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## Theological Observer

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## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### FASTING AMONG CHURCHMEN

The *Anglican Theological Review* (April 1958), under this heading, offers a very helpful article on the subject of fasting. It first describes the four different types of fasting in Christian practice: the spiritual, the moral, the ecclesiastical, and the natural, which serve the abstinence from sin and forbidden pleasure, promote temperance in all things, observe the fasting commandments of the church, and prepare for the proper reception of the sacraments. It then traces fasting, as it is observed in the Roman Church, back to Jewish and Gentile patterns, shows that the Anglican Church, while suggesting fasts for certain church feasts, does not insist upon a uniform practice, and in conclusion points out a worthwhile substitute for fasting. We read: "If the Church . . . does not define and impose a common method of fasting, there is at least a way of developing a common end for which the discipline of fasting is undertaken. Let us suppose that each individual member of the church, young and old, is left to decide what act of self-denial he or she will cultivate on the days of fasting and abstinence; or possibly, let the specific form of self-denial be decided in family groups, or even by a parish community as a whole. The Church could at least set a particular object (for example, a missionary or charitable object) to which the saving made by self-denial might be directed. At certain stated times these offerings would be gathered from the whole people of God in a conscious, deliberate oblation Churchwide in scope, at which every member would be expected to share. In this way, the several individual forms of 'fasting' would be caught up into a commonly accepted purpose, and every member would thereby be brought into a concern, not so much about his own ascetic effort, but rather about the goal of corporate endeavor. The reason we suggest a money-offering rather than some other form of common enterprise, such as prayer and study groups, is that a money-offering is more readily organized so as to involve every single member of the Church, and that, too, in a way that necessitates for each and every member a real privation of his own good for the common good." JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

### ORDINATION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN

*The Lutheran Quarterly* (May 1958) discusses the problems indicated by the given heading very objectively and intelligently. As a state church the Swedish church is subject to the national parliament. But



every fourth year, or oftener, the church holds a Diet, composed of elected representatives of the church. This Diet in 1957 rejected the government proposal permitting the ordination of women to the ministry of the church, because it is contrary to the teaching of the Bible. Not all representatives of the Diet agreed to this motivation, but all were of the opinion that no decision about the ordination of women should be made until the church had come to a greater unity and clarity in regard to the nature of the church's ministry and the authority of the Bible. The decision of the Diet brought four issues before the church: the authority of Scripture, the nature of the ministry, the relation of the church to the state, and the status of women in church and society. Those who opposed the ordination of women on the basis of the Bible were upheld by some of the high-church group who, in view of the apostolic succession, maintained that the office had been entrusted to men and that women are ineligible. In closing the report the author writes: "As the discussion continues, the question of the relationship of the church to the state becomes more and more serious. Already a member of parliament has raised the question by what right a small part of the nation, such as the church Diet, can veto an act passed by the national parliament. Can the state tolerate such a situation? And, on the other hand, can the church permit a secular body such as the parliament to decide matters of faith and practice? It would seem that either the state must assume complete control and take away the veto power of the Diet, or else the church must be separated from the state and become independent." JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

#### BRIEF ITEMS FROM NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL

*Blair, Nebr.*—The United Evangelical Lutheran Church concluded its 62nd annual convention here by adopting budgets that amounted to \$630,000. This sum includes one third of a "forward phase" plan to raise \$257,000 prior to the UELC's merger with the Evangelical and American Lutheran churches in 1961.

Dr. John M. Jensen was re-elected editor of the *Ansgar Lutheran*, official periodical of the church, a position he has held since 1936, and the Rev. Lawrence Siersbeck was again named as secretary of the church.

*Belgrade.*—The gold medal of the Yugoslav Red Cross was conferred here upon three Lutheran leaders, among them two from the United States, in gratitude for the relief work of their organizations in Yugoslavia.

