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Encomium for William Carr, Upon His Retirement

It is a privilege to honor Bill Carr's retirement from the faculty of Concordia Seminary. Bill has been a good friend and an exemplary colleague for many years. We became acquainted after he returned to campus in the 1990s, first in graduate courses, after years of parish experience—and all that after years of service in the US Navy. The former—his parish service—has given him a deep and abiding love for the Scriptures and for the gospel, on the one hand, and for our Lord and for his people, on the other. The latter—his Navy service—has given him a deep and abiding interest in and ability to address problems, to craft solutions, and to get things done. If you doubt the former, listen to his chapel sermons—always focused upon the text at hand, always engaging the specific message of *that* text, as it testifies to Christ, and always wanting to make sure that the impact of its saving message speaks to you. If you doubt the latter, ask him, for example, to spin out a new program for the Graduate School. Perhaps just one day later you will receive a mock-up of an entire evening course of MA studies, just as I did when I was dean of the Graduate School and he was helping in the office. Indeed, it's that analytical, organizational, and problem-solving ability that has most delighted and amazed me. On April 29, 1962, President John F. Kennedy opined, at a magnificent dinner honoring the Nobel Laureates of the Western Hemisphere: "I think this is the most extraordinary collection of talent . . . that has ever been gathered at the White House, with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone."

I have often used that saying analogically with Bill with regard to administration. In fact, it reflects my own solution to most seminary administrative problems: "Bill Carr and a bottle of Scotch"—or, more accurately, Bill Carr and a bottle of Jameson. Give Bill this type of problem, with a little encouragement or reward—depending upon how you look at it—and you're home free! It sure helped me during my administrative days.

Bill Carr will always be remembered as a fine Christian man, a fine Christian husband, and a fine member of this faculty. But most of all, he will be remembered at this place as a *fine colleague*. Do you need information on something that happened years ago? Ask Bill. He will take the time to research it thoroughly. Do you have an idea that you would like to bounce off of someone? Talk to Bill. He's always got a ready ear, and probably something from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* to help you out. Do you need someone to fill out your golf foursome? Bill will oblige, and he might even have his clubs stashed in his truck. Do you need someone to work hard on a project that requires insight, effort, imagination, and a nimble mind? Ask this ex-Navy guy, who has a thousand analogies and just as many of his own ideas. Finally, do you need someone to interpret a biblical text, whether in the pulpit or in the classroom—especially an Isaianic one—with complete integrity, with the ability to find Christ—legitimately—within its contours, and to listen to its meaning and to detect its impact, also for us today? Then I advise you to talk to this man, while you still are able.

Concordia Seminary is going to miss you, Bill. And so am I.

James W. Voelz