILCAA (2022). *Manual For Accreditation*, p. 88.

21 Yaşar, G. C., & Aslan, B. (2021). Curriculum theory: A review study. *International Journal of Curriculum* and Instructional Studies, 11(2), 237-260. https://doi.org/10.31704/ijocis.2021.012.

1. If your institution's programmes are accredited, share your experience of the accreditation process including benefits and challenges. Did the external accreditation process lead to a compromise in Lutheran formation at your seminary?
2. How is the Lutheran formation promoted at your seminary and at what level (1-5, with 5 being the highest) would you rate it?
3. If your institution's programmes are not accredited, what benefits do you think accreditation would confer? What have you found to be barriers to accreditation? What would help you to overcome these barriers?
4. Does your institution have a programme of assessment? If so, what does it cover? How frequently is it undertaken? What changes have been made as a result?
5. If your institution does not have an assessment programme, what are the reasons? How do you identify areas for improvement? What help would you need to institute regular assessments?

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Appendix 1. Examples of Self-Evaluation Topics

Management, staffing and administration

There is a clear management structure including a governing board that is under the authority of the local church body. The governing board establishes policies consistent with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of the student learning program and services and the resources necessary to support them. Board members, the head of the institution and senior management have appropriate qualifications and experience, understand their responsibilities and are effective at carrying them out. There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff, including the verification of qualifications and experience prior to employment; there is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of staff; there is

good communication between management and staff. The institution establishes and publishes clear policies and procedures that are comprehensive, meet legal requirements, are implemented effectively and promote honesty, responsibility, and academic integrity; policies, procedures and systems are well documented and effectively disseminated across the institution and are reviewed regularly and updated when necessary. Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its programmes, including costs; the administration works and communicates effectively with the local confessional Lutheran church body leadership and congregations; the institution has effective systems to review its own standards and assess its own performance with a view to continuing improvement, including regular meetings for planning and reviewing policies and practices.

Financial sustainability

Financial resources are sufficient to support and sustain the institution's theological formation program and services, including library, to achieve its mission. Financial management is effective and prudent; the institution prepares and implements annual budgets, including building and maintenance budgets, and develops a three-year budget projection. Institutional planning reflects a realistic assessment of financial resource availability (i.e., donors, congregations, auxiliary groups, etc.), development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements. The financial situation ensures that the institution will remain viable for the duration of the students' programmes.

Teaching, learning, and assessment

The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty, with qualifications including knowledge of the subject matter and necessary skills for the service to be performed, including appropriate theological degrees, pastoral experience, discipline expertise, teaching skills, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. The institution ensures the commitment of faculty and educators to encompass appropriate mature Christ-like character, to accept and conform to the ILC doctrinal position as well as a concern to improve in personal professional skills and in their individual fields of specialisation and instruction, to be an active participant in the life and worship of the institution. The institution plans for and provides all faculty, educators, and staff with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on theological education, library and information, technology, and learning needs.

The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enroll suitable students for its courses with a selective admissions procedure which focuses on the applicant's Christian character and vocational experience, in addition to their academic qualifications; the institution regularly obtains and records feedback from students and other stakeholders and takes appropriate action where necessary, teaching is effective, well-planned, thoroughly researched and supported by good resources, the appraisal procedures for teaching staff incorporate regular classroom observation. Academic management is effective, teachers demonstrate a commitment to each student's learning and provide regular formal and informal assessments and feedback on their performance and progress,

which are effectively monitored, courses are planned and delivered in ways that enable students to succeed, taking into account academic backgrounds and particular needs of students. The theological education programme, including the curriculum, content of individual courses/modules and syllabi, is reviewed regularly. Desired program outcomes align with and demonstrate a commitment to Scriptures, Lutheran Confessions, and the institution's mission; the student's spiritual and vocational formation as well as academic development are included in decisions regarding graduation.

Student welfare

The college takes seriously its duty to care for its students who receive pastoral support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances, which is in line with Lutheran teaching and ethos; there is at least one named staff member responsible for student welfare who is suitably trained, accessible to all students and available to provide advice and counselling. Where residential accommodation is offered, it is fit for purpose, well maintained and appropriately supervised. Policies, procedures, practices, and guidance for health and safety are up to date and made available for students, staff, and visitors. The institution has or has access to a sufficient number of qualified student services personnel to meet the needs of students.

Premises and facilities

The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises and provides students and teachers with access to appropriate resources and materials for study, classrooms, and other learning areas are appropriate for the courses offered; students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private study, including library and IT and other learning support resources; teaching staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work, and relaxation. Appropriate housing accommodation is provided for residential students.

Compliance with statutory requirements

The institution acts with clarity, accuracy, and integrity with faculty, staff, students, governing board, others associated with the operation of the institution, and with all external associations including the broader public. The institution's integrity is grounded in its identity and confessional Lutheran theological commitments; is demonstrated through policies and practices that highlight fairness, honesty, and accountability; and is manifested in a healthy institutional environment with effective patterns of leadership, transparency, and communications. The institution acts with integrity by following all applicable legislative and statutory requirements in the country in which it operates, beginning with documents that demonstrate its authority to operate and confer certificates, diplomas and/or degrees and including areas such as company and employment law, health and safety, disability provision, general data protection and copyright, advertising, public liability.