The Americans honored were Bernard A. Confer of New York,



executive secretary of Lutheran World Relief, and the Rev. Werner Kuntz of Detroit, executive secretary of the Board of World Relief of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and a member of the LWR board of directors. A recipient of the medal also was the Rev. Mogens Zeuthen of Geneva, Switzerland, minority churches secretary in the Department of World Service of the Lutheran World Federation.

The awards, given during a 10-day visit of the relief officials to Yugoslavia in mid-June, were made by Dr. Pavle Gregoric, president of the Yugoslav Red Cross, in the presence of other officials and staff of the agency.

Also present was Mrs. Patricia Mason, field representative of LWR and Church World Service, which jointly sponsor a feeding program for some two million children in 12,000 school cafeterias throughout the country. Both agencies also ship other relief supplies to Yugoslavia. LWR shipments have totaled more than \$18 million.

*New York.*—The Rev. Charles P. Carroll has resigned after nearly five years as a staff member of the National Lutheran Council, effective July 1. Mr. Carroll has been secretary of the Department of Theological Co-operation in the NLC's Division of Lutheran World Federation Affairs since it was established early in 1956. Previously he had been for two years the administrative assistant to Dr. Paul C. Empie, executive director of the council.

Mr. Carroll has accepted a call to serve as business administrator of San Rafael (Calif.) Military Academy, operated by the Episcopal Diocese of California. In addition, he will also develop a mission parish in nearby Stinson Beach. San Rafael is located 18 miles north of San Francisco and has a population of about 20,000.

*Plymouth, Mass.*—Lutherans accounted for one fifth of the 200 participants in the sixth national conference on clinical pastoral education held here in mid-June. A number of Lutherans had active roles in the conference, among them the Rev. Carl R. Plack, secretary for chaplaincy services of the National Lutheran Council, who served as program chairman as well as secretary of the advisory committee on clinical pastoral education.

The following Lutherans served as leaders or recorders in discussion and workshop groups: Chaplain Henry Cassler, Medical Center for Federal Prisoners, Springfield, Mo.; Professor John Doberstein, Philadelphia Lutheran Seminary; Chaplain J. Obert Kempson, State Hospital, Columbia, S. C.; Chaplain Edward J. Mahnke, Lutheran Hospital, St. Louis, Mo.; the Rev. Francis A. Shearer, executive, Lutheran Board of Inner Missions, Philadelphia; Professor Charles A. Sullivan, Chicago



Lutheran Seminary; Chaplain Paul Swanson, Lutheran Social Service, Augustana Lutheran Church, Avon, Mass.; and the Rev. Dayton G. Van Deusen, assistant secretary for chaplaincy services, NLC.

The discussion of the theme "Sharing in the Churches' Concern for the Pastoral Ministry" centered in a paper presented by Dr. Samuel H. Miller, adjunct professor of Andover Newton Theological School and Harvard Divinity School. Dr. Miller's dissertation concerned pastoral experience and theological training with the implications of depth psychology for Christian theology.

After the two-day conference, members of Lutheran church groups spent an additional day discussing the relation of clinical pastoral education to theological seminaries, the common Lutheran elements in chaplaincy services and clinical training, the process of accepting students for clinical training and for the ministry, and the procedure for Lutheran approval of chaplain supervisors and of training centers.

*New York.*—Bishop Lajos Ordass has been ousted as head of the Southern District of the Lutheran Church of Hungary, the second time in a decade that he has been removed from episcopal office because of his staunch opposition to Communism.

According to press dispatches received here, the council of the Southern District asked Bishop Ordass to relinquish his office on June 25 and named Dr. Emil Koren, dean of Budapest, to replace him temporarily. The council's action was taken when the Hungarian Government refused to accept the resignation of Bishop Laszlo Dezser, thus declaring in effect that Bishop Ordass has been holding the post illegally.

Although state approval is necessary for any change in church positions, the government's ruling came nearly two years after Bishop Ordass succeeded Bishop Dezser when the latter resigned during the abortive revolt in Hungary in the fall of 1956. The situation came to a head when the government was asked by the church council of the Southern District not only to clarify the status of Bishop Ordass but also "to decide on the matter of Bishop Dezser first of all." Evidently the government lost no time in complying with the request.

