

Announcements

- ◆ A warm welcome to all our visitors and guests, friends both old and new. We pray that God has blessed your time among us with His Word and Holy Spirit. We cordially invite you to join us this morning for coffee and other refreshments downstairs following the Divine Service; and we ask that you please sign the guest book at the back of the church.

- ◆ Following coffee & refreshments, our Family Bible Class continues our study of Genesis, relying especially on Dr. Luther's extensive commentary on that sacred text. Parents and children, youth and adults are welcome.

Catechesis class for younger and beginning catechumens will meet at the same time. Also, Mike Jindra and Ian Walsh are teaching a catechesis class for children of approximately eight through twelve years of age. And Dave Smith is teaching a catechesis class for teenagers (and others interested).

- ◆ This Saturday (30 May) Pastor Stuckwisch will be vested and available in the Emmaus Sanctuary for Individual Confession and Absolution from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. This means of grace and forgiveness, by the authority of our dear Lord Jesus Christ, is freely offered to be freely received in repentant faith. Those who may have questions concerning this Christian practice are welcome and encouraged to speak with pastor about it, and to review what the Small Catechism teaches on the Office of the Keys and Confession.

- ◆ The Altar flowers this morning are provided by Charley & Karin Horner to the glory of God, in celebration of and with thanksgiving for the birthdays of their daughter Anna, their granddaughter Clara, and their son Martin.

- ◆ COLLECTIONS FOR 17 MAY 2015: \$ 643.00

In order to meet our financial obligations and commitments, an average of \$2240 is needed each week.

- ◆ IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY: (ELDER) Eldon Knepp; (USHERS) Rick Saenz & Tobias Tribble; (ACOLYTE) Lucas Jindra; (ORGANIST) Deaconess Sandra Rhein; (CRUCIFER) Matthew Harrison; (GREETERS) Marilyn Dulmatch & Lois Veen.

- ◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

From the Lutheran Confessions

“Article XXVII. Monastic Vows: The [Papal] Confutation [of our Confession] says that monks merit a more abundant eternal life, and it quotes the passage (Matt. 19:29), ‘Every one who has left houses,’ etc. That is to say, here, too, it claims perfection for artificial religious acts. But this passage of Scripture has nothing to do with the monastic life. Christ does not mean to say that leaving parents or wife or brothers is a work we should do because it merits the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Indeed, such leaving is accursed; for if someone leaves his parents or his wife in order by this act to merit the forgiveness of sins or eternal life, he is insulting Christ.

“There are two kinds of leaving. One happens without a call, without a command of God; this Christ does not approve, for works which we have chosen are ‘vain worship’ (Matt. 15:9). The fact that Christ speaks of leaving wife and children makes it even clearer that He does not approve this kind of flight, since we know that the command of God forbids deserting wife and children. The other kind of leaving is that which happens by a command of God, when a government or a tyrant forces us either to leave or to deny the Gospel. Here we have the command rather to bear the injury, to let property, wife, and children, even life itself, be taken from us. This kind of leaving Christ approves. He adds the phrase ‘for the Gospel’ (Mark 10:29) to show that He is talking not about those who do injury to wife and children but about those who bear injury because of the confession of the Gospel. We should leave our body, too, for the Gospel. But it would be silly to conclude from this that it is a service to God to commit suicide and to leave our body without the command of God. So it is silly to maintain that it is a service to God to leave possessions, friends, wife, and children without the command of God.

“It is evident, therefore, that they wickedly twist the saying of Christ in applying it to monastic life, unless perhaps the statement that they will receive a hundredfold in this life applies here. Many become monks not for the sake of the Gospel but for the sake of food and leisure; instead of a slender inheritance they find the most ample riches. But as the whole monastic system is full of counterfeits, so they quote passages of Scripture under false pretenses. Thus they are guilty of a double sin — deceiving men, and doing so under the pretext of the divine name.

“They quote another passage on perfection: ‘If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor; and come, follow Me’ (Matt. 19:21). This passage has exercised many people because they imagined that perfection consists in casting off possessions and the control of property. Let the philosophers praise Aristippus for throwing a great weight of gold into the sea.

“Such examples have nothing to do with Christian perfection. The distribution, control, and possession of property are civil ordinances, approved by the Word of God in the commandment, ‘You shall not steal’ (Ex. 20:15). The abandonment of property is neither commanded nor advised in the Scriptures. The poverty of the Gospel (Matt. 5:3) does not consist in the abandonment of property, but in the absence of greed and of trust in riches. Thus David was poor in a very rich kingdom.

“Since the abandonment of property is therefore merely a human tradition, it is a useless service. It is an exaggeration to praise it the way the Extravagant [a constitution of Pope Nicholas III] does, saying that renouncing the ownership of everything for God is meritorious and holy and the way of perfection. It is highly dangerous to heap such extravagant praises upon something that conflicts with political order. Yet Christ calls it perfection here! Yes, He does, but they do violence to the text when they quote it in a mutilated form. Perfection consists in that which Christ adds, ‘Follow Me.’ This sets forth the example of obedience in a calling. Since callings vary, this calling is not for everyone, but only for the person with whom Christ is talking here. Thus the call of David to rule, or of Abraham to sacrifice his son, are not for us to imitate. Callings are personal, just as matters of business themselves vary with times and persons; but the example of obedience is universal. It would have been perfection for this young man to believe and obey this calling. So it is perfection for each of us with true faith to obey his own calling.

“Third, in monastic vows chastity is promised. We have said above in connection with the marriage of priests that the law of nature in men cannot be repealed by vows or laws. Since not everyone has the gift of continence, many fail in their continence because of weakness. Nor can any vows or any laws abolish the commandment of the Holy Spirit, ‘Because of the temptation to immorality, each man should have his own wife’ (1 Cor. 7:2). Therefore such a vow is not lawful for anybody whose weakness causes him to defile himself because he does not have the gift of continence. On this whole topic we have said enough earlier. It is indeed strange that with such dangers and scandals going on before their very eyes, our opponents should defend their traditions, contrary to the clear command of God. They are also undaunted by the voice of Christ upbraiding the Pharisees for setting up traditions contrary to the command of God.

“Fourth, those who live in monasteries are released by such wicked ceremonies as the desecration of the Mass by its application to the dead for the sake of profit. Then there is the worship of saints which is guilty of a double fault: it arrogates Christ’s place to the saints, and it worships them wickedly. . . .”

(From the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, 1530)

Walking with Our Savior this Week

TODAY

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST DAY

Divine Service of Communion 9:00 a.m.

Coffee & Refreshment Downstairs 10:30 a.m.

Catechesis / Family Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

MONDAY

Vespers 6:00 p.m.

Bible Class 6:30 p.m.

TUESDAY

Pastor's Writing Day (but do call in cases of emergency)

WEDNESDAY

Catechesis Class 4:30 p.m.

Children's Choir 6:10 p.m.

Evening Prayer 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY

Pastor's Family Day (but do call in cases of emergency)

FRIDAY

Catechesis Class 4:30 p.m.

SATURDAY

Individual Confession & Absolution 5:00—7:00

NEXT SUNDAY THE FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY

Divine Service of Communion 9:00 a.m.

Coffee & Refreshment Downstairs 10:30 a.m.

Catechesis / Family Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

You may also want to keep in mind, in your observance of daily prayer at home:

The Appointed Readings for next Sunday, the Feast of the Holy Trinity:

Isaiah 6:1–8; Acts of the Apostles 2:22–36; Saint John 3:1–17