



To Extol and Equip the Blessed Partnership between the Royal Priesthood and the Office of the Public Ministry

RESOLUTION 13-01A

OVERTURES 13-22, 13-28 (CW, PP. 452, 455)

WHEREAS, The apostle Peter affirms the royal priesthood, that all are called to “proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness” (1 Peter 2:9); and

WHEREAS, There exists a blessed partnership in the ministry of the Gospel between the royal priesthood and those called to the Office of the Public Ministry; and

WHEREAS, The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope quotes from the words of Jesus in Matt. 18:19–20, where He says, “If two of you agree on earth” to affirm that Jesus “grants the power of the keys principally and without mediation to the church”; and

WHEREAS, Martin Luther wrote:

We have been born of this bridegroom and bride through holy baptism and thus have become true clerics in Christendom in a hereditary manner, sanctified by his blood and consecrated by his Holy Spirit, as St. Peter calls us in 1 Peter 2:9: “But you are...a royal priesthood” for offering spiritual sacrifices. St. Paul also extols us as priests in the Epistle to the Romans, chapter 12:1, for he calls upon us “to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God....” Now to make sacrifices to God is solely the office of the priests, as the pope himself and all the world must admit. Moreover, we are not only his children, but also his brothers, as he says in [Ps. 22:22], “I will tell of thy name to my brethren,” and in the Gospel of Matthew: “Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and my sister, and my mother” Matt. 12:50. So we are not only true clerics and priests according to our right as children but also according to our right as brothers. This, our hereditary priesthood with which we are born, we do not want to have taken away, impeded and obscured; rather, we want to have it brought out into the open, proclaimed and extolled with all its honors in order that it should beam and shine like the precious sun and blind the eyes of the devil and his hypocrisies and abominations,.... (AE 38:187–188)

and also

If they were forced to grant that all of us that have been baptized are equally priests, as indeed we are, and that only the ministry was committed to them, yet with our common consent, they would then know that they have no right to rule over us except

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Task force membership: The task force is to include lay leaders (L); representatives from districts both with and without licensed lay deacons; and representatives from the Council of Presidents, both seminaries, and the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations.

Rev. Jonathan Dinger

LCMS Northwest District

Dr. Roni Grad

LCMS English District (L)

Rev. Dr. Robert Kasper

LCMS Michigan District

Jonathan Kohlmeier

LCMS Nebraska District

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Rev. Larry Vogel

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Kaye Wolff

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Rev. Timothy Yeadon

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**Chairman*

insofar as we freely concede it. For thus it is written in 1 Peter 2:9, “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, and a priestly royalty.” Therefore we are all priests, as many of us as are Christians. But the priests, as we call them, are ministers chosen from among us. All that they do is done in our name; the priesthood is nothing but a ministry” (AE 44:127);

and

WHEREAS, The holy ministry, or the pastoral office, is an office distinct from the priestly office, which belongs to all believers; and

WHEREAS, God has blessed the Church with a talented laity, whom He has blessed with spiritual gifts; therefore be it

Resolved, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod give thanks for district, university, and college-based lay training programs and the many willing lay servants who have sought to further their theological education and desire to serve in the work and mission of the Lord’s Church; and be it further

Resolved, That such lay training programs continue their work and include a major emphasis on evangelism and the task of outreach, as well as mercy, education, visitation, and so forth in our increasingly diverse and challenging cultural context; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations and districts be encouraged to identify individuals for special training in and attention to evangelism and outreach; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations and districts be encouraged to facilitate lay training on both local and district levels and to establish new opportunities for lay people to make use of their gifts in evangelism and service to the church; and be it further

Resolved, That districts be encouraged to provide assistance and support for lay training; and be it further

Resolved, That the President of the Synod convene a task force including lay leaders, representatives from districts both with and without licensed lay deacons,

and representatives from the Council of Presidents, both seminaries, and the Commission on Theology and Church Relations to consider how best to facilitate an ongoing conversation and communication among laity, districts, and the Synod in order to foster the blessed complementary relationship between the royal priesthood and the Office of the Public Ministry, and also to consider

- (1) the royal priesthood and the office of the public ministry in the New Testament (in light of the many offices that are mentioned, e.g., deacon, elder, overseer);
- (2) the challenges of an increasingly multicultural North America and a country that has become the third largest mission field in the world; and
- (3) the growing number of congregations and ministries that cannot provide financial support for a pastor;

and be it finally

Resolved, That the task force complete its work and present its recommendation to the Synod in 2018 for consideration at the 2019 convention.

Action: Adopted (3)

(During the discussion that followed the introduction of Res. 13-01A, the word “North” was added as a friendly amendment to the second-last resolve, subparagraph 2, after the word “multicultural.” An amendment was proposed and accepted to add to the resolution: “And be it finally Resolved, That the task force complete its work and present its recommendation to the Synod in 2018 for consideration at the 2019 convention.” A motion to amend the resolution by adding a final resolve paragraph that would “provide funding of \$200,000 per year for the next three years to truly equip the priesthood of all believers” was discussed until a motion to end debate was carried and the motion to amend failed [Yes: 132; No: 936]. When discussion of the resolution resumed, a motion to end debate was carried and Res. 13-01 was adopted as changed and amended [Yes: 911; No: 159].)