Appendix 2. ILCAA Recommended Core Curricula Subject Area

Subject Area	Course/Module	Certificate or Diploma in Pastoral Formation	Bachelor of Theology or Bachelor of Ministry
Biblical Languages	New Testament Greek	Introduction and working skills in grammar and reading.	Introduction and working skills in grammar and reading.
	Old Testament Hebrew	n/a	Introduction and working skills in grammar and reading
Biblical Theology	Old Testament	Introduction to the OT books	Isagogics: Introductory study of the literary and external history of the Old Testament books
	New Testament	Introduction to the NT books	Isagogics: Introductory study of the literary and external history of the New Testament books
	Hermeneutics	Using Biblical principles to interpret Scripture	
	Old Testament books	Genesis	Genesis, Psalms, Isaiah, Apocalyptic Texts
	New Testament books	Synoptic Gospels, Pauline Epistles & Acts	Synoptic Gospels, Romans & Galatians,
	Apocalyptic Texts	n/a	selected from Ezekiel, Daniel & Revelation
Historical Theology	Church History	A timeline of the Church from Christ to present	I – Early Church. II - Medieval. III - Reformation and Orthodoxy. IV – Growth of the Christian Church in specific country.
Practical Theology	Liturgics	Introduction of the History and Theology of Liturgy, Learning the Rubrics, and Hymnody.	Introduction of the History and Theology of Liturgy, Learning the Rubrics, and Hymnody.
	Homiletics	I – Intro to Preaching with understanding of preaching theories, and basics of outlining	I – Intro to Preaching with understanding of preaching theories, and basics of outlining
		II - Sermon construction and preaching.	II - Sermon construction and preaching.
		n/a	III - Sermon preparation on texts from the Old Testament.
	Pastoral Theology	Understanding the Office of Public Ministry, pastoral relationships, practice, and cultural dimensions of pastoral ministry	Understanding the Office of Public Ministry, pastoral relationships, practice, and cultural dimensions of pastoral ministry

	Pastor as Catechist	n/a	The pastoral role in teaching and leading the congregation in the study of the creation and sustaining of faith in Christ, and how that faith expresses itself in the Christian life.
	Teaching Methods	The general principles, pedagogy and management strategies used for classroom instruction.	The general principles, pedagogy and management strategies used for classroom instruction.
	Martin Luther's Life and Theology	A study of the life and theology of a Lutheran Reformer.	A study of the life and theology of a Lutheran Reformer.
	Comparative Religions	Study of beliefs and practices of non-Christian religions with emphasis on Islam in comparison to Lutheran doctrine.	Study of beliefs and practices of non-Christian religions with emphasis on Islam in comparison to Lutheran doctrine.
	Confessing Christ in the Community	Practical approaches to engage in mission and Evangelism.	Practical approaches to engage in mission and Evangelism.
	Church Administration	Preparation for the administration of a congregation, particularly the identification of shared leadership with laity for evangelism, stewardship, and program planning, execution, and evaluation.	Preparation for the administration of a congregation, particularly the identification of shared leadership with laity for evangelism, stewardship, and program planning, execution, and evaluation.
	Stewardship	Pastoral responsibilities for priority setting, church and personal finances, and identification of skills among the laity.	Pastoral responsibilities for priority setting, church and personal finances, and identification of skills among the laity.
	Theological Ethics	n/a	Disciplined theological reflection on frustrating ethical issues.
Systemic Theology	Catechesis	n/a	Study and memorization of Luther's Small Catechism
	Law & Gospel	I. Proper distinction between Law and Gospel with application to pastoral ministry.	I & II. Proper distinction between Law and Gospel with application to pastoral ministry.
	Lutheran Confessions	I - Ecumenical Creeds, Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, and the Power and Primacy of the Pope	I - Augsburg Confession and the Apology of the Augsburg Confession.
		II. Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord.	II - Smalcald Articles, Power and Primacy of the Pope, Large Catechism.
			III - Formula of Concord, Epitome and Solid Declaration.

	Dogmatics	I - Holy Scripture, Doctrine of God, Creation, Angelology, and the Doctrine of Man.	I - Holy Scripture, Doctrine of God, Creation, Divine Providence, Angelology, Doctrine of Man
		II - Saving Grace, Doctrine of Christ, Application of Salvation, Faith, Conversion, Justification, and Sanctification.	II - Saving Grace, Doctrine of Christ, Application of Salvation.
			III - Faith, Conversion, Justification, Sanctification, and the finished work of Christ.
		III - The Holy Spirit at work through the Means of Grace, The Word of Promise and the Holy Sacraments, and Eschatology.	IV - The Holy Spirit at work through the Means of Grace, The Word of Promise and the Holy Sacraments, Eternal Election of sinners by God, and Eschatology
General Studies (non-credit)	Instructional Language Grammar I & II	Grammar and vocabulary skills in the local language of instruction. Familiarization with the seminary library, developing research abilities, writing of papers, and practicing a learned writing style and structure.	Grammar and vocabulary skills in the local language of instruction.
	Library Research and Writing		Familiarization with the seminary library, developing research abilities, writing of papers, and practicing a learned writing style and structure
	Language Readings	Instruction on effective strategies such as identifying text structure and comprehension of the content area reading.	Instruction on effective strategies such as identifying text structure and comprehension of the content area reading.
	Local Church Body Structure and Church Relations	n/a	Understanding how the local church functions through its ecclesiastical structure and relationships with partner church bodies.
	Health and Hygiene	Understanding the importance of good health and hygiene practices, developing the ability to communicate practices to congregation and community	Understanding the importance of good health and hygiene practices, developing the ability to communicate practices to congregation and community.
Practical Experience	Field Education	A student will be assigned to a church during his first and second years of study whereby he will be mentored by a local pastor.	the student will be assigned to a church during his second and third years of study whereby, he will be mentored by a local pastor.
	Vicarage	After a student completes his two years of study, he will be assigned to a congregation for 12 months. In the congregation he will lead worship and Bible study, preach, evangelize, and work with the leaders of the congregation to further the proclamation of the Gospel, done under the leadership and mentorship of a supervising pastor.	After a student completes his three years of study, he will be assigned to a congregation for the period of 12 months. In the congregation he will lead worship and Bible study, preach, evangelize, and work with the leaders of the congregation to further the proclamation of the Gospel, under the leadership and mentorship of a supervising pastor.

