



PASTORAL EDUCATION

January 2010 ■ A newsletter for those interested in the ministry of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

This Issue Emphasizes 'Faithful Faculty'

Each issue of *Pastoral Education* emphasizes one of the 12 "Themes for Pastoral Education" from the Board for Pastoral Education. In this issue the focus is on "Faithful Faculty with Pastoral Experience."

The theme states: "The church needs faculty who are committed to the mission of the church, maintain academic excellence, testify to their faith, relate theology to pastoral practice, make alive the Lutheran heritage, and show appreciation for the practice of pastoral ministry. The church encourages faculty to read and write and study to be faithful mentors to pastoral ministry students. Faculty needs to aid students in the practical transition to parish ministry. For the sake of the vitality of Lutheran pastoral education and the contribution it makes to the congregations, the church wants faculty with substantial pastoral experience."

All 12 themes can be found online at:
www.lcms.org/pastoraleducation.

Faculty provide lasting impact

Most of us can remember teachers who were extremely influential in our lives. In addition to teaching us important course material, they inspired us. They shaped our thinking. They fashioned our attitudes toward the subjects they taught. Their profound impact upon our lives continues to this day.

In the same way, pastors can remember seminary professors who were extremely influential in their lives. These professors not only provided cognitive knowledge for their students, but also significantly influenced their thinking and attitudes concerning theology, people, and the place where theology and people intersect—the pastoral ministry. For each pastor, the combination of professors might be different, but each pastor can likely identify several seminary professors whose collective, significant influence upon his life and ministry remains to this day.

Dr. Daniel Aleshire, executive director of the Association of Theological Schools, the accrediting agency for approximately 250 seminaries in North America, including the two LCMS seminaries, participated in a recent study of the impact seminary professors have upon

students. In his book, *Earthen Vessels*, Aleshire describes the results of the study: "To our surprise, every faculty member at the school was identified as an important influence by at least one student. The professors that we thought were the most influential had impacted the largest number of students, but even the faculty members we suspected had influenced no one had touched someone in meaningful ways. . . . Every one of them had deeply influenced at least some students" (68).

While many of their names are not widely known throughout the LCMS, the faculty members of our Synod's two seminaries exercise a critical role, a sacred trust. Their formation of students will have a profound impact for generations to come, both upon the students themselves, and upon those whose lives the students will touch.

The following data describe the combined faculty of our Synod's seminaries in Fort Wayne and St. Louis:

- Number of full-time faculty: 63
- Average age: 51
- Percent possessing a terminal academic degree: 75
- Average years of pastoral ministry service prior to seminary: 8



Dr. Glen Thomas

While these data provide one description of the collective LCMS seminary faculty, a better description emanates from former students who gratefully remember the efforts of these professors, both inside and outside the classroom, to form and shape them for service as pastors, deaconesses, scholars, and leaders.

Words from David's song of thanks seem particularly appropriate in describing and responding to the work of these gifted, dedicated faculty members and the work their graduates will undertake for years to come: "Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him; sing praises to Him; tell of all His wondrous works" (1 Chron. 16:8-9).

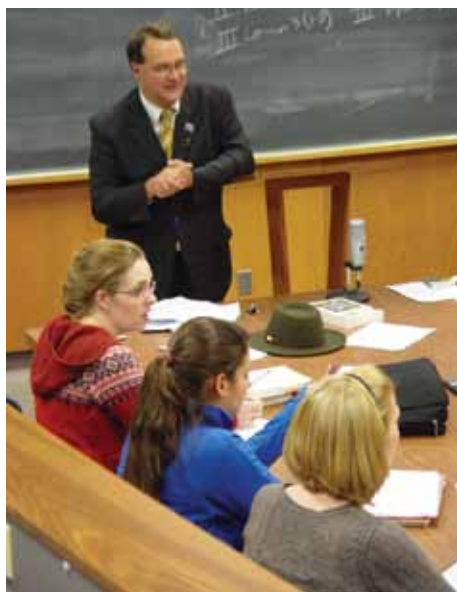
Dr. Glen Thomas
Executive Director
Board for Pastoral Education

Academic capacity, ministry excellence set the bar high for seminary faculty

Committed to the mission of the church . . . maintain academic excellence . . . testify to their faith . . . relate theology to pastoral practice . . . make alive Lutheran heritage . . . appreciate pastoral ministry: The list describing those who would teach future pastors is demanding.