The dismissal of Bishop Ordass had been freely predicted in Western church circles since the Hungarian Government launched a campaign last December to restore Communist-approved churchmen to active leadership in the Lutheran Church. The government's move, it said, was aimed at bringing an end to the "lawless conditions existing since the counterrevolution," when Bishop Ordass reorganized the church



to free it from state control of its ecclesiastical affairs. His success in this effort was short-lived.

A year later Bishop Lajos Veto returned as head of the Northern District and also replaced Ordass as presiding bishop of the church. Several other officials known as collaborationists with the Communist regime also resumed office, leaving Bishop Ordass as the chief obstacle to the state's domination of the church. A Budapest radio broadcast announced that Bishop Ordass had to "resign" the post as primate because he found himself "in complete isolation due to his policy of nonco-operation with the government" in working out an agreement between the church and state. In reporting the new development the station observed that Bishop Ordass' attitude toward the state has "always been hostile."

The pattern followed in the second ouster of Bishop Ordass from leadership in the Hungarian Lutheran Church is almost identical with that which led to his arrest and imprisonment a decade ago. Whether that will be his fate in the present situation is shrouded in uncertainty.

Bishop Ordass attended the first assembly of the Lutheran World Federation at Lund, Sweden, in 1947 and was elected a vice-president of the LWF. After a short visit to the United States he returned to Hungary and plunged into the struggle against nationalization of church schools. Finally, in 1948, he was arrested, tried, and convicted on a trumped-up charge of "foreign currency manipulations," growing out of relief contributions received from American Lutherans. Given a two-year sentence, Bishop Ordass served 20 months and was released from prison in May 1950. He then went into forced retirement that was to last for six years, living quietly in a small apartment in Budapest. Only a month earlier Dezserly had been named to succeed him as bishop and Veto had been named to his place as presiding bishop. Later two other bishops "resigned," and the four districts of the church were reorganized into two, with Dezserly as head of the Southern District and Veto as head of the Northern District.

In the summer of 1956 Bishop Ordass was rehabilitated when the Hungarian Supreme Court annulled his sentence "in the absence of any crime committed," and some months later he was reinstated by the church.

When the Hungarian revolution broke out late in October 1956, Bishops Veto and Dezserly resigned, and Bishop Ordass returned to leadership as head of the Southern District and primate of the church. He preached his first sermon on Reformation Day, October 31.



Last summer the Kadar government of Hungary gave permission to Bishop Ordass and five other Lutheran leaders to attend the third assembly of the Lutheran World Federation at Minneapolis, Minn., August 15—25. Bishop Ordass preached at the opening service of the assembly to an audience of some 18,000 persons and also spoke at the closing rally of the assembly before a crowd of more than 100,000 on the grounds of the State Capitol in St. Paul. As he was being driven from Minneapolis to St. Paul with a police escort, Bishop Ordass noted the date was August 25—10 years to the day that he had last had a police escort when he was arrested and jailed by the Hungarian government.

*Detroit, Mich.*—Dr. Raymond W. Wargelin of Hancock, Mich., was unanimously elected to his second term as president of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church or Suomi Synod at its 69th convention here.

Dr. Wargelin has been vice-chairman (since its formation in December 1956) of the Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity, through which the Suomi Synod is engaged in merger negotiations with the United Lutheran Church in America, the Augustana Lutheran Church, and the American Evangelical Lutheran Church.

*Madras.*—India's Lutheran theologians are carefully studying a new statement from the Church of South India on the ministry and the episcopacy to see if it affords ground for agreement between the two groups. The CSI statement is aimed at breaking the deadlock which developed in its theological talks with the Lutherans when they failed, at their 1956 meeting, to reach a common position on this subject. Since then the theological commissions of the CSI and the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India have held no further joint sessions.

In its statement, which was approved by the executive body of the Church's synod, the CSI theological commission said in effect that: (1) "For the shepherding and extension" of the church, there is needed a system of bishops "as episcopacy has been accepted in the church from early times." (2) The church's ministers must be ordained by bishops, and its bishops must be consecrated by other bishops, to "effectively maintain continuity with the historic episcopate."

