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# The Role of the Lutheran Parish Pastor in the Classrooms of his Congregation's Christian Day School

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THE ROLE OF THE LUTHERAN PARISH PASTOR  
IN THE CLASSROOMS OF HIS  
CONGREGATION'S CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL

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A Research Paper Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for elective  
P-200

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by

Gregory J. Wismar

March 1971

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## CHAPTER I

### AN INTRODUCTION

To discuss the role of the pastor in the classrooms of the Christian Day School is to speak in terms of possibilities; there is nothing either in the Bible or in the Lutheran Confessions which specifically addresses this situation. Also there is nothing stated in the typical call of the pastor which states that, if there is a parochial as part of his charge, he must be present in the classrooms for this purpose or on that occasion. Even Seminary training gives the pastor no clear indication of what role he should play regarding the Christian Day School.

What factors, then, should be considered as being the determinative dynamics of this role? This study will seek the basis for an approach in the historical precedents, the facts of contemporary situations and the expressions of future possibilities that have been suggested by some pastors, and church educators. Emanating from this discussion is a challenge to mutual involvement and understanding on the part of all educators in the church -- be they pastors, teachers or administrators. Much of the research for this paper comes from people who have shared ideas and excitement and dreams about Christian education; from their responsiveness has come the greatest of resources.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Christian Day School as it has come to be in the United States is a singular phenomenon; it has no historical basis in its establishment nor does it have a contemporary parallel in the world today. Even in the Lutheran tradition, however, there were differing reasons for the establishing of church-aligned schools.

The first Lutheran schools in America were incorporated in the Swedish settlements along the Delaware river; the pastor, as the most educated man of the settlement, was expected to share his knowledge with the others--especially the children. Lack of support and supplies from the mother country brought a rapid end to the settlement experiment and the "schools" were closed as the pastors returned to Sweden and the people were assimilated into the dominant English culture around them.

The Germans of Pennsylvania were the first to have well-established schools in conjunction with the Lutheran churches in America... although not necessarily by choice. Most German settlers sought education for their children from the colony only to find that the conceptions and ideals of William Penn had not been realized; there was no system of public education. The Lutheran people then turned to their churches, remembering the close association

of churches and schools back in Germany--even though the schools there had been supported by state funds; the churches and ministers responded to the need of the people and took on the responsibility of establishing schools.<sup>1</sup> The churches volunteered to have schools for the education of their youngsters--but it was left up to the pastors to attend to the actualities of establishing the schools and, for the most part, teaching in them. "In those early years many of the assistants, as well as the regular pastors . . . taught school a part of the time."<sup>2</sup> As the secular authorities began to establish schools in the Pennsylvania the church schools the Lutherans had instituted to take their place began to go into decline. They had served their intended purpose; soon all but a few had permanently closed and the pastors readjusted their work schedules accordingly.

The parish schools of the Saxon Lutherans settling in Missouri during the 1830's were not brought into being for the same reasons that those in Pennsylvania had been; the accent here was on a separate education apart from what was offered elsewhere. The Saxons wanted to keep their children away from strong culturally non-German and religiously non-orthodox influences; this they did through the Church, with the pastor as the dominating figure. "The formal elementary education during the period from 1838 to 1847 can be briefly characterized as consisting in full-time parochial schools, confirmation instruction and Catechism reviews in Church services. In nearly all cases the pastor was also

the schoolteacher."<sup>3</sup> It was understood that each pastor could expect to find himself in a school classroom, for "nearly every pastor was called as a Pastor und Lehrer (pastor and teacher), which meant that he was to teach one or more parochial schools of his parish."<sup>4</sup>

The teaching role of the pastor had already manifested itself in the earlier Lutheran experience in Pennsylvania.

Since the pastors generally called themselves Lehrer rather than Pastor, the term Lehrer was seldom applied to schoolteachers; the latter were usually therefore designated as Schulmeister, Schuldiener or Schulhalter.<sup>5</sup>

The pastors had clearly established their own role as educators of the members of their congregations.

In the beginning days of the Missouri Synod the opening of a school was expected to coincide with, if not precede, the opening of a new congregation. "The Synod impressed strongly upon all pastors that they open schools in their congregations and if necessary teach the schools."<sup>6</sup> The tradition of pastoral service to the parish school became firmly established in the Synod, as is exemplified by this presentation to a pastoral conference of the Western District in 1892:

Wohl sind unsere Pastoren herzlich gerne bereit, in ihren Gemeinden, wenn diese eigne Lehrer anzustellen noch nicht im Stande sind, „selbst den Schulunterricht zu übernehmen, ihn, wenn nöthig, Jahr nach Jahr zu ertheilen, so lange Gott Kräfte verleiht, ja, bis er den müden Arbeiter zur himmlischen Ruhe ruft."<sup>7</sup>

Even well into the twentieth century there was a large number of pastors who occupied a teaching position in conjunction with the rest of his pastoral duties. A



report from the year 1915 reveals that "in almost one-half of the Lutheran parochial schools the pastor either teaches the entire school himself or assists in teaching in some classes."<sup>8</sup>

One of the dynamics of the role of the pastor as regards the parochial schools in the course of Synod's history was the question of pastoral obligation. For a long while it was taken for granted that the pastor would also be a teacher in the parish school. As the years passed on and the number of synodically-trained teachers came into the schools, a controversy arose in some sections of Synod as to whether or not pastors had to teach in the parish school of the congregation which he served.

The issue came to a head in the Iowa District around 1880. In that year that District adopted a recommendation of one of its convention committees to request certain congregations for official approval to strike the words 'obligated to teach' from the listing of the pastor's duty to the parish school. 'For,' said the committee, 'this is not the obligation of a pastor. Rather it is a work of love which this particular person surely should be willing to furnish where there is need and where he is in a condition to do so.'<sup>9</sup>

The increasingly large numbers of teachers produced by the teachers' colleges of Synod served to replace pastors in the classrooms as full-time teachers; by the middle of the twentieth century only a few pastors remained in that capacity. The historical necessity for the pastor's presence had been obviated, but there were other considerations that sustained his contact with the school classrooms.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR AS EXPLICIT FUNCTION

Although pastoral interest in the parish school was assumed by the founders of Lutheran Day Schools, often it was explicitly cited as being his duty in a church constitution or other such document. Representative of the earliest period is a constitution of the Lutheran congregation at Philadelphia which includes in the pastoral duties:

They should have the superintendence over the regular schools and school-teachers, as over the church library; arrange salutary rules for the schools and examinations; visit the schools diligently, as much as possible, and encourage the youth . . .