"It's a big list and, while the demands are pretty significant, I think it's a reasonable list," comments Dr. Lawrence Rast, as he reviews the expectations of "Faithful Faculty," one of 12 themes for pastoral education in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. "If we set the bar high, it's because the Scriptures set that bar high, and we as Lutherans have set that bar high."

Rast, academic dean at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, says the qualifications for faculty are demanding, but not unattainable. "Certainly they're unattainable on our own if we're simply basing them on our own reason and strength, but we've been gifted by the Lord Himself for these kinds of tasks."



Dr. Lawrence Rast, professor of historical theology and academic dean, teaches a class for deaconess students at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. He says the seminaries "set the bar high" in their expectations of faculty because the Scriptures and Lutheran tradition set the bar high.

The seminary's search for faculty is somewhat like the vacant congregation's search for a pastor who is 30 years old with 30 years experience, Rast says. The seminary seeks men with meaningful pastoral experience and the potential to mature into the teaching task. He says God gives faculty a unique set of gifts to connect academic capacity with pastoral application.

"One thing we insist is that our professors actively model pastoral ministry," Rast states. "I think our professors are really gifted and are a tremendous blessing to the church in the way they actively model—in the classroom, the chapel, and informal settings—the whole picture of being a shepherd and a pastor in the church."

Ordinarily, the seminary does not consider a person for a faculty position unless he has five years of pastoral experience, according to Rast. Among the current faculty, he notes that only three out of 27 professors do not have that kind of parish experience.

"In one sense it is challenging to prepare men for pastoral ministry at the present time without having had some taste of that yourself," he explained. "At the same time, we are recognizing that there are circumstances where somebody without that particular set of experiences might work well within the context of the faculty."

Dr. James Voelz, dean of the faculty at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, says the seminary's expectations of its faculty include knowledge and ability in a given field, pastoral experience, and capabilities to work as a colleague in the wider seminary setting. He described the seminary as a multi-staff ministry that relies on people who are able to cooperate.

"The number one thing is that a prof be a good teacher," Voelz says. "Your call is to be here with these students and to enable them to be equipped as pastors. When a student comes to my beginning Greek class, he wants to know how good a Greek teacher I am because he is going to spend 150 hours with me."

Faculty members also need to be "good at their subject," Voelz continues. Scholarly activity, professional associations, and conferences help them keep current. Voelz describes the process as both centrifugal and centripetal since pro-

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MEET THE SEMINARY PROFESSOR:

DR. DOUGLAS RUTT

Mission experience has profound effect on teaching and ministry of Douglas Rutt

In 1981, he enrolled at Concordia Theological Seminary thinking of serving a rural parish in southern Minnesota, but a vicarage assignment profoundly affected Douglas Rutt's approach to ministry and, ultimately, his approach to teaching.

"We were challenged during our second year at the seminary to consider a vicarage experience overseas," Rutt explains. "We went to Guatemala in 1983 for two years, and that changed our lives forever."

After graduating, Rutt and his family returned to Guatemala where he served as an evangelistic missionary and theological educator. In all, eight years as a missionary gave him a global perspective on the challenges of communicating the Gospel.

Today, he serves as associate professor of pastoral ministry and missions and dean of distance learning at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.

Theological reflection is necessary in order to communicate the Gospel to people of other worldviews and cultures, he says. Mission often requires the church to study issues that arise, and he cites the Jerusalem Council's deliberation on issues of circumcision and adherence to the Law of Moses when non-Jewish believers began to pour into the church.

Rutt's ministry has included responsibilities with the LCMS Board for Mission Services as area secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean and director of theological studies for Guatemalan pastors. He has taught at the seminary part time since 1995 and full time since 2000.

"The challenge is to help people appreciate that someone from a different culture does not see things exactly the way we do," he says. "It is naive to think we can continue to say everything as we would say it in our own culture."

Rutt and Dr. Adam Francisco, assistant professor of historical theology,

team-teach "Ministry in a Pluralistic Context." This required course is designed to deal with religious pluralism and ethnic diversity in the United States today, as well as the post-modern philosophies that influence contemporary church life.

"We have to become students of our own culture and society," he comments. "I try to help the students begin to see there are different ways of looking at the world, at reality, at truth—and these things must be taken into account as we seek to proclaim the Gospel in these various contexts. This is very much part of life in America today."

As he talks about his missionary experience, Rutt points out an irony: His wife, Deborah, had wanted to be a missionary since she was a little girl. When they married, he was in the Navy, serving as a helicopter mechanic and pursuing a career in aviation. "Her parents sat her down and told her she would have to give up her dream of becoming a missionary if she were to marry me," he recalls.