It said that CSI "does not consider episcopal ordination essential for a valid ministry." However, it asserted also that "in view of the place which the historic episcopate has held from early times, and still holds, throughout a large part of Christendom, there cannot be a uni-



versally accepted ministry which does not include the historic episcopate as one element." It explained that the CSI's "historic episcopate" is not bound to "any particular interpretation of episcopacy or to any particular view or belief concerning orders of the ministry."

In a statement on the ministry presented at the April 1956 joint meeting in Bangalore, the CSI had stressed that in any wider union it was "most unlikely that we shall be led to abandon the historic episcopate," which it had "inherited" as a "gift" from the Anglican Church in India. However, at that time also, the CSI said its acceptance and retention of "the historic episcopate" did not depend upon "the acceptance of any doctrine of apostolic succession."

The new document was drafted in reply to three questions posed to the CSI by FELC executive committee in October 1956 after the former's earlier statement was rejected by the Lutherans. The questions were: (1) What is the meaning of the historic episcopate? (2) In what does the continuity of the ministry lie? (3) What constitutes validity of the ministry?

While numerous Lutheran churches have an episcopal organization and some of these churches claim that their bishops' line of consecration can be traced to apostolic times, Lutheran theologians generally have held that the presence of such bishops is not essential to the existence of the true church of Christ and the validity and continuity of its ordained ministry. "The unity and the continuity of the church," the Lutherans had told the CSI, "depend upon the church's adhering faithfully to the Gospel of Christ and its sacraments."

Prior to 1956 commissions representing the FELC and CSI had met together for theological discussions about once a year since 1948, the year after the latter was formed by the merger of groups of Anglican, British Methodist, Presbyterian, Reformed, and Congregational origin. Out of these talks had come a series of agreed statements on the Law and the Gospel, the doctrine of election, the relation of creedal and confessional statements to the being of the church, and the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

Except for the India Mission of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the Lutheran churches of India have not been represented directly in these talks, but through the Federation. This body's membership includes 10 Indian churches and five co-operating missions.

*Warsaw.*—Poland's largest Protestant church, held by the government for its own use for a decade after World War II, has been re-consecrated to religious purposes by this country's Lutheran Church.



Badly damaged by bombs during the war, Holy Trinity Church in downtown Warsaw underwent restoration that was begun by the Polish state in 1947 and completed by the Lutheran Church after it recovered use of the building in 1956. Among the speakers at the rededication was Dr. Franklin Clark Fry of New York, president of both the United Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran World Federation.

"Our lives today are filled with fear," he told the gathering of 5,000 which packed the edifice. "But thank God for a house in which you can speak with Him and He with you."

Officiating at the reconsecration was Bishop Hanns Lilje of Hannover, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran churches in Germany and former LWF head. Funds from the LWF helped the Polish body, whose name is the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, to repair the structure.

*New York.*—A statement deploring the ouster of Bishop Ordass as head of the Southern District of the Lutheran Church of Hungary has been issued by the Lutheran World Federation.

Following is the complete text of the statement:

The Lutheran World Federation sees the removal of Bishop Lajos Ordass from his last official position in the church life of his country merely as the culmination of a chain of events that have been taking place over several months under pressure from the Hungarian government.

We deplore that Bishop Ordass has been deposed from ecclesiastical leadership of a diocese that was rightly his, but the esteem in which this stalwart and truly Christian figure is held all over the world is undiminished. Indeed our admiration for the constancy of his spirit grows and grows.

Bishop Ordass' status as first vice-president of the Lutheran World Federation is in no way affected by this development, of course, and remains unchanged.

#### BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

*Bronxville, N. Y.*—The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Atlantic District adopted a resolution at its annual meeting here asking that synod cadets at West Point be permitted to worship "according to the practices of their church."

Although a Lutheran traveling chaplain has been available to the U.S. Military Academy, the resolution pointed out, Lutheran students have been "coerced" into attending nondenominational Protestant services at the school.



