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In God for the World: Three Reflections- Good Men Are Hard to Find

Gilbert Amadeus Thiele
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

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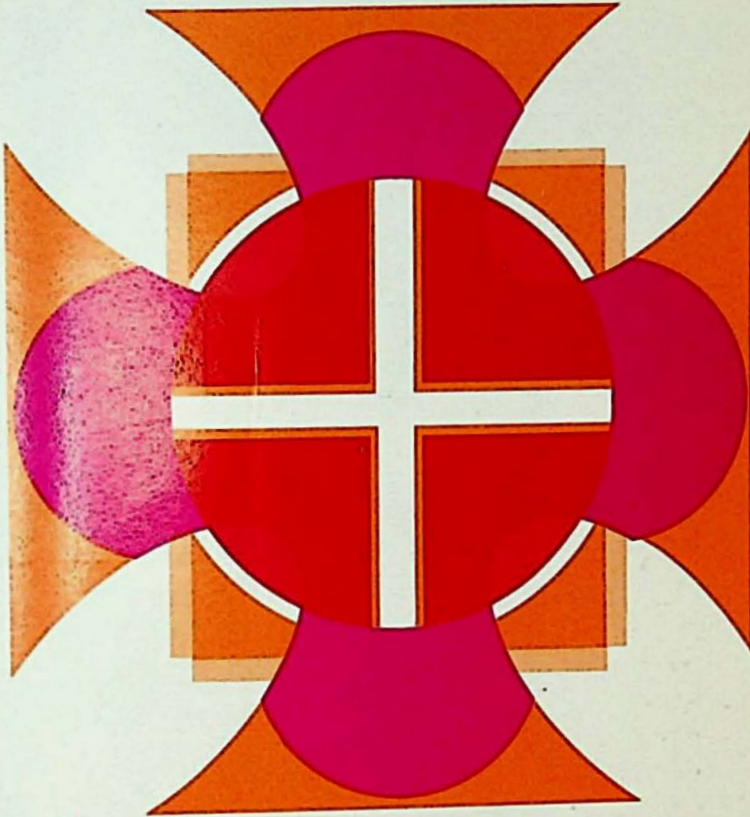
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In God

for the World:

Three Reflections

Good Men Are Hard to Find

Good men are hard to find. They are more difficult to replace. The school which edits this journal of church, theology, and mission has had six presidents in its 134-year history. Each was unquestionably a good man, not just in himself, but for the time when he came on the scene and for the time he served. Each one, with the exception of Dr. C. F. W. Walther, studied at Concordia Seminary under one of his predecessors. They wrote articles, editorials, and book reviews for this journal and its forerunners. Through their teaching and administrative activities, sometimes carried out also in the church at large, they helped to shape the theology, develop the ministers, and inspire the constituency of our church.

Each had a significant measure of parish experience, in varied places—in western towns, in small and large metropolitan congregations. All of them, including Pres. John H. Tietjen and his immediate predecessor, Pres. Alfred O. Fuerbringer, had in mind the purpose of the best possible academic and practical training available for future ministers in the congregations of the Synod and in its numerous agencies and organizations. By far the largest number of graduates of our school served or are serving the congregations as pastors.

Walther helped to organize the Synodical Conference of North America. Franz Pieper was a sought-after district and synodical essayist and an influential theologian. Ludwig Fuerbringer experienced and partially presided over the transition from German to English. Sieck, during his pastorate, had also served as member and chairman of the Board of Control of the seminary. The second Fuerbringer was the only president to be called from another educational presidency to ours.

Now, in our most recent history, our school is blessed with still another superbly suited president with impeccable academic training. To him, John H. Tietjen, this issue is dedicated, not in the nature of a *Festschrift* but in the nature of a tribute to his presidency and leadership. The last 4½ years of the history of our seminary have been the first and only extended period of time in that history in which the synodical and the seminary administrations have been cast in adversary roles, a development with sad consequences for both the Synod and the seminary.

Without knowing what the political realities may be when this editorial will appear in print, we say that President Tietjen's incumbency, though diverted from what he was called to do, has been a great blessing to students, staff, and Synod alike. We write these words in the conviction that his incumbency, under a clean-cut divine call to tenured professorship and presidency, must be allowed to continue to flourish.

The continuation and intensification of the seminary's program of training men and women at the undergraduate and graduate levels to be "in God for the world" merit respect and support, while its teachers deserve to be defended against unwarranted internal and external onslaughts.

To these ideals this journal stands committed for the future. The traditional Lutheran support, dating back to the Reformation period itself, of training for *educated* and *learned* ministry, validates such hopes and purposes.

Gilbert Amadeus Thiele