Rutt earned his private pilot license while in high school. After his military service, they lived in southern Minnesota where he was a flight instructor and a charter pilot. "But I felt there was something that I was searching after," he says. A visit to Deborah's brother, who had begun his seminary studies in Fort Wayne, led to his own consideration of the pastoral ministry.

"I just kind of dropped everything and had to finish college first—Bethany College and then Minnesota State University, both in Mankato," he says. "I used my aviation training as a mechanic and as



Dr. Douglas Rutt

a pilot to support my family while I finished college and during my first years at the seminary."

Deborah's interests led to a missionary partnership. "When we were overseas, she was very much a part of the mission work," Rutt states. "Being an overseas missionary is a family affair. When you come into a new culture, a new village, the people are watching the entire family in terms of its commitment to the Gospel."

After a year-and-a-half of his first call to Guatemala, the family had to return to the United States when Deborah contracted a tropical disease. (Fortunately, she recovered and they were able to go back to Guatemala.) So, for three years he did find himself in Minnesota as pastor of a dual parish, St. John Lutheran Church and School in St. James and Truman.

Rutt grew up in Minnesota, but his overseas experience affected his parish ministry. "It was really helpful to approach a typical parish in the Missouri Synod from a missionary perspective,"

he remarks. "In other words, you first try to understand their history, values, assumptions, and worldview in order to do a better job of ministering to them."

In Guatemala, Rutt worked with distance education to instruct ministerial students. Today, he serves as dean of distance education at the seminary. "There is no question that this is going to be prominent in the future of theological education," he observes. "It's not the only way—it doesn't take away from the need for residential facilities and faculty and resources—but as another arm of what seminaries do."

Away from the campus and the mission process, he works with his hands to "readjust my priorities." From his experience as an aircraft mechanic, he is willing to repair the water heater, furnace, or microwave. He also intends to take up flying again.

The Rutts have five adult children—four daughters and one son. Their son and a son-in-law are currently attending the seminary; another daughter and her husband are applying to become Bible translators. "I'm thankful that all of our kids and their spouses are faithful Christian men and women," he says.

MEET THE SEMINARY PROFESSOR

A continuing series of articles designed to provide greater familiarity with the faculty members serving at the LCMS seminaries in Fort Wayne and St. Louis.



Dr. Douglas Rutt teaches a class of international students at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. Rutt, associate professor of pastoral ministry and missions and dean of distance learning, says his vicarage experience as a missionary in Guatemala, "changed our lives forever."

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

(Continued from Page 1.)

fessors share their scholarship with professors and theologians beyond the Synod and identify issues and developments to be discussed in the classroom.

In addition, Voelz says, a professor has to like people and "remember what it's

like to not know." With knowledge in his subject field, the professor has to be able to relate with students who may know little about the topic."

Voelz says all the faculty members are ordained and a majority have experience

as parish pastors. For many, that experience is ongoing, and he estimates that 50 percent of the professors actively teach a Bible class in their local congregations, as well as taking guest preaching assignments. "Some men will fill a vacancy here and there, and others will help out in a pastoral assistant role," he adds.

Rast concurs with the value of faculty members engaging in pastoral ministry activities. "We encourage our professors to get out, preach, teach, and be present at church workers conferences and to engage the church in meaningful ways," he comments. "We also require that they be active members of a local congregation, and most professors take certain leadership roles within their congregations." When faculty members are eligible for sabbatical leaves, the seminary offers the

option to serve in a parish or mission.

Faculty foster student contact in other ways outside the classroom. "For the last couple years, we've had faculty coffees outside after chapel if it's good weather or in Wartburg Hall otherwise to provide a place where students and faculty mix," Voelz adds. A range of intercollegiate sports—from basketball to golf, tennis, and cycling—is coached by the faculty. Faculty members also participate in intramural sports.

On Friday afternoons, professors and students enjoy a social time together. "You have no idea how fantastic this is in terms of just interacting with students in a whole different setting," Voelz comments. "They see you as a real person. I think it's almost impossible to overestimate the importance of something like that."



Dr. James Voelz, dean of the faculty at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.



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Concordia Seminary releases 1,000 videos for iTunes, iPhone, and iPod touch

Educational audio and video podcast resources from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, are now available for direct download by users of the iPhone and iPod Touch. The resources come from an extensive catalog the seminary has offered through iTunes U section of Apple Computer's popular iTunes music store.

With Apple's release of 3.0 software update for iPhone and iPod touch, iTunes U is directly accessible over both cellular and Wi-Fi networks through the iTunes Store.