West Point has two sets of chaplains: an Army chaplain for the regular Army personnel and a civilian chaplain for cadets. Traditionally, the civilian chaplain has been a Protestant Episcopal clergyman.

*Jamestown, N.Y.*—In a move to strengthen its institutions of higher learning, the Augustana Lutheran Church, meeting here for its 99th annual synod, voted to observe its centennial in 1960 by presenting a thankoffering of \$4,500,000 to its colleges and seminary.

According to a plan which received unanimous approval from 600 delegates attending the synod, three colleges will receive one million dollars each from the appeal. They are Augustana College, Rock Island, Ill.; Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn., and Upsala College, East Orange, N. J. Another million dollars will be divided between Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kans., and Luther Junior College, Wahoo, Nebr.

Earmarked for a new Lutheran college recently launched as a co-operative effort in California is the sum of \$100,000, while Pacific Lutheran College in Parkland, Wash., an institution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, will receive \$25,000, and Texas Lutheran College, Seguin, Tex., operated by the American Lutheran Church, will be given \$5,000.

The Synod voted that \$150,000 be appropriated for the National Lutheran Council's division of college and university work for its ministry on nonchurch campuses; \$100,000 to Augustana Theological Seminary, Rock Island, Ill.; and \$120,000 to the Board of Christian Higher Education for scholarships, pilot projects, and Canadian Lutheran seminary.

Dr. O. V. Anderson of Chicago, president of the Central Conference and chairman of the general centennial anniversary committee, informed the Synod that an intensive educational campaign emphasizing the significance of Christian higher education will be carried into 1,200 Augustana congregations during 1959, and the \$4,500,000 appeal will be launched in 1960, the 100th anniversary of the church.

*Milwaukee, Wis.*—Members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod were warned here to be cautious about joining college fraternities and sororities, "many of which use Christless prayers in their meetings." Boy Scout membership and YMCA and YWCA participation, however, do not "necessarily" constitute a "denial of the (Christian) faith," a Synod report declared.

The report, based on a study by an official synodical committee, was disclosed at the 30th convention of the church's South Wisconsin District at Concordia College.



In presenting the report, the Rev. J. W. Acker of Hammond, Ind., said the committee adopted a "middle of the road" position on the controversial issue of communicants' joining "secret fraternal benefit societies."

The committee included in its classification of societies, fraternal lodges, veterans' organizations, and labor unions, besides college fraternities, the Boy Scout movement, and the Y's.

Mr. Acker said the committee frowned upon all societies which engage in "unionistic" functions. He defined "unionism" as the "practice of religion without doctrinal agreement as a prior consideration."

He explained that the synod neither approves nor disapproves of the Boy Scout movement, in which participation is left up to the individual congregation.

Scouting is one of the issues which has produced sharp controversy between the Missouri Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, both members of the Synodical Conference of North America. The Wisconsin Synod strongly objects to the scouting movement.

Mr. Acker said participation in the movement "does not interfere with or weaken the congregational program of youth training."

While discouraging membership in college social fraternities and sororities, the committee saw no objection to professional and honorary societies, which "almost without exception have no religious elements in their rituals."

On the other hand, Mr. Acker said, in examining rituals of the social groups, the committee found expressions "reflecting natural religion, self-righteousness, and snobbery" as well as prayers which "usually involve members in unionistic practices."

Also approved by the committee were veterans' groups and labor unions, which, the minister said, have no "unionistic" functions.

Certain lodges, like the Masons, were disapproved by the church group, which urged Synod members not to join them. It said the Masonic Lodge, where "any God will do," puts the Bible "on the same plane with the great books of the other world religions."

While the Y's may be called "unionistic" because they "arbitrarily select only certain Christian teachings as essential," the committee said, they have a system of associate membership whereby those wishing to use their facilities need not necessarily "enter into spiritual union" with the associations.



Societies like the Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions were given a clean bill of health by the committee because the "only trace of religion at their gatherings may be a table prayer."