CORE COMPETENCIES FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION LEADING TO ORDINATION/DEACONESS CERTIFICATION

Ron Mudge

Martin Luther told us clearly what it takes to make a theologian: *oratio* (prayer), *meditatio* (meditation), and *tentatio* (temptation, or, as I prefer, assaults of Satan). Prayer and meditation on God's Word are not surprising, but assaults of Satan may seem surprising at first. Even more surprising is Luther's statement that "the devil is the best teacher of theology." In His wisdom, the Lord uses the attacks of Satan to drive us to His Word as we desperately seek hope and help. We are not speculative theologians, guessing about theology for entertainment. We are theologians under the cross, digging deeply into God's Word as the only source of truth, which leads us to forgiveness and salvation. Salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ comes through Baptism, the Lord's Supper, confession and absolution, and God's Word. Through these means, the Holy Spirit kindles faith in our hearts and leads us to salvation. The free gift of salvation and the entirety of God's Word give us hope, strength, and wisdom as we face the assaults of Satan.

I have been invited to speak on core competencies for theological education leading to ordination and deaconess certification. The process that Luther describes for making a theologian is true of every Christian and certainly of pastors and deaconesses. I will describe, in detail, the competencies, outcomes, and performance indicators for Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne (CTSFW) and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL). These competencies deal with prayer, meditation, and the assaults of Satan. They describe how the Lord shapes men toward ordination and how He shapes women toward certification as deaconesses.

Theological education is a humbling endeavor. I will first consider the competencies that a pastor must possess. It may be helpful to frame these competencies in terms of what a pastor should know, be, and do. What a pastor should know might include, for example, a working knowledge of the content of the Bible and the Greek language. What a pastor should be has to do with his identity and beliefs—for example, his belief that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God and his life as a baptized child of God. What a pastors should do involves skills that apply to the Pastoral Ministry, such as preaching.

Once these competencies have been identified, we must consider how a seminary should shape a man so that he develops the necessary competencies. In addition, we must determine how to verify that he has, in fact, developed these competencies. It is often easiest to verify knowledge, harder to verify skills, and even more difficult to verify identity and beliefs. As I describe the materials from CTSFW and CSL, we will see how these seminaries have both established the necessary competencies and worked to verify that these competencies have been achieved. Seminaries cultivate prayer and meditation on God's Word and give students resources for when the assaults of Satan come. At the same time, seminaries shape students through the attacks of Satan.

As you may imagine, the core competencies of CTSFW and CSL cover much of the same ground but each in different ways. In what follows, I present each seminary's expectations of student outcomes separately so that we can consider how each approach works. When there is overlap, I will limit my explanation.

Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne (CTSFW) Student Learning Outcomes for the Master of Divinity program[1]

Having successfully completed the Master of Divinity program, the graduate is one who:

1. Confesses the prophetic and apostolic faith of the Holy Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions;

> *Comment:* Notice the term "confesses" here. This outcome deals with identity and beliefs and is difficult to measure. Before a man receives a call and is put forth for ordination, we must verify that he confesses the prophetic and apostolic faith. This faith is found in the Holy Scriptures and is described accurately in the Lutheran Confessions. Seminaries must verify that their students confess both the entire content and teaching of the Holy Scriptures accurately, as well as the faith delivered through the Scriptures.

2. Interprets biblical texts using the original languages in a manner that is congruent with the Lutheran Confessions;

> *Comment:* This outcome focuses on skills. Graduates must be able to translate biblical Greek and Hebrew correctly. This competency includes the ability to parse correctly, to discern the correct meaning of a word in a given context, to translate syntax correctly, even to understand idioms correctly. Students must also be able to interpret God's Word accurately and faithfully. They must be able to recognize when a passage is literal or figurative. They must be able to interpret poetry and prose, parables and prophecy, types and antitypes, and apocalyptic literature. They must be able to demonstrate that the entire Bible points to Jesus Christ and His salvation. As men struggle to develop these competencies, the Lutheran Confessions are their teacher. The Lutheran Confessions demonstrate how to interpret the Bible correctly. They serve as a guide, warning students when their efforts at interpretation have led them to a wrong conclusion. Through much careful work, students learn to interpret God's Word accurately. They develop the key skills that are necessary for meditation on God's Word.