"Mobile learning is an exciting area for Concordia Seminary," commented Rev. Tony Cook, director of distance curricula. "With Apple's latest advance, we are now able to bring educationally and theologically sound content to our residential and distance students as well as to the pastors and laity of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod via this exciting technology.

"Imagine being able to download a podcast directly onto your iPhone or iPod Touch and present it to your confirmation class, elders meeting, or Sunday morning Bible study with a simple cable and a standard television," Cook continued. "This advance in technology helps to fulfill our goal of offering relevant confessional resources directly to Lutherans throughout the world."

Since Apple's software update, more than 200,000 downloads of seminary content occur every month, according to Cook. "While this number far exceeds our original estimates," he said, "we anticipate a dramatic increase in downloads with the new titles we are now making available."

In a historic partnership with Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, and the Concordia University Education Network (CUEnet), the seminary is releasing a collection of more than 1,100 videos that were originally part of the Distance Education Leading To Ordination (DELTO) courses. "It is our hope that these videos will open the door to thousands of Christians worldwide who desire to learn more about the Bible and Lutheranism," Cook stated.

The new videos can be found on Concordia's iTunes U site under the heading "Congregational Courses." For those who are interested in downloading Concordia Seminary content directly onto an iPhone or iPod Touch, the instructions can be found at the following Apple support link: <http://support.apple.com/kb/HT3570>. For questions or help, contact the seminary's educational technology unit at 314-505-7018.

Concordia Theological Seminary unveils site for theology resources

As part of its efforts to make theological resources available to church workers, laity, and the church-at-large, Concordia Theological Seminary has opened an online media site, providing access to one of the most extensive collections of theological media offered to date.

Anyone with an Internet connection will have access by going to <http://media.ctsfw.edu/>.

"With media.ctsfw.edu we have a single location where someone can come and search through the full text of the entire publication history for *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, the CUEnet DELTO [Distance Education Leading to Ordination] video collection, and even the daily chapel sermons from Kramer Chapel," said Rev. Bill Johnson, CTS theological education technology specialist.

Johnson said the seminary intends to continue adding material, including past and future symposia lectures, full courses from some of the major figures in the history of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and more. "Basically, if we can get rights to it and it's helpful to the church, we want to make it available and searchable through this tool."

Upcoming events at CTS include:

- **The 2010 Symposia Series, Jan. 19-22**
For a complete schedule and list of speakers, or to register online for the symposia and preaching workshop, go to www.ctsfw.edu/symposia or call 260-452-2172 for information.
- **Christ Academy/Phoebe Academy — College, Jan. 21–24**
For college students who are contemplating service to the church as a pastor or deaconess to become a part of the seminary community for a few days. This retreat is free and held in conjunction with the annual symposia.
- **Invitational Campus Visit, March 25-27**
For men who are considering becoming pastors. Spouses and fiancés are strongly encouraged to join them. Experience the worship and academic life of the seminary. Housing and meals are provided at no charge to participants.

For additional information about any CTS event, see www.ctsfw.edu or phone 260-452-2100.

An idea that is catching on

It was an intriguing idea expressed within the letters to the editor in the October 2009 *Lutheran Witness*. The idea: "One Dollar Says Thanks for Pastor!" Pastor Ernie Bernet of St. Mark Lutheran Church, Mineral Wells, Texas, invited congregations throughout the LCMS to participate.

Here is the invitation from Pastor Bernet's letter:

"I suggest that each congregation and calling entity within [the] Synod take up a collection and mail it as soon as possible to The Joint Seminary Fund. The specific program I recommend works something like this: (1) Ask each person in our congregations to give one dollar per pastor serving them, and, (2) that this program be called 'One Dollar Says Thanks for Pastor!'

"... I also encourage us all to pray for our seminaries and our faithful folks serving there."

Pastor Bernet recently sent a check to The LCMS Joint Seminary Fund for \$1,000 from the members of St. Mark Lutheran Church and added a note indicating that the seminaries are included in his daily prayers.

The Stewardship Board at Village Lutheran Church in Ladue, Mo., a suburb of St. Louis, liked the "One Dollar Says Thanks for Pastor!" idea very much and adopted it, with a slight modification. The following invitation for support appeared in Village Lutheran Church's November newsletter:

"\$1? That's all? At Village Lutheran Church in Ladue? We have had two dedicated pastors this year and many sermons and Bible classes by seminary professors. Let's add a zero—\$10 per member to give thanks for all of these blessings—and designate Stewardship Sunday on Nov. 15 for each member to say 'Thanks for Pastors' in this most tangible way. We may, of course, give more."