The pastor was the central figure in the educational system, for "the call of the pastor included the office (ministry) of teaching, and the call of a teacher made the teacher an assistant to the pastor in charge."<sup>2</sup>

The founding of schools by the Saxons in Missouri brought the question of authority in the school into consideration. What was to be the role of the pastor when he was not the full-time teacher of a class? C.F.W. Walther looked back to the writings of Luther for an answer:

Dass die Schulmeister der Aussicht des Predigtamts zu untergeben sind, bezeugt Luther in der "Ordnung eines gemeinde Kastens", welche er der Gemeinde zu Leissnig gemacht hat, worin es u. A. heisst: 'Auf das Schulamt und Regierung der Jugend sollen unsre Seelsorger, Prediger und die zehen Vorsteher ein unnachlässig, treulich Aufsehen haben . . .

A restatement of this general idea was made by J.C.W.

Lindemann in the December 1865 issue of the Evangelisch-Lutherische Schulblatt: "Dem Pastor gebührt eine Oberaussicht über die ganze Schule, über Alles, was in der Schule gelehrt und getrieben wird, nicht bloss über einzelne Theile des Unterrichts."<sup>4</sup> The pastor had a responsibility; what was taught in the entire program of his school was to remain in his sphere of concern.

Such concern was not always expressed. As the parish school became more firmly established and seemingly self-perpetuating, the pastors' involvement decreased. An awareness of this problem began towards the end of the nineteenth century:

The Synod deemed it necessary at its 1899 convention to call attention to pastoral responsibility in this matter by declaring: "If a congregation has a teacher, then the pastor, who on the Day of Judgment will be held responsible for all that is taught in his parish, shall see to it that a complete course of instruction in the pure and unadulterated Word of God is also properly applied as to the discipline of the school."<sup>5</sup>

The pressures of the world during the decades following the founding of the Missouri Synod and the establishing of parish schools included such forces as the impact of the theories expounded by Charles Darwin, the growth of secularism in American life, and expansion of content in most educational areas. Again, in an appeal written in the year 1930, the pastors were reminded of their full responsibilities as directors of the schools' educational progress and guardians of their sanctity. W.C. Kohn writes:

Einst am Jüngsten Tage wird kein Pastor sich entschuldigen können, wenn durch Veruntertreuung des

Lehrers viele Seelen verlorengegangen sind, dass er ja nichts das Amt gehabt habe, für diese zu sorgen, sondern der Lehrer. Nein, der Herr wird das Blut der Verlorenen zunächst von ihm fordern, da ihm die ganze Herde anbefohlen war. Der Pastor ist nun aber ebensowohl wie der Lehrer antwortlich dafür, wenn in einem andern Fach als Religion falsche Lehre oder eine unbiblischen Darstellung gelehrt wird.<sup>6</sup>

Well into the twentieth century the moral imperative of pastoral obligation to be present in and supervise the schools was reechoed. A statement from 1935 speaks to this directly: "As shepherd and overseer of his flock the pastor is, by virtue of the office given him, responsible for. . . the religious instruction given in the school and also the teaching of the secular branches, in so far as these are a means of training."<sup>7</sup>

The period during World War II was a time of great change in the schools of the Synod. The great enrollment expansion was not paralleled by a greater number of male teacher candidates. To make the position more attractive the role was given a new emphasis as being a singular ministry; the textbooks which discussed the role of the male teacher accented his restated role as a member of the clergy of the church.<sup>8</sup> As the role of the male teacher and the principal was being more firmly established, the role of the pastor was being lessened to the degree that he was presented as a figurehead whose role in the school was "clearly advisory" to the writer of a teachers' training textbook.<sup>9</sup> Although statements and books reportrayed the role of the pastor, no mention had been made of a change in responsibility.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR IN PRESENT PERSPECTIVE

#### The question of limitation

The pastor of the congregation with a parochial school today is faced with a dilemma: should he make his presence in the school more than a perfunctory gesture or remain within the bounds that have been gradually established for his role? A survey of the parish schools of our Synod would seem to indicate that the latter option is being taken by those pastors who even have any role at all in conjunction with the parish school. One reason for this is revealed in a symptomatic statement of A.C. Stellhorn, a Synodical educator; he says: "Practically no pastor exercises any kind of formal supervision of the teacher and his activities. If he does, it is probably not different from the informal supervision exercised by all pastors, or he gets into trouble."<sup>1</sup> Such a statement is the exact opposite of what was enunciated at the beginning of the synodical school system where it was stated in the Lutherisches Schulblatt that "the pastor, by virtue of the call extended to him by the congregation, is the principal and therefore most responsible supervisor of the Christian day school."<sup>2</sup> The tension that emanates from two such divergent ideas might be eliminated if there were a unified approach to the role of the pastor in the school clearly delineated. There is none.