1 Academic Catalog 2024–2025, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, 22.

3. Embraces baptism, preaching, and the Lord's Supper as constitutive to his own Christian identity and to the life of the Church;

> *Comment:* This outcome highlights the fundamental role of Baptism, preaching, and the Lord's Supper in the Christian faith and in the identity of the pastor and of the Church. Seminaries must verify that students recognize both their own Baptism and the habit of hearing sound preaching and receiving the Lord's Supper as essential to their identity. They also recognize that each Christian and the Church at large ground their identities in these gifts from the Lord.

4. Preaches and teaches biblical truth, rightly dividing the Law and the Gospel, in order to call all to repentance and faith in Christ; an appreciation for the evangelical nature of the Divine Service;

> *Comment:* This outcome highlights essential skills and habits for the Pastoral Ministry. Seminaries must verify that their graduates preach and teach biblical truth. There is an aspect of knowledge in this competency, as we must verify that our graduates have a working knowledge of biblical truth. We must also verify that they are able to teach. This outcome also stresses the effect of preaching and teaching in the lives of Christians. Our graduate must be able to rightly divide Law and Gospel and to apply Law and Gospel to their hearers. That is, they must preach and teach the Law to convict people of sin and of their need for a Saviour and use the Gospel to lead them to faith in Christ as the One who died to forgive their sins. They do this trusting that the Holy Spirit will kindle and strengthen faith in the hearts of their hearers. Finally, our students must recognize that the Lord uses the Divine Service to deliver His grace through His Word, preaching, confession and absolution, and the Lord's Supper. The Divine Service delivers the Gospel as it teaches biblical truth.

5. Worships, prays, and gives thanks as one formed by the liturgical practices passed down in the church through the ages, with an appreciation for the evangelical nature of the Divine Service;

> *Comment:* This outcome specifically mentions prayer and does so in the context of one formed by the liturgy. Our graduates must recognize the role of the liturgical practices passed down through the ages in shaping us through the Gospel-giving Divine Service. Our graduates worship and lead worship, recognizing that our Lord uses the liturgy to deliver the Means of Grace to Christians and that He uses the Means of Grace to forgive, save, and form us.

6. Engages the history of the church as his own family story such that it shapes his ministry in the present context;

> *Comment:* This outcome deals with identity and skill. Our graduates find their identity in Christ and His Church such that the history of the church is the history of their family. It is their history. They must know their own history well and in such a way that it guides their ministries in the present context. That is, they use examples from church history in their preaching and teaching to form the faithful in the reality that church history is the history of every Christian. They also use lessons

from church history in their ministries. We engage the present with the lessons we have learned from church history in mind.

7. Defends the faith against immoral cultural trends, subversive social attitudes, deceptive philosophies, and hostile public actions;

Comment: This outcome requires that a man be shaped by the assaults of Satan in such a way that the Holy Spirit has cultivated in him strength, resolve, and character to recognize false teaching and practice, and to stand against it even when that means that he will be attacked and will suffer. Our students must know God's Word well enough to recognize anything contrary to that Word. They must be able to use God's Word to defend the faith against all attacks. They must have the courage and faith to defend the faith in the face of hostility.

8. Exemplifies the Christian life of humble perseverance and holy living in the face of the apathy, temptation, and hostility of the world;

Comment: This outcome also deals with men who have been shaped by prayer and meditation on God's Word in the face of the assaults of Satan. The Lord uses this process to teach us to trust His Word. The Lord shapes us by the power of the Holy Spirit to trust in Jesus and to receive His grace, forgiveness, and salvation. This process strengthens our faith, gives us character, and makes us humble, as we continue to receive the grace of Jesus and to serve Him. Through the attacks of Satan, the Lord leads us to grow in trust and holy living. We must verify that the Lord has prepared them to persevere even in the face of the apathy, temptation, and hostility of the world.

9. Cares for the children of God in order to keep them in faith and nourish their growth in the sanctification of the Spirit; and

Comment: This outcome highlights the graduate's attitude toward the children of God. We must verify that our graduates care for the children of God so that they encourage faith and growth in the faithful. In many ways, Outcome 9 applies Outcome 8 to the faithful and highlights the role of the pastor in the spiritual wellbeing of the flock. Seminaries must verify that their graduates will preach, teach, lead Divine Service, baptize, practice confession and absolution, and serve the Lord's Supper faithfully for the spiritual wellbeing of the flock. In this way, the Lord uses the pastor to keep His Church in the faith and to nourish their growth in the sanctification of the Spirit. The Lord uses these gifts to strengthen His people in the face of the assaults of Satan and to give them the resolve to live in the grace of Jesus and to serve Him faithfully in spite of attacks and temptation.

10. Evangelizes those outside the Church in order to gather them into the saving fellowship of Christ's body

Comment: What our graduates do for the faithful, they also offer to those outside of the Church. Our seminaries must prepare and form graduates to evangelize those outside of the Church. While evangelism can take many shapes, it always applies

Law and Gospel to the lives of people, trusting that through His Word, the Holy Spirit will kindle faith in the hearts of hearers.

