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My dear Brother:

It does not require a great stretch of the imagination for me to hear you mutter: "Didn't I get one of these yellow sheets only a month ago? Why doesn't he get back to work instead of cluttering up my mail?" Well, thereby hangs a tale. A few weeks ago I spent an illuminating, and somewhat dismaying, evening with brother Theophilus in the Middle West. He has a good congregation of about five hundred members. It is an "average" parish, with the usual complement of saints and sinners, with the lines between them shifting back and forth. Theophilus has worked hard and the Lord of the Church has blessed his hands and his voice.

But this night Theophilus was troubled. We were talking about money and the stewardship of his people. "You know" he said "I am really Synod-minded. We have quadrupled our contributions to Synod over the past twelve years. I know that our Synod is really doing a great job and that no congregation is worth a shot of powder unless it lifts its sights beyond the local level and reaches out into the world through the work of Synod. But now I am getting scared. We have been asked to 'up' our budget for Synod by another thirty per cent. I don't know if we can do it. I am sure my people have the money. There is still very little sacrificial giving. But the educational process is slow — much slower than the growth of Synod's work. I feel that I am caught in the middle. And then the rest of you fellows come along — Valpo, and the high schools, and the Charities — and I really don't know what to do. Give me some time and a little more divine blessing, and I can probably make it — but all of you want money right now. I don't blame you; you represent great causes, but I can't get blood out of a turnip." (For a moment I visualized Deacon Sauerbraten who would not like being called a turnip — but I let it go). I am sure you will agree that Brother Theophilus is not alone in his concern. I have heard similar things in parsonages late at night up and down the land. The answer? Certainly it is not an easy one. The needs of a living church in a dying world must be brought to our people ever more eloquently and urgently. This is our bounden duty and we are all in this together.

It also creates a problem for Valpo and the rest of us. We certainly do not want to cut into the synodical dollar. A great Lutheran University should be built in our time and our generation. Some of our laity should be educated for time and eternity within the boundaries of the church. A great Church deserves a great University.

Perhaps there is no ultimate answer on this side of the last veil. In other words, this, too, is a part of our common life in a struggling, growing, waiting, and working Church. It will be heavenly to be somewhere, some day, where the streets are of gold and the gates are of pearl; but as long as we are where we are, we shall have to ask for a little gold and a few pearls so that the Kingdom may go marching on. Something like this I said to Brother Theophilus late that night. This, too, is a part of our theology of the ministry — and this, too, shall pass away when we are no longer vessels of clay and hewers of wood and drawers of water. Meanwhile, I hope that also a little of the silver and gold of your people will help us to bring God and His Son and His Church into the lives of our young people.

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PARAGRAPH THAT BRINGS TROUBLE

On a sunny day in fall I journeyed down to Wabash College to be present at the commemoration of the 125th anniversary of that solid little school. It has often struck me that Wabash College even today is closer in its traditions and customs to our Concordias throughout the land than any other college that I know personally. The 125th anniversary featured a symposium on the Liberal Arts. Three distinguished