A contributive factor to this situation may be perceived

in the contrasting outlooks engendered in the educative process of the seminary and the teachers' college in Synod. Dr. John Damm, a teacher of education courses at Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis writes:

In the local parish the pastor had the final responsibility for whatever education takes place-- therefore he must assume a supervisory role over all others--principal, teachers, Director of Christian Education, volunteers, etc.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Victor C. Krause, professor of Education at Concordia Teachers' College, River Forest, Illinois presents an altered view of the pastor's role, saying that "while the pastor may often visit the classrooms, he is not supervisor of the school's instruction."<sup>4</sup> In his presentation on Lutheran Elementary Schools Krause equalizes the role of the pastor and principal at the expense of the teaching aspect of the pastor's full task. He says of the two positions: "In respect to service, the only difference is one of function, the principal being dedicated to the teaching ministry and the pastor to the preaching ministry."<sup>5</sup> A.C. Mueller, both a pastor as well as an educational administrator finds a tentative middle way by saying that "both the pastor and the teacher have this duty of oversight or supervision."<sup>6</sup> Instead of a positive statement of role the pastor has only his own "ministry intuition" and the suggestions of others to consider. Implicit in the statements of some educators is a limitation of the pastoral role--which in the extreme might be taken as an invitation to non-involvement. Dr. Martin Koehneke states that "the pastor will not . . .

feel that his fingers must be in the whole educational pie."<sup>7</sup> Dr. A.H. Jahsmann says that the idea of the pastor as the head "ought to go out the window"<sup>8</sup>; Concordia Seminary professor Robert Conrad restates this by saying that "the pastor should not interfere in policy execution in regard to the Christian Day School . . ."<sup>9</sup>

A survey of pastors, teachers and educational administrators of the Synod reveals no accord on the role of the pastors. A typical pastor's response comes from the Rev. Howard Leber of Trenton, New Jersey, who states that "the pastor is missing the boat when he turns over the school to teachers, even of our own ilk. The pastor in all things must be the pastor to all of his flock."<sup>10</sup> The dimensions of his role, then, would be dictated by considerations of time and interest rather than pronouncements.

To fulfill a role in the school completely requires personal contact between the pastor and the individual student; the best locale for this inter-relating is in the pupil's classroom. Many aspects of the pastor's functioning in the school lend themselves well to a presence in the classrooms; research reveals a number of potentialities for the pastor's role establishment.

## CHAPTER V

### POTENTIALS OF THE PASTOR'S ROLE IN THE CLASSROOM

#### A. Personalized Administration

According to W.T. Janzow, president of Concordia Teachers' College of Seward, Nebraska, "the chief function of the pastor over against the school in his parish is to set a spiritual and organizational tone."<sup>1</sup> Some responses reflect the idea of the pastor as being engaged primarily in administrative process--determining goals, making policy and evaluating tasks in the light of goals and objectives.<sup>2</sup> An added insight into the dimension of administration is revealed in a statement by Armin Meyermann, a Lutheran Day School principal, who says: "The Pastor will be concerned about the well being of the individuals in the classroom just as he is concerned about the well being of the individuals in the pew."<sup>3</sup> Seeing past the group to the individual and his needs is a pastoral possibility that can be realized by the pastor's being in the classrooms of his school, especially if there are many children in the school who are not from the congregation. Carol Aufdemberge reports that 90 to 95% of the student body of her school (Saint Matthew's--New York) are not members of the church; she underscores the role of the pastor in integrating the school activities into the total work of the congregation--with an emphasis on mission outreach to the students and their parents.<sup>4</sup>



The classroom has a special possibility for the pastor according to Dr. A. Fuerbringer, past president of both a teachers' college and a seminary. He remarks: "This is one of the best opportunities he has to lay the foundation for good pastoral relationships--in fact, already to be a pastor to the children . . ."5 This idea seemingly finds acceptance in theory with Dr. Krause who writes: "It is wholesome for both pupils and teachers to see in their pastor a person who is concerned about them and the school and who considers himself to be a member of the school staff."6 The pastor is to be in the classroom, then -- but what specific functions should he fulfill?

#### B. The Pastor as Disciplinarian

In An Instrument for Evaluating Lutheran Elementary Schools it suggests that the pastor "helps maintain Christian discipline in the school"7--a role also mentioned in another analytical report.8 The interpretation of this role seems to vary widely from the maintenance of a general decorum9 to dealing with individually referred problem cases.10 The clergy role as prime monitor is also found in Roman Catholic parochial schools; "in twenty-two percent of them he (the parish priest) acts as ultimate and chief disciplinarian of the pupils."11 Certain dangers may arise from placing the pastor in a punitive role, in that later relationships between the child and his pastor may be jeopardized by construing him as a fear figure rather than as one who

is a representative of God and a minister of the Church.

### C. The Pastor as Informal Classroom Visitor

The Christian Day School in many ways is a microcosm of the congregation; often a very appreciable percentage of the parish families are represented there. In such a situation the pastor has a great opportunity to get a "pulse reading" of the entire congregation from the younger arm; often an impromptu visit to a classroom gives a pastor great insights into both the activity of the school and the congregation. "Sometimes I just rove around and visit the classrooms--to let the kids know I'm here," comments Pastor Al Buls. "I think it's pretty important to have the children see you around."<sup>12</sup> This concept of visitation stands in contrast to the supervisory marathon suggested by W.C. Kohn in 1930: "Wenn darum ein Pastor seine Schule besucht, so soll das nicht so geschehen, dass er einmal eine Stunde da ist . . . An diesem Tage wohne er dem ganzen Unterricht bei."<sup>13</sup>

A workable set of guidelines for the pastor to follow in informal classroom visitations comes from the Rev. Clarence Roth of Queens Village, New York.

Early in the year go to each classroom  
 Talk with children informally; get their concepts  
 of ministry; help them understand what a minister does  
 Learn to know each child by name  
 Be honest with the kids; don't double talk them  
 Radiate a joy--a warmth to people; show joy in your work  
 Laugh with the children; play with them occasionally  
 Pop in to say hello every once in a while  
 Don't use language foreign to a child  
 Establish a relationship so nothing changes as you walk  
 into the classroom<sup>14</sup>

Although no statistics are available on the matter, it is highly unlikely that the percentage of Lutheran parish pastors who frequently visit the school classrooms is much better than is revealed concerning the Roman Catholic schools, that "in relatively few instances (7%) does the Pastor visit the classrooms frequently and regularly."<sup>15</sup> A revealing statement comes from teacher Paul Sturm of Concord Lutheran School in Saint Louis: "In the seven years I have been at Concord, I can't recall the time when a pastor visited a classroom."<sup>16</sup> Because of this situation he is forced to speak in terms of what could be:

What we would like to see is a more relaxed relationship between pastor and teacher, where the pastor is free and feels free to stop in and sit in on a lesson in the classroom, where he feels free to mingle and chat with students in the hallways or on the playground, where he feels a part of the faculty, instead of an outsider looking in. I guess what I'm trying to say is the pastor should be a part of the team, not just the leader.<sup>17</sup>

The need for the pastor is there--for by being there he says something not only about himself but about his Lord. Coming into the classroom and sharing in the life-style of the children gives him the perfect opportunity "to communicate himself as a genuine person--one who lives with the students as a fellow forgiven child of God--one that lives each day in celebration of the newness that is theirs through Christ Jesus."<sup>18</sup> A full personal relationship "can not be developed through theory but by active involvement in the daily world of the children."<sup>19</sup>

The failure on the part of a pastor to take an interest in children as important individuals may be detrimental to the child's concept of himself within the Kingdom of God. Principal Meyermann states of the pastor:

His role too will be to assure the children that just because of their age or because of their lack of understanding they are not some kind of probationary citizens in God's Kingdom...The above point seems so very important to me. Even though the classroom teacher may tell again and again that the child is God's child, he will not be quite sure if he sees that the Pastor treats the adults as though they are more important.<sup>20</sup>

Being there is the first step in showing interest. Another St. Louis principal, James Lemke, says: "My own feelings are that the pastor should be seen as often as possible in the school"; he suggests eating with the children, being in the hallways and coming to school events as ways this may be accomplished.<sup>21</sup> Being seen around is a first step--but there are more ways by which the pastor can interact with the Day School pupils in the school and its classrooms.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PASTOR'S ROLE AS ACTUAL CLASSROOM TEACHER

#### A. The Background

The status of the role of the teacher as extension of the pastor's ministry is one that is still clouded with controversy. As was mentioned above, teachers are given to understand that there are two types of ministries--teaching and preaching. Pastors, however, generally seem to see teaching as part of his calling and the teachers as an extension of this role. Dr. A.C. Piepkorn reflects this stance as he discusses the selection of instructors:

Obviously, the pastor must be allowed a decisive voice in the choice of instructors. Their ministry of teaching is, after all, a part of his ministry. Their office is derived from, and is auxiliary to, his office.<sup>1</sup>

The textbook, by educator Krause, does not suggest that the above is the case at all but rather states that . . . "the pastor is not responsible for initiating procedures designed to call or to dismiss teachers."<sup>2</sup> The presence of the teacher in the classroom may or may not be due to the expressed desire of the congregation's pastor. If the teacher is an extension of the pastor's ministry, then the pastor is represented in the classroom; if the teacher is not such an extension, then the pastor may not be represented in regards to what is taught.

An historical overview reveals the great extent to

which the pastors went in showing concern for education in their classroom as evidenced by their actions. This total scope of concern was shown first in the Lutheran schools in Pennsylvania:

The charge of the pastor to look after the welfare of the young laid upon him the duty and obligation of instruction, not only in religious matters, but also in secular knowledge essential to Christian living. With few exceptions therefore the ministers spent much of their time in the schoolroom . . .<sup>3</sup>

In Missouri Synod circles interest on the part of the pastors was likewise far-reaching. Concern for the students which manifested itself in direct action was not limited just to the religion instruction; E.A. Krauss tells of the interest of C.F. Walther:

Long after Walther had ceased to be President of Synod, he was particularly concerned that no proposed text-book for the schools . . . should contain anything contrary to the pure, saving doctrine, but also insisted that the physical make-up of text-books should be attractive and superior.<sup>4</sup>

This interest became a tradition that lasted into the first half of the twentieth century. The years of tradition during and after the Second World War saw the teaching role of the pastor so minimized that a 1960 study entitled What's Lutheran in Education? gave no mention of the pastor as teacher at all, except for a quotation from an unpublished work of A.C. Mueller which suggested that the months of instruction before confirmation provided the "one and only opportunity which a pastor will have to meet the children over and over again in order to instruct them in the sacred truths which are so essential for their Christian life and

the life which is to come."<sup>5</sup>

The present situation lacks definition--even on the level of administration in the Board for Parish Education. Dr. Richard Englebrecht, secretary of schools for the Atlantic District says that the role of the pastor is not one as a classroom teacher<sup>6</sup>; Dr. William Kramer, retiring Secretary of Schools comments: "If I were a pastor I would want to teach in the classrooms . . ."<sup>7</sup> An educator of pastors says that "the pastor ought to assume some direct classroom teaching responsibility. (There is) no better way to come to know the lambs and ewes."<sup>8</sup> Those who see the pastor teaching in the classroom tend to limit this to being part of his role as what Harold Otte calls "that of Co-ordinator of the Religion curriculum."<sup>9</sup>

#### B. The pastor as religion teacher in the classroom

In many schools it is traditional that pastors teach confirmation in the upper grades.<sup>10</sup> In others there is an expansion of that role, so that the pastor is asked "to take over the religion classes at various times during the year in all grades, especially if the teacher feels that the Pastor could give a more complete lesson or add to what had been taught."<sup>11</sup> The classroom may well become a laboratory of religious instruction for the pastor. Rev. Howard Leber observes that the pastor "ought to be instrumental in the programming and carrying out of the religious instruction of the school. He should be innovative in

reaching children with the gospel and take time to demonstrate his ideas to the teachers by actual classroom teaching."<sup>12</sup> The role of the pastor as religion teacher is summed up by Frederick Nohl of Synod's Audiovisual Project division, who says that the pastor is . . .

to teach a religion course to a certain grade for a quarter, a semester, maybe even for a year. And not just because it's traditional or because it will give the principal a little time for administration. But because the pastor's got something to offer to, and something to learn from, the kids in that grade.<sup>13</sup>

The relation of the pastor to the religion curriculum of the school should include also interest in Church doctrine such as the teaching of Law and Gospel, states Dr. Al. Senske, the synodical Secretary of Schools; "the pastor has no choice but to get into the classroom." He further suggests the pastor should watch the religion classes to see whether or not the process of religious education is having results.<sup>14</sup> Such interest precludes the pastor's being aware of the scope and trends current in religious education.