While the outcomes I have described deal with broad concepts related to theological education for pastors, the areas of pastoral competency below remind elucidate how our graduates demonstrate that they are prepared to faithfully carry out the duties of the pastoral office. Our seminaries use coursework, Field Education, and Vicarage to form our students and to verify that they demonstrate the competencies necessary for ordination.

These are the six broad areas of pastoral competency that CTSFW assesses for growth as a student progresses through the MDiv coursework, two years of Field Education, and the Vicarage year[2]

1. Worship - The student gains proficiency in all aspects of preparing and leading the Church's worship.

Comment: Our students learn about and practice preparing and leading the Church's worship. Their study of worship gives them an understanding of the theology of worship, which helps them to prepare worship well and to conduct the service well. They practice preparing services for the church year and a variety of special situations, which includes leading worship under supervision. Through this process they learn how to prepare and lead worship, and our seminaries are able to verify that they are able to do these things well.

2. Teaching - The student is able to oversee the total parish education experience and to teach with confidence at most levels, particularly adult Bible classes and catechesis.

Comment: Our graduates know the content of the Bible and the goal of every aspect of parish education and are, therefore, able to oversee all parish education. If someone else is leading a certain aspect of parish education, the pastor is able to verify that the teaching follows biblical truths. In many cases, the pastor himself teaches, and he does so with skill and an awareness of how people of different ages and contexts learn. All our graduates must be strong in teaching adult Bible classes and in catechesis. Our students learn how to teach and practice teaching in a variety of contexts under supervision, allowing our seminaries to verify their competency in teaching.

3. Preaching - The student preaches sermons that are textual and Christ-centered, rightly dividing Law and Gospel.

Comment: Our seminaries must verify that graduates preach well. Classroom work and preaching under supervision gives our students the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the skills necessary to preach well. Specifically, they preach sermons that focus on Christ and deliver His grace to their hearers. They divide Law and Gospel rightly so that they proclaim God's Word correctly. They confront hearers with the truth of their sin, their need for a Saviour, and Christ's call to holy living.

2 Paul Grime, "Pastoral Competencies," For the Life of the World 23, no. 3 (Fall 2019): 4–6.

They also show that Jesus Christ is our only hope of salvation and saves us by grace through faith in Him. Their sermons deliver the grace of Jesus to their hearers.

4. Spiritual Care - The student ministers to those in distress and need with evangelical clarity, compassion, and empathy.

Comment: Our graduates provide spiritual care to the people they encounter. Pastors often provide spiritual care when people visit them in their offices, when they visit people in their homes, or when they visit people who are in hospital or at care facilities, but spiritual care may occur under a wide variety of circumstances. Our graduates listen patiently and allow people to speak about their concerns and needs. As they interact with others, they show that they care and that our Lord cares. They speak biblical truth to the people, especially the truth of God's love and grace in Christ.

5. Outreach and Evangelism - The student speaks the Gospel individually to all those needing to hear it.

Comment: Our seminaries must form students who are able to speak the Gospel and do speak the Gospel to individuals. This competency has to do with character and resolve. Students must have the will to speak the Gospel. At the same time, it is important for them to be able to articulate the Gospel accurately and clearly.

6. Administration and Leadership - The student gains awareness of administrative and leadership responsibilities.

Comment: This competency speaks in terms of awareness rather than highlighting a particular skill or a particular accomplishment. Our seminaries must give some attention to administration and leadership.

I will now present the outcomes of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL). They are organized differently than the CTSFW outcomes, but there is a lot of overlap. At the same time, there are also some important differences. I am also including performance indicators designed to expand upon the outcomes and, in some cases, as a way of measuring that the outcome has been met.

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL) Student Learning Outcomes and Performance indicators for the Master of Divinity program[3]

Student Learning Outcomes — the M.Div. curriculum is designed to achieve the following learning outcomes:

Theological Foundations

Outcome 1. Confessional

3 For a condensed list of these outcomes see the Academic Catalog, 2024–2025, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 22–23.

A graduate of the M.Div. program accepts the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions as authoritative for faith and life.

Comment: This outcome stresses the fact that the Bible and the Confessions are authoritative for faith and life. They tell us what God wants us to believe and how He wants us to live.

Performance Indicator 1.1. Ordination Vow - The student will demonstrate acceptance by specifically stating his willingness to accept the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice, the Ecumenical Creeds as faithful testimonies to the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and the Lutheran Confessions as a true exposition of Holy Scripture and a correct exhibition of the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Comment: When our students take their ordination vows, they commit themselves to God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions.

Performance Indicator 1.2. Certification Interview - The student will demonstrate acceptance by exhibiting sound and faithful interpretation of the Lutheran Confessions and by appropriating them in a way that is responsive to his responsibilities as a member of the Lutheran Church and the wider church catholic in matters of the church's life, witness, and reflection.

Comment: The student demonstrates through his classes that he interprets the Lutheran Confessions accurately and uses them as he ought. In addition, the certification interview serves as an opportunity for the seminary to verify carefully and specifically that the student understands and uses the Lutheran Confessions correctly.

Outcome 2: Theological

A graduate of the M.Div. program appropriates the theological disciplines as frameworks for theological reflection and pastoral practice.

Comment: This outcome deals with the theological disciplines and highlights their role in theological reflection and pastoral practice. Our graduates use the disciplines to engage theological questions and to determine what the pastor ought to do in specific situations.