Pastors and congregations across the LCMS are realizing that the funding model for the LCMS seminaries has changed dramatically over the past 30 years. Today, corporate Synod receives \$5 million less in unrestricted gifts from congregations and districts than it did in 1973 (\$19 million today versus \$24 million then—less than 1.5 percent of what is placed into offering plates today across the Synod). This figure reflects actual dollars, not adjusted for inflation. As a result, funding to supply generous subsidy to the LCMS seminaries is reduced to a memory.

With a return to *the good old days* of generous synodical subsidy for the seminaries unlikely, it will be up to individuals, groups, and congregations to support directly the formation of future LCMS pastors.

One final example of a congregation that desires to say "thank you" is found in this excerpt from a letter that was received recently by The LCMS Joint Seminary Fund:

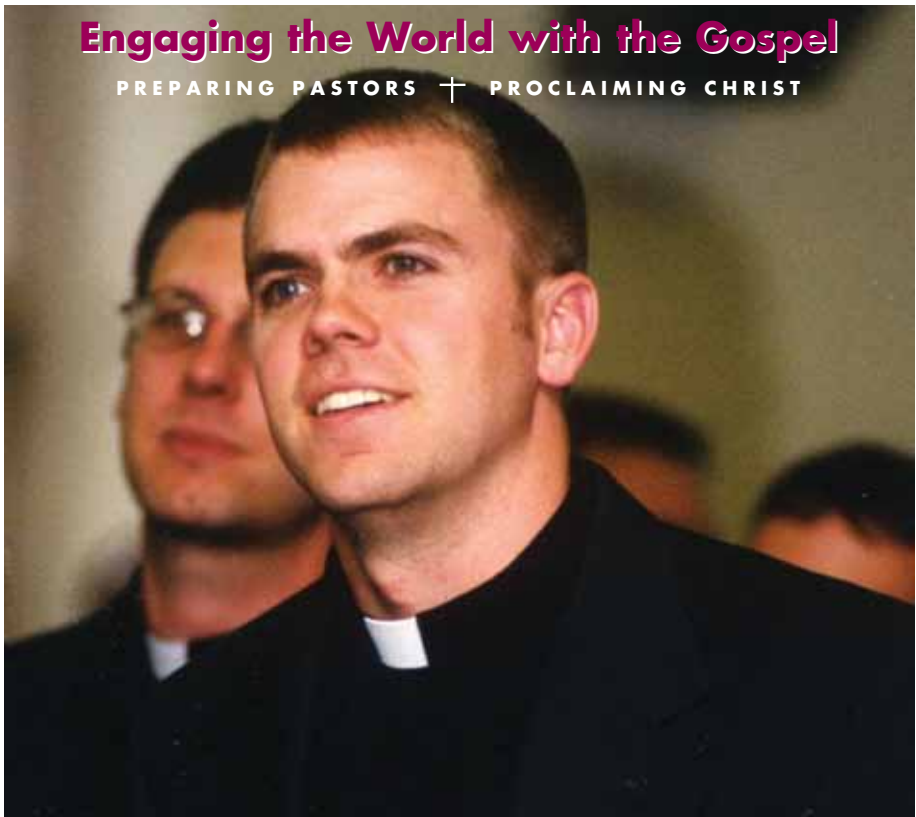
"Please accept this gift to The LCMS Joint Seminary Fund in the amount of \$20,000. It is given in gratitude to God for the many fine pastors who have prepared for the office of the public ministry in the past and in anticipation that the Lord of the church would provide more pastors through the ongoing ministry of our fine seminaries."

These examples of grateful congregations saying "thank you" with offerings to The LCMS Joint Seminary Fund are used with permission in the hope that this concept will catch on across the Synod. It is off to a very good start!

For more information, contact LCMS Joint Seminary Fund, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122; 800-325-7912, ext. 1675.

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St. Louis, MO 63122

800-325-7912, ext. 1675

paul.kienker@lcms.org
www.lcms.org/PastoralEducation

Pastors recall formational experiences with faculty as educators and mentors

While seminary faculty teach formally in the classroom, they also teach in influential ways as they interact with future pastors in the office, over coffee in the student commons, or in informal campus gatherings.

In all of these settings, a professor reflects his commitment to the mission of the church and to form students for pastoral ministry. The entire interactive process has a significant effect on a student's development for ministry.