It is well for the pastor to be involved in the classroom teaching of religion. For him to dominate it, however, is to weaken the school; teacher Richard Wismar, principal of First Lutheran School of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, observes:

This practice would seem to take away from the regular classroom teacher the opportunity to apply the daily Bible lesson to other areas of classroom life. It would also tend to give students the impression that religious instruction is something only Pastors can do rather than emphasize the call of every Christian to be God's royal priest and teacher.<sup>15</sup>

The scope of the task dictates a sharing of the role among



the pastor, principal and staff of the Day School.

The sharing of teaching responsibilities in an open way brings up the topic of confirmation instruction; An Instrument for Evaluation notes that the pastor "regularly teaches the religion classes of those children about to be confirmed."<sup>16</sup> One of the objectives of this instruction is to provide "a happy experience" and to "create a desire for children to live their faith . . . to witness and to defend their faith"<sup>17</sup>, states Rev. Clarence Roth. Perhaps this can be done better by someone on the staff other than the pastor; the challenge in this situation would be to find who can best do the job of giving Christian instruction in its varied forms. It is the capacity of the individual person to be what he is to be in relation to people, suggests Mr. Martin Wessler of the Board of Parish Education Staff, that should determine what he is to do in response to the needs of the children and the congregation.<sup>18</sup>

### C. The pastor as teacher of other material

The Lutheran school system prides itself in having a religious atmosphere in all of its instruction. "Under Lutheran education, pupils do not become non-religious when they take up non-religious studies on their schedule, but they take the religious spirit of their whole education with them also into their study of secular subjects."<sup>19</sup> By taking part in instruction that is not totally "religious" in nature, the pastor more fully shares himself with the children as being a total person with varied interests

and abilities. Along this line teacher Wismar reports:

"when first and second graders studied air travel, our Pastor was invited to be their special guest to share his experiences as a pilot of his own craft."<sup>20</sup>

The pastor has many reasons for being in the classroom; some of these are perhaps served even better by participation in "secular" areas than by restricting him to the "sacred" realm. Dr. A.H. Jahsmann comments: "You might have the purpose of relating to the kids more fulfilled by teaching about flying or electricity than by teaching the catechism."<sup>21</sup> Integration of the religious into the whole of life can be done by example as well as by instruction.

#### D. The pastor as resource person

Time is always a consideration that a pastor must contend with--and it may limit the time that he can spend in each Day School classroom. Consequently, there is a role for him as a resource person--one who from time to time supplements the regular instruction of the classroom. Rev. John Hinsch of Plainview, New York gives an example: "I have worked with certain grades as they were interested in matters of church symbolism, liturgies, Baptism and the Eucharist."<sup>22</sup>

E.F. Brauer states in a Parish Education Bulletin that "the pastor will help strengthen the school's program by seeing to it that opportunities are provided for children

personally to observe the church at work."<sup>23</sup> An imaginative transformation by the pastor of the church into a type of religious laboratory both in classroom and "on location" enables the developing children to have an awareness of, and interest in the church in their lives. "Have children react freely, frankly, honestly about things in the church", says Pastor Clarence Roth. "Then evaluate--guide--direct--challenge."<sup>24</sup>

The pastor can be a resource person in whatever areas he is knowledgeable. Teacher Kathy Mill suggests: "If he has another interest area I feel the school should make use of this too, especially history, science, art, etc."<sup>25</sup>

One of the areas in which the pastor can be of greatest help in the daily life of the Christian Day School is in the many facets of the worship life of that community. A Long Island teacher candidly states: "The Pastor as a resource person can add a new depth to the sinking religion programs of the schools."<sup>26</sup> His efforts could well begin in the area of worship, for the worship life is often a true barometer of the total life of a Christian community.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR AS SHEPHERD TO THE CLASSROOM

#### A. As worship enabler

The usual involvement of the pastor in the worship life of the school comes from an occasional chapel address; Lynne Kreyling of Calvary Lutheran School of Baltimore says of the pastor that "he takes turns with the lay assistant, principal, and male teacher, in leading chapel."<sup>1</sup> She finds this situation to be a bit better from that of her former school where "the pastor had no dealings with the children in the school, except for having the opening and last chapel services of the year."<sup>2</sup> The typical school chapel service does have its possibilities-- "a school-day church service for children gives the pastor an opportunity to preach exclusively to the young"<sup>3</sup>--but it does not meet the full worship needs of the child. Often the pattern of worship for such a service becomes fossilized and the pastor's verbal presentation becomes repetitiously pedantic--akin to the type rendered by the average Roman Catholic priest to the school pupils, which "almost always includes exhortations to good behavior."<sup>4</sup> The pastor who restricts himself to a general appearance before the entire school in an occasional chapel service says something about the way he believes in communication

between God and the individual. The comments of one schoolteacher graphically point to the problem; she writes concerning the pastor of her school:

He refuses to listen to our suggestions to make worship in school chapel more meaningful. The school never sees him except in chapel. I feel that the staff should cooperate to make our Lord worth celebrating to our kids. . . . The pastor should occasionally or always participate in the worship life and religion curriculum.<sup>5</sup>

Of the many roles the pastor may fill in the Christian Day School of his congregation, perhaps none is as central as that of worship leader. Professor G.W. Hoyer gives a view from this perspective as he states:

The real role of the pastor however in the Christian Day School as I see it would be in functioning in his capacity as the leader in worship and the developer of the sacramental life of young members of the church. . . . the pastor should particularly be the expert in instructing in the art of worship, considered as the direct address of the Christian to God. His task can best be carried out as he actually worships with the children and leads their worship.<sup>6</sup>

Fulfilling this role is especially necessary in schools which have a high percentage of students who come from families which do not belong to the congregation. A teacher in a New York City school writes: "For most of these children their entire 'religious' instruction and worship must come from our school. This makes it all the more important for the pastor to be involved . . ." <sup>7</sup>