Performance Indicator 2.1. Use of Exegetical Theology - The student will demonstrate appropriation by using exegetical theology as a framework for approaching the Scriptures in a way that attends to its particular context, the broader biblical and historical confession of Jesus, and its implication for contemporary Christianity.

Comment: Our students use exegetical theology to engage the Scriptures, recognizing that the Lutheran Confessions provide correct biblical interpretation for the foundation of the Christian faith. When studying the Scriptures, our students consider the historical context of each passage of Scripture within the broader context of what the Scriptures teach about Jesus and what Christians have confessed about Jesus throughout history. They engage contemporary Christianity with

these considerations in mind and draw conclusions that agree with the teaching of Scriptures as a whole and the confession of Christians throughout the ages.

Performance Indicator 2.2. Use of Historical Theology - The student will demonstrate appropriation by using historical theology as a framework for critical reflection on Christian theology and practice within the present local context, social, institutional, and intellectual history of the Lutheran church, and the history of the broader Christian church.

Comment: Our students use the discipline of historical theology to engage theology and practice. They evaluate history in a way that reflects the truth of God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions. They consider the broad history of the Christian church as well as the more particular history of the Lutheran church. They consider the events and thoughts of history along with social influences and the impact of the church as institution in order to understand how the Lutheran church has developed throughout history and how the Lutheran church manifests itself in the present local context.

Performance Indicator 2.3. Use of Systematic Theology - The student will demonstrate appropriation by using systematic theology as a framework for addressing contemporary problems and challenges centered in and advancing the confession that Jesus is Lord.

Comment: Our students use systematic theology to engage the doctrine of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions and to apply this doctrine to our present world. As the Lord uses His Church to advance the confession that Jesus is Lord, His Church encounters problems and challenges. Our students uses systematic theology to express Christian doctrine and to respond to false teaching and practice in a clear and compelling way to people of a variety of backgrounds.

Performance Indicator 2.4. Use of Practical Theology - The student will demonstrate appropriation by using practical theology as a framework for attending to a specific situation of pastoral ministry.

Comment: Our students use practical theology, guided by the truth of God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions, to engage specific situations of pastoral ministry. A specific situation may focus on preaching, teaching, counseling, missions, or some other practical application of theology.

Personal and Spiritual Formation

Outcome 3. Spiritual

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates a life of spiritual health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Performance Indicator 3.1. Spiritual Health - The student will demonstrate growing commitment to spiritual health by nurturing his awareness of and relationship to God through worship and spiritual discipline.

Comment: This outcome focuses on the spiritual wellbeing of our students. The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the key to spiritual health, as our students receive the grace of Jesus Christ as a free gift and are forgiven and saved by Him. Our students have a relationship with God because Jesus has saved them and claimed them in Baptism. They belong to Jesus and serve Him, and He calls them to holy living and service in His Name. Our students take part in worship and such spiritual discipline as Bible study, prayer, and service to others as they continue to receive the Lord's gifts, to grow in their understanding of His teaching, and to develop in their lives as Christians in the hands of Jesus.

Outcome 4. Vocational

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates a life of vocational health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Performance Indicator 4.1. Vocational Health - The student will demonstrate growing commitment to vocational health by living faithfully within the various roles in which he has been placed.

Comment: The grace of Jesus Christ works in and through our students as they recognize and live faithfully within the various roles the Lord has given them, including such roles as student, classmate, fellow citizen, child, husband, and father. We also prepare our students to live faithfully within the role of pastor.

Outcome 5. Relational

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates a life of relational health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Performance Indicator 5.1. Relational Health- The student will demonstrate growing commitment to relational health by building and maintaining healthy relationships.

Comment: The grace of Jesus Christ works in and through our students as they build and maintain healthy relationships. Our students engage others to actively build relationships with them. They demonstrate that they care about others and grow in their ability to engage others socially in a way that makes others comfortable around them. Our students relate to others in a healthy way that shows Christian love and respect, cultivates faith and inspires others to receive the grace of Jesus, and encourages others to live holy living.

Outcome 6. Cultural

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates a life of cultural health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Performance Indicator 6.1. Cultural Health - The student will demonstrate a growing commitment to cultural health by recognizing and respecting the creaturely and cultural differences that exist among people.

Comment: The grace of Jesus Christ works in and through our students as they learn to respect and appreciate cultural differences that exist among people. Out students are able to distinguish between cultural differences that are acceptable according to the truth of God's Word and differences in doctrine and practice that do not follow God's teaching. They cling to the truth of God's Word while appreciating the cultural variety that the Lord has given to His church.

Outcome 7. Physical

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates a life of physical health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Performance Indicator 7.1. Physical Health - The student will demonstrate a growing commitment to physical health by caring for his physical welfare as a gift from God.

Comment: The grace of Jesus Christ works in and through our students as they practice good physical health. They eat appropriate amounts of healthy food and engage in reasonable exercise. They have a healthy relationship with alcohol and manage any medical conditions they may have.

Outcome 8. Emotional

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates a life of emotional health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Performance Indicator 8.1. Emotional Health - The student will demonstrate a growing commitment to emotional health by understanding, communicating, and managing his emotions.