*New York.*—The United Lutheran Church in America will spend \$350,000 for the development of projects in eight foreign mission fields. Dr. Earl S. Erb, executive secretary of the denomination's Board of Foreign Missions, which made the allocations, said the funds will be used to build and maintain schools and medical centers in Argentina, British Guiana, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Malaya, Liberia, and Uruguay.

At the same time it was announced that the Rev. E. Dale Click, associate director of evangelism of the Board of Social Missions, will conduct a two-month evangelism mission in Argentina, a program sponsored by the board. Primary purpose of Pastor Click's trip will be to create a year-round evangelism program which the local congregations can direct.

In listing the major allocations for the foreign missions program, Dr. Erb said that \$85,000 was pledged to assist the church in Hong Kong to erect a \$241,000 Lutheran Center. The Vellore Christian Medical College in southern India, which is known as one of the most effective medical centers in Asia, will receive \$24,000 as part of the board's five-year plan, under which the ULCA gives \$20,000 each year for the school's operation. A total of \$34,700 was allocated for the construction of two elementary schools in British Guiana.

In the field of education, \$37,000 was earmarked to facilitate the creation of a preseminary school in Jose C. Paz, a suburb of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Dr. Erb said the school was essential in order to get qualified students to enter Argentina's seminaries.

The board also granted 26 scholarships to students in British Guiana for study abroad. Most students will attend United Lutheran colleges in the United States. The scholarships were given in co-operation with the ULCA's Board for Higher Education.

About \$168,000 of the total sum will be used on numerous smaller projects in the church's foreign mission field, Dr. Erb said.

*Berlin.*—East Germans crowded St. Mary's Church in the Soviet Sector here to attend a concert given by a chorus of theological students from Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Ill. The choir was believed to be the first church choral group to sing in East Berlin since the Communists took over that part of the city. Members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the seminarians were on a six-week tour of Europe to give 30 concerts in 12 countries.



As the students left Berlin after their concert, sobbing men and women, deeply touched by their performance, waved farewell and shouted "Thanks" as they ran alongside the bus taking the choir away. Meanwhile Communist youths mocked both the choristers and the Germans who had favored the program.

Earlier a concert the students gave in Hannover was praised as "exceptional" by Lutheran Bishop Hanns Lilje of that city. He commented on the choir's "sincerity and precision." After a performance in Hamburg, the Hamburg *Abendblatt* said that the chorus' "clear intonation and beautiful harmony as well as the impressive conducting were well received by a large audience."

Conducting the choir is Prof. Fred Precht of Concordia Seminary. Other countries on its itinerary include Norway, Sweden, Austria, the Netherlands, and France. It was also scheduled to appear at the Protestant Pavilion of the Brussels World's Fair on July 23.

*Vatican City.*—The Vatican radio, in a special broadcast, urged Latin American Roman Catholics to be "more active" in countering what it labeled a planned campaign by Protestants to penetrate all areas of Latin America.

Citing statistics showing a rapid growth of Protestantism in Latin America during the past ten years, it said Protestants there now number 5,000,000. "Protestant publications," the station added, "now boast that within 10 years Brazil will have a Protestant majority."

The Vatican radio broadcast came on the heels of an announcement that the annual conference of the Latin American hierarchy, which ordinarily takes place in Bogota, Colombia, will be held instead in Rome this year, beginning November 10. In addition to 18 bishops belonging to the American Bishops' Council, the Rome conference is expected to be attended by many other Latin American bishops as well as by a number of cardinals of the Roman Curia. Vatican observers said the conference will be one of the largest gatherings of Latin American bishops ever held.

In addition to discussing the problem of Protestant "infiltration" in Latin America, the bishops will weigh other key matters, among them the threat of Communism in Latin America, the need to promote more religious vocations, and the intensification of religious education programs, especially among Catholics who are poorly instructed in their religion. Strong appeals are expected to be made in support of more church-endorsed social welfare programs. The November conference will coincide with special celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of the Pontifical Latin American College in Rome.