Here are comments from pastors about the influence seminary faculty had on their ministries:

"Probably the most influential professor for me was Dr. Kurt Marquart," states Rev. Douglas Bauman, a 2002 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. "Dr. Marquart, a systematics professor, not only taught us the truths of the Scriptures but by his example, both inside and outside the classroom, modeled how a pastor is called to be both faithful and loving." [Dr. Marquart, associate professor of systematic theology, died in September 2006. He had served on the faculty since 1975.]

Bauman, who is pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ind., adds, "To be faithful and loving is what I hope to exemplify in my ministry."

He also recalls his impression of Dr. Lawrence Rast [professor of historical theology] and his passion for church history and the students he served.

"He made me see more clearly that our confession of the faith is not only to be believed, but is also to be lived and practiced," Bauman says.

Rev. David Gehne, a 2005 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, cites the influence of three professors, particularly their enthusiasm for scholarship and for the pastoral ministry.

"For me, Dr. Jeffrey Gibbs [professor of exegetical theology] was able to connect biblical scholarship and pastoral ministry," says Gehne, associate pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Racine, Wis. "Although it was informal, I would call him a mentor in many regards," he adds, noting that the connection often occurred at seminary gatherings where they talked about life and ministry and family.

Gehne also pointed to the influence of Dr. Reed Lessing, associate professor of exegetical theology, for his biblical scholarship and energy for preaching. "The man is so incredible! He was so fired up about what he taught us," Gehne adds that he appreciated Dr. David Schmitt [associate professor of practical theology] as a teacher of the preaching task and for his ability to connect life, literature, and preaching.

Dr. Jonathan Huehn, a 2009 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, comments that many "well-educated and caring professors" influenced his formation as a pastor. "It was a collaborative effort," he states. "The professors challenged me and helped me develop my theological acumen."

Huehn, assistant pastor—youth discipleship at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Belvidere, Ill., named seven professors. He listed Rast and Dr. Cameron MacKenzie, professor, both in the department of historical theology. From the department of pastoral theology and mission, he cited Dr. Carl Fickenscher II, associate professor; Dr. Larry Harvala, associate professor; Rev. John Pless, assistant professor;



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Dr. Randall Schroeder, assistant professor; and Dr. Harold Senkbeil, associate professor (now retired).

"My time at the seminary was a joy, and the Lord used all my professors to shape me for ministry. But you've allowed me only a few sentences to tell the story, so I'll use them to express my appreciation and affection for Dr. Jeffrey Gibbs [professor of exegetical theology]," writes Rev. Timothy Wilkins, pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in St. Louis.

"In the classroom and as a partner in ministry at Holy Cross, 'Pastor Jeff' has taught me to read the Bible, to live in my baptism, and to deliver the Gospel in preaching," says the 2004 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. "For this and so much more, he is a God-sent blessing and friend."

Rev. Scott Abel, a missionary-at-large at St. Luke Lutheran Church, Oviedo, Fla., notes that teaching eighth-grade confirmation is a challenge for any pastor. "Dr. Charles Arand's [professor of systematic theology] teaching on Luther's Small and Large Catechisms continues to guide not only the content of my confirmation classes, but also the way in which I pres-

ent the material," adds the 2005 graduate of the St. Louis seminary.

Abel continues: "Dr. Reed Lessing [associate professor of exegetical theology] exemplifies the quality of education Concordia Seminary offers. His influence on my pastoral formation went far beyond just the classroom. During my time at seminary, Dr. Lessing was a professor, pastor, and mentor to me and many others."

Abel states that every week he employs the techniques and concepts that he learned in Schmitt's homiletics classes. "Not only have I been personally blessed, but it has been a joy for me to share these same insights with other pastors in my area," he states.

As a seminarian, Rast, a 1990 graduate of the Fort Wayne seminary, was impressed with the accessibility of faculty and carried that formative experience into the parish. "Some of them were world-renowned experts, and to me that was intimidating, Rast comments. "They immediately embraced me as a future colleague, and I felt welcomed into ministry right from the beginning.

"They also helped me form questions that I needed to address in my develop-

ment as a future pastor," he continues. "That enabled me to go into the parish and to work with people in those same kinds of ways so together we could explore the depths and the wonders and the richness of God's grace and His mercy in Christ."

The LCMS Board for Pastoral Education advocates and coordinates the formation of pastors, missionaries, and other church servants to serve the mission and ministry needs of Christ's church. *Pastoral Education* is published four times a year as an insert in the *Reporter* by LCMS Board for Pastoral Education, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122.

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