Comment: The grace of Jesus Christ works in and through our students as they grow in their emotional health. They recognize and understand their own emotions and communicate their emotions to others in an appropriate way. They manage emotion, especially emotions such as anxiety and anger.

Outcome 9. Intellectual

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates a life of intellectual health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Performance Indicator 9.1. Intellectual Health - The student will demonstrate a growing commitment to intellectual health by pursuing a vigorous life of the mind.

Comment: The grace of Jesus Christ works in and through our students as they engage their minds in intellectual pursuits. They grow intellectually in areas directly related to the Pastoral Ministry, while also developing other areas of intellectual interest and growth.

Outcome 10. Financial

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates a life of financial health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Performance Indicator 10.1. Financial Health - The student will demonstrate a growing commitment to financial health by managing the earning, saving, spending, and sharing of his money and possessions.

> *Comment:* The grace of Jesus Christ works in and through our students as they manage the resources that the Lord has entrusted to them. They have healthy habits of the use of money, which allow them to be generous and to give offerings, while also maintaining the resources necessary to care for themselves and their families.

Cultural Interpretation and Engagement

Outcome 11. Contextual

A graduate of the M.Div. program analyzes and engages cultural and global realities.

Performance Indicator 11.1. Cultural Insights - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by applying cultural insights within a congregation and its community.

Performance Indicator 11.2. Cultural Dynamics - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by accounting for specific cultural and global dynamics in leading congregational ministry in the multi-faith and pluralistic context of contemporary society.

> *Comment:* Our graduates distinguish between biblical truth and cultural characteristics. They hold to biblical truths, while respecting cultural differences. They are aware of and engage cultural characteristics. They use culturally appropriate communication. They are aware of the worldviews of others and help their flock to be aware of the present worldviews. They also prepare the faithful to engage and they themselves engage our multi-faith and pluralistic world with the truth of God's Word.

Pastoral Practice and Leadership

Outcome 12. Pastoral Care

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates the ability to provide Christ-centered care and counsel to people of various ages and social conditions according to their needs.

Performance Indicator 12.1. Grief Counseling - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Advanced Beginner level by observing and, where appropriate, participating in grief counseling and funeral planning.

Performance Indicator 12.2. Premarital Counseling - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Advanced Beginner level by observing and, where appropriate, participating in premarital counseling and wedding planning.

Performance Indicator 12.3. Visitation - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by making regular hospital calls, shut-in visits, and home visits.

> *Comment:* Our graduates engage in counseling that focuses on Jesus Christ and are able to counsel those of different ages and backgrounds. They provide counseling in a variety of situations.

Outcome 13. Preaching

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates the ability to proclaim the Word for the benefit of the hearers.

Performance Indicator 13.1. Wedding & Funeral Sermons - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by composing wedding and funeral sermons.

Performance Indicator 13.2. Occasional & Topical Sermons - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by composing occasional and topical sermons.

Performance Indicator 13.3. Preaching OT & NT Sermons - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by preaching on Old Testament and New Testament texts.

Performance Indicator 13.4. Self-Evaluation of Preaching - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by evaluating his preaching.

Performance Indicator 13.5. Essay on Preaching - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by articulating his personal theology of preaching.

> *Comment:* Our graduates preach God's Word faithfully. They evaluate their preaching in order to become better preachers. Each student articulates his theology of preaching, expressing in his own words biblical teaching concerning the art of preaching.

Outcome 14. Teaching

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates the ability to oversee discipleship in a congregation as a teacher, resource, and guide.

Performance Indicator 14.1. Teaching Confirmation - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by teaching confirmation for ten weeks.

Performance Indicator 14.2. Teaching Adult Bible Study - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by teaching adult Bible study for ten weeks.

Comment: Our graduates teach the Word of God faithfully, and they focus on teaching confirmation and adult Bible study well. They also oversee discipleship so that the faithful grow in their spiritual disciplines, especially Bible study and prayer, and so that they grow in holy living.

Outcome 15. Worship

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates the ability to lead and facilitate the worship life of a congregation.

Performance Indicator 15.1. Worship - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by regularly assisting in leading and facilitating congregational worship on vicarage.

Comment: Our graduates lead worship faithfully. They practice leading worship during vicarage.

Outcome 16. Fellowship

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates the ability to guide and support members of a congregation in their communal life in Christ.

Performance Indicator 16.1. Issues in Fellowship - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by reflecting critically on current fellowship issues between church bodies.

Performance Indicator 16.2. Pastoral Fellowship - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by participating in circuit, district, synodical, and inter-congregational events.

Performance Indicator 16.3. Congregational Fellowship - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by participating in congregational fellowship events.

Comment: Our graduates understand and practice biblical fellowship. They understand biblical teaching on why one church body should or should not practice altar and pulpit fellowship with another church body. Our graduates actively take part in fellowship with other pastors in the LCMS and our church partners. They also take part in fellowship within the congregation and lead the congregation to maintain healthy and biblical communal life in Christ.

Outcome 17. Witness

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates the ability to prepare and lead members of a congregation to bring the Gospel to those outside the Church.

Performance Indicator 17.1. Preparing to Witness - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by preparing members of a congregation to share the faith with those outside the Church.

Performance Indicator 17.2. Congregational Outreach - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by participating in or leading the congregation's evangelistic outreach activity.