Although the pastor is to fulfill "his role as instructor in the art of worship"<sup>8</sup> in the classroom, he must not exclude being a participant in worship that is led by others--both faculty and students. Being present

for worship led by a faculty member "helps indicate to students that the teacher too is a 'minister of the Word' and shares in the Pastor's ministry."<sup>9</sup> Having the pastor present for student-led or student-developed worship demonstrates a total interest in the enabling role he fulfills; he can see the results of his worship program demonstrated and evaluate the results.<sup>10</sup>

#### B. As Counselor

Being a "shepherd" to the child in the classroom -- where he is -- is part of the pastor being, as Dr. Martin Koehneke states, "the pastor of the people being served by any or all of the congregation's educational agencies."<sup>11</sup> The classroom provides an ideal chance for the pastor to relate to the children throughout their stages of development<sup>12</sup> so that when the years of confirmation instruction come there has already been built a bond between the pastor and the child. Teacher Carol Weyrauch of New Britain, Connecticut, says:

The children should gain the idea that the pastor is a friend, some one they can go to if they have a problem or some one just to talk to. Pastors should try to show some interest in the children rather than always concentrating on the adults. If communication between pastor and child is established early it continue through the years, creating a closer tie between the child and his church as he reaches adolescence.<sup>13</sup>

It is almost certain that a special event of some nature will come up during the year in each classroom, such as the birth of a brother or sister to one of the children, a serious illness of some sort, or perhaps a death in the

family of one of the students. At these times of joy or crisis the pastor has a special task of ministering both to the pupil most directly involved and to the class he is in, sharing with them the spiritual dimensions of what has happened. Relating such events to the plan of God may help to strengthen the faith of the children and aid in their development as a community that is concerned about each member.

This aspect of the pastor's interaction with the classrooms would establish him in the role of the father-confessor, a position of total spiritual concern. In suggesting this role Dr. Richard Engebrecht observes: "Too often he is used to scold and admonish, when he should be open to the kids."<sup>14</sup> The cruciality of the child's interpretation of the pastor's role is pointed to by Principal John Lockhart of Saint Paul's Lutheran School of Troy, Illinois; he states regarding the students:

. . . they are impressed by the pastor, positively or negatively. If the impression is positive they grow in spirituality. If negatively impressed, their spirituality may deteriorate, thus, skepticism is the result. The pastor is indeed a key to their spirituality for the remainder of their lives.<sup>15</sup>

The full interaction of pastor and students suggests a mutual process. Frederick Nohl sums this up as he posits that the role of the pastor is           

to make himself available for ministry to all the classroom inhabitants, teacher and pupils both. And perhaps even more important, to allow himself to be ministered to--counseled, if you will--by those same inhabitants.<sup>16</sup>

By means of this mutual process, many human needs are met.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR AS RESPONSIBLE EDUCATOR

The inter-relationship of the role of the pastor with that of a teacher has been long-standing in the Lutheran tradition. Martin Luther is quoted as having said: "I would have no one chosen for a preacher who has not previously been a school teacher."<sup>1</sup> This tradition was carried over into America by the clergy of the Pennsylvania Ministerium. C.L. Maurer cites that "...the proficiency of many of the pastors of that day . . . arose from the fact that they were thoroughly trained as teachers."<sup>2</sup> This was not necessarily the case with the early Saxon immigrants in Missouri, according to W.O. Forster; in Zion on the Mississippi he tells that ". . . the duties of conducting the school usually fell upon the ministers, whose qualifications as teachers often were not on a par even with their limited pastoral abilities."<sup>3</sup> It became the determination of the Missourians to have a clergy that was able both to preach and to teach; to that end they set up a college and began extensive instruction. Even when the schools began to have full-time teachers it was stated: "In der Regel wird es doch so stehen, dass der Pastor dem Lehrer an gründlicher Bildung überlegen ist."<sup>4</sup>

Throughout its history the seminaries of the Missouri



Synod have incorporated instruction in educational principles as part of the curriculum which are to prepare him for his role as educational leader.<sup>5</sup> When this training comes to the reality of the classroom situation, there is some question as to its validity in the minds of the school staff; this attitude may in part come from an outlook fostered by a teacher's textbook which says that the pastor in the school is "conscious of his own deficiency in professional training as an educator . . ."<sup>6</sup> Even an attempt by the pastor to deepen his educational insights may not be well received, suggests teacher Paul Brammeier:

. . . the teacher feels resentment when the pastor sincerely tries to find out about education. ('Pastors can't teach -- what's he doing here in the first place?')<sup>7</sup>

To go into a classroom, a pastor is to have more than concern as a criterion.

More extensive educational experience for the seminarian is suggested by Principal John Lockhart:

I think it would be to the advantage of both the pastors and our schools if the seminaries would offer some courses in methodology and teaching procedures. In many cases, I believe that the pastors are willing and recognize the need for their services, but when they enter the classroom they simply don't know where to begin. This is the case because they lack training.<sup>8</sup>

Concordia Seminary's George Hoyer responds to the situation as he relates:

An analysis of what is being offered at Concordia Seminary simply on the basis of the number of hours of instruction and of practice teaching would indicate that only a beginning is being made. The solution which would seem most practicable because of an already crowded curriculum would be the improvement of the

kinds of teaching which the student experiences and would require better training of the instructors in the other courses of the seminary in their tasks of teaching.<sup>9</sup>

The responsibilities of the pastor as educator to the students in the classrooms are met both by his presence in the room and also through the relationship he holds with the classroom's regular teacher. President W.T. Janzow of Concordia Teachers' College of Seward, Nebraska, states that the pastor "should also play an on-going role in the day to day operation of the school . . . primarily by exerting his influence with the faculty."<sup>10</sup> A strong, working concept of "team ministry" between the pastor and the school staff is far-reaching in the effecting of a rounded religious education experience for the child. Pastor Harry G. Coiner of Accident, Maryland, underscores the value of working together:

The pastor, if he has any conviction and facility about Christian education in a parish school, ought certainly to meet at stated intervals with the school staff. Since the pastor is involved responsibly in the edification of the entire congregation (individuals come in groups) it is patently evident that in the staff meeting he finds a medium of working out his pastoral responsibility.<sup>11</sup>

Being present in the classroom puts such a "team" type of relationship into practice and affords the pastor insights into the work of the teacher which he otherwise would not have. Among the roles for the pastor in the classroom Dr. A. O. Fuerbringer cites that of "a regular visitor and participant in the educational process going on . . . to enable himself to understand the teacher better, to improve

the team-work and total ministry, and to have a better, more meaningful pastoral relationship with them."<sup>12</sup>

The pastor's role as educator makes it imperative that he be aware of what is happening in the area of education.. "He will keep himself informed, at least in a general way, on educational matters and will strive to be especially familiar with both the progress and the problems in the field of Christian education."<sup>13</sup> Two ways by which he might accomplish this are by attending teachers' conferences<sup>14</sup> and by reading educational journals -- especially any one that is published by the educational agencies of the Missouri Synod<sup>15</sup>; a deeper interest might even occasion the pastor's taking education courses in graduate school.<sup>16</sup>

## CHAPTER IX

### THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR AS CHALLENGE

The role of the pastor in the classroom of his congregation's Christian Day School is, in the final analysis, totally up to him. He has no arbitrarily designated function, no status that is predetermined on philosophical or theological grounds; his role is what he actually does.<sup>1</sup> By investing his time and efforts in the school he underscores in actions what he may say about Christian Day School education on many occasions. This is definitely part of his role in the congregation and community for, as teacher Allen Holthus of Westwood, New Jersey, comments: "A pastor has to believe in his school."<sup>2</sup> Participation in the daily classroom life of the school -- both as contributor and learner -- is a visual statement of confidence in what is happening there. Pastor Harry Coiner summarizes:

The pastor should be highly conscious of the classrooms as living and breathing places where youngsters are 'being' church, where the stuff of life in Christ is being handled. So he gets on the ball in his understanding and knowledge of objectives and curriculum. In his person he strives to become as affective as he can be in his personal relationships with teachers and pupils.<sup>3</sup>

The pastor has much that he can offer the children in the classroom, complementing what they learn from the teacher and textbooks. He can meet the needs of the children by being where they are and sharing in their lives and days.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter I

Chapter II

The Role of the Pastor in Historical Perspective

<sup>1</sup> Charles L. Maurer, Early Lutheran Education in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: Dorrance and Company, Inc., 1932), pp.37-38.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.240.

<sup>3</sup> A.C. Stellhorn, One Hundred Years of Christian Education, edited by Arthur C. Repp (River Forest, Ill.: Lutheran Education Association, 1947), p.17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p.11.

<sup>5</sup> Walter H. Beck, Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1939), p.64.

<sup>6</sup> August C. Stellhorn, Schools of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synbd (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), p.72.

<sup>7</sup> L. Hölter, Von den Pflichten der Familie und der Kirche in der christliche Erziehung der Jugend (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1892), p.163.

<sup>8</sup> P.E. Kretzmann, A Brief History of Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), p.115.

<sup>9</sup> Walter F. Wolbrecht, One Hundred Years of Christian Education, edited by Arthur C. Repp (River Forest, Ill.: Lutheran Education Association, 1947), p.89.

Chapter III

The Role of the Pastor as Explicit Function

<sup>1</sup> Kretzmann, p.110.

<sup>2</sup> Beck, p.64.

<sup>3</sup> C.F.W. Walther, Die rechte Gestalt einer vom Staate

unabhängigen Evangelisch--Lutherischen Ortsgemeinde (St. Louis: Wiebusch und Sohn, 1864), p.100.

<sup>4</sup> J.C.W. Lindemann, "Ist der Pastor einer Gemeinde auch Inspector der Gemeindeschule?", Evangelisch--Lutherisch Schulblatt, I(Dec. 1865), p.103.

<sup>5</sup> Albert Merkens, The Policies of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States with Regard to Elementary Education by Means of Christian Day-Schools (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1935), p.24.

<sup>6</sup> W.C. Kohn, "Eine herzliche Bitte an die Pastoren zum Wohl unserer Gemeindeschulen", Lutheran School Journal, LXV (Feb.1930), p.243.

<sup>7</sup> Albert Merkens, p.24.

<sup>8</sup> Victor C. Krause, Lutheran Elementary Schools in Action (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), p.35.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.103.

#### Chapter IV

##### The Role of the Pastor in Present Perspective

<sup>1</sup> August C. Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation", Report of the 1949 Educational Conference, Seward, Nebraska, 1949, p.59.

<sup>2</sup> Merkens, p.23.

<sup>3</sup> John S. Damm, memorandum of February 1971.

<sup>4</sup> Krause, p.104.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.104.

<sup>6</sup> Arnold C. Mueller, The Ministry of the Lutheran Teacher (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), p.153.

<sup>7</sup> Martin Koehneke, "The Administrators of Parish Education", Concordia Theological Monthly, XXIII (March 1952), p.198.

What about footnotes  
8 9 10

## Chapter V

## Potentials of the Pastor's Role in the Classroom

- <sup>1</sup> W.Th. Janzow, letter of January 13, 1971.
- <sup>2</sup> Robert Conrad, statement of February 1971.
- <sup>3</sup> Armin Meyermann, letter of January 29, 1971.
- <sup>4</sup> Carol Aufdemberge, letter of February 16, 1971.
- <sup>5</sup> A.O. Fuerbringer, letter of January 1971.
- <sup>6</sup> Krause, p.106.
- <sup>7</sup> Fredrick Nohl, editor, An Instrument for Evaluating Lutheran Elementary Schools. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1958), p.97.
- <sup>8</sup> Arthur L. Miller, Educational Administration and Supervision of the Lutheran Schools of the Missouri Synod 1914-1950 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p.248.
- <sup>9</sup> Teacher, Immanuel Lutheran School, Whitestone, N.Y. (one in faculty survey)
- <sup>10</sup> Paul Brammeier, memorandum of February 10, 1971.
- <sup>11</sup> Joseph H. Fichter, Parochial School: A Sociological Study (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1958), p.456.
- <sup>12</sup> Al Buls, interview of March 4, 1971.
- <sup>13</sup> Kohn, p.244.
- <sup>14</sup> Clarence Roth, letter of January 21, 1971.
- <sup>15</sup> Fichter, p.456.
- <sup>16</sup> Paul Sturm, letter of February 22, 1971.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.,
- <sup>18</sup> Richard Wismar, letter of February 8, 1971.

- 19 Allen Holthus, letter of February 13, 1971.  
 20 Meyermann  
 21 James Lemke, letter of January 25, 1971.

## Chapter VI

## The Pastor's Role as Actual Classroom Teacher

- <sup>1</sup> A.C. Piepkorn and Edwin Jacob, "Promoting the Cause of the Christian School in the Local Parish", Lutheran School Journal, LXXV (March 1940), p.300.
- <sup>2</sup> Krause, p.104.
- <sup>3</sup> Beck, p.64.
- <sup>4</sup> Erwin Krauss, "Walther and the Parochial School" Lutheran School Journal, LXXIV (June 1939), p.451.
- <sup>5</sup> Allan Jahsmann, What's Lutheran in Education, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), p.123.
- <sup>6</sup> Richard Engebrecht, interview of February 1971.
- <sup>7</sup> William Kramer, interview of February 25, 1971.
- <sup>8</sup> Damm.
- <sup>9</sup> Harold W. Otte, letter of January 13, 1971.
- <sup>10</sup> Lemke,
- <sup>11</sup> Teacher, Immanuel Lutheran School, Whitestone, N.Y. (faculty survey).
- <sup>12</sup> Howard Leber, letter of January 22, 1971.
- <sup>13</sup> Nohl, memorandum of February 23, 1971.
- <sup>14</sup> Al Senske, interview of March 3, 1971.
- <sup>15</sup> Wismar,
- <sup>16</sup> Nohl, p.97.



- 17 Roth
- 18 Martin Wessler, interview of February 24, 1971.
- 19 W.H.T. Dau, "The Lutheran Philosophy of Education", The Lutheran Educational Conference Report of 1941, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1941, p.43.
- 20 Wismar.
- 21 Allan Hart Jahsmann, interview of February 26, 1971.
- 22 John Hinsch, letter of February 16, 1971.
- 23 E.F. Brauer, "The Pastor's Role in Strengthening the Congregation's Program for Christian Growth -- Particularly Through the Day School", Parish Education Bulletin, (January 1961), p.4.
- 24 Roth.
- 25 Kathy Mill, letter of February 14, 1971.
- 26 Teacher, Immanuel Lutheran School, Whitestone, N.Y. (faculty survey).

## Chapter VII

### The Role of the Pastor as Shepherd to the Classroom

- 1 Lynne Kreyling, letter of January 27, 1971.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Clarence Kurth, "The Lutheran Day School of Tomorrow", New Frontiers in Christian Education (River Forest, Ill.: Lutheran Education Association, 1944), p.56.
- 4 Fichter, p.156.
- 5 Mill.
- 6 George W. Hoyer, letter of February 12, 1971.
- 7 Aufdemberge.
- 8 Hoyer.

- 9 Wismar.
- 10 Conrad.
- 11 Martin Koehneke, letter of January 11, 1971.
- 12 Jahsmann.
- 13 Carol Weyrauch, letter of February 16, 1971.
- 14 Engebrecht.
- 15 John Lockhart, letter of February 5, 1971.
- 16 Nohl.

17 Chapter VIII

The Role of the Pastor as Responsible Educator

- 1 F.V.N. Painter, Luther on Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), pp.142-143.
- 2 Maurer, p.240.
- 3 Walter O. Forster, Zion on the Mississippi (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), p.344.
- 4 Lindemann, p.144.
- 5 Miller, p.248.
- 6 Krause, p.105.
- 7 Brameier.
- 8 Lockhart.
- 9 Hoyer.
- 10 Janzow.
- 11 Harry G. Coiner, letter of January 11, 1971.
- 12 Fuerbringer.
- 13 O.C. Rupprecht, et.al., Building the Parochial School of Tomorrow (Racine, Wisconsin: no publisher, 1941), p.35.

- 14 Senske.
- 15 Kohn, p.244.
- 16 Coiner.

## Chapter IX

### The Role of the Pastor as Challenge

- 1 Jahsmann.
- 2 Holthus.
- 3 Coiner.

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 Rev. John C. Hinsch, Plainview, New York  
 Rev. Howard Leber, Trenton, New Jersey  
 Rev. Clarence Roth, Queens Village, New York

## Former Teachers in Christian Day Schools:

Mr. Paul Brammeier, Graduate Student at Concordia  
 Seminary, St. Louis  
 Mr. Frederick Nohl, Audiovisual Project Director of  
 Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod

## Personal Interviews with:

## Educational Administrators:

Dr. Richard Engebrecht, Superintendent of Schools,  
 Atlantic District  
 Dr. Allan Hart Jahsmann, Executive Editor, Editor-  
 ial division, Board of Parish Education  
 Mr. Martin F. Wessler, Director of Field Services,  
 Board of Parish Education

## Retired Educational Administrators:

Dr. Alfred O. Fuerbringer, Former President of Con-  
 cordia Seminary, St. Louis  
 Dr. William A. Kramer, Former Director of Field  
 Services, Board of Parish Education

## Principals of Christian Day Schools:

Mr. William Keske, Grace Lutheran School, Chicago,  
 Illinois

## Pastors:

Rev. William Hemenway, Beth Alto, Illinois  
 Rev. Al Buls, University City, Missouri

## Teachers in Christian Day Schools:

Mr. Michael Weber, Graduate Student at Concordia  
 Seminary, St. Louis

## Informal Surveys of Faculties:

Immanuel Lutheran School, Danbury, Connecticut  
 Immanuel Lutheran School, Whitestone, New York