> *Comment:* Our graduates work with the faithful to give them resources for sharing the Gospel outside of the Church. They themselves share the Gospel outside of the Church, and they lead the flock to do the same. They lead at least one activity under supervision to verify that they have achieved this outcome.

Outcome 18. Service

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates the ability to guide and support members of a congregation to care for and serve those in need.

Performance Indicator 18.1. Community Service Project - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by collaborating in leading a community service event in a congregation.

> *Comment:* Our graduates guide the faithful to care for and serve those in need. They lead at least one community service event under supervision to verify that they have achieved this outcome.

Outcome 19. Administration

A graduate of the M.Div. program demonstrates the ability to lead a congregation in administrative practices that carry out the goals of a Christian congregation.

Performance Indicator 19.1. Organizational Skills - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by exhibiting organizational skills in his various responsibilities.

Performance Indicator 19.2. Congregational Simulation - The student will demonstrate achievement of the Competent level by producing a congregational simulation project.

> *Comment:* Our graduates provide sound administrative leadership to congregations. They complete a congregational simulation project that includes a budget plan, administrative structure proposal, long range strategic plan, and strategy for financial support of the ministry. As they serve under supervision in resident field education and vicarage, their supervisors verify that they have adequate organizational skills.

I will now list and describe the learning outcomes for the deaconess program at CTSFW and at CSL. There is substantial overlap with M.Div. outcomes, and many of the outcomes require little explanation, so I will limit my comments. Deaconesses speak the Gospel and engage in acts of mercy under the supervision of a pastor. While they have some of the same competencies as a pastor, these competencies are applied in the specific context of their role as deaconess.

Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne (CTSFW) Student Learning Outcomes for the Deaconess program[4]

1. Embody the mercy of Christ, as it is revealed in the Scriptures, in their service to the church.

Comment: Our graduates study the mercy of Christ revealed in God's Word. They embody this mercy as the serve the church.

2. Exemplify faithful participation in the liturgical life of the church as a devoted hearer of the Word and partaker of the Lord's Supper.

3. Respect and support the spiritual authority given to pastors for the public proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments.

4. Understand the deaconess vocation according to its roots in the Scriptures, the theological tradition of the church, and the testimony of the Lutheran Confessions.

5. Articulate the Gospel of Christ as it relates to those especially in need of mercy in accordance with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.

Comment: As our graduates engage in acts of service and mercy, they articulate the Gospel. When they serve others, they speak Christ's compassion and gift of forgiveness and salvation.

6. Foster strong bonds of fellowship between members of the Body of Christ.

7. Lead the church in its service to the larger community and in so doing connect the community to the church.

Comment: Under the supervision of the pastor, our graduates lead our churches to engage their communities through service and, in this way, to create and strengthen connections between the community and the church.

8. Recognize and respond to human suffering in a manner that reflects Christ's compassion and care

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL) Student Learning Outcomes for the Deaconess program[5]

Outcome 1: Confessional - A graduate of the Residential Deaconess Studies Program accepts the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions as authoritative for faith and life.

Outcome 2: Personal and Spiritual - A graduate of the Residential Deaconess Studies Program possesses a degree of personal and spiritual maturity that is appropriate for service as a deaconess.

4 Academic Catalog 2024–2025, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, 48.
5 Academic Catalog, 2024–2025, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 63–64.

Outcome 3: Ministry to Women - A graduate of the Residential Deaconess Studies Program demonstrates the ability to identify and address the unique needs and opportunities for ministry to women within the ministry context.

> *Comment:* Our graduates engage effectively in ministry to women, with special consideration of the unique needs of women and the vocations that are unique to women.

Outcome 4: Diaconal Care - A graduate of the Residential Deaconess Studies Program demonstrates the ability to articulate and provide holistic Christ-centered care and counsel to people of various ages and social conditions according to their needs.

Outcome 5: Teaching - A graduate of the Residential Deaconess Studies Program demonstrates the ability to teach the faith in a variety of settings.

Outcome 6: Devotions - A graduate of the Residential Deaconess Studies Program demonstrates the ability to speak the Word in devotional settings for the benefit of the hearers.

Outcome 7: Leadership - A graduate of the Residential Deaconess Studies Program demonstrates the ability to lead the laity in social ministry and other ministry activities, and work in a team ministry setting.

Outcome 8: Outreach and Evangelism - A graduate of the Residential Deaconess Studies Program demonstrates the ability to prepare and lead members of a congregation to bring the Gospel to those outside the church.

> *Comment:* Under the supervision of the pastor, our graduates help the faithful to take the Gospel to those outside of the church.

Outcome 9: Works of Mercy - A graduate of the Residential Deaconess Studies Program demonstrates the ability to care for and serve those in need.

I described the competencies, outcomes, and performance indicators for theological education leading to ordination and deaconess certification, using Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne (CTSFW) and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL) as examples. These descriptions may be helpful as you consider the theological education you offer in your seminaries. As we evaluate the theological education we offer in our seminaries, we strive to make adjustments that will help our students achieve these competencies. We also strive to develop ways of verifying that our students have achieved these competencies. This is challenging work, and we ask the Lord to give us wisdom, to guide us, and to use our seminaries to provide faithful pastors and deaconesses to serve Him in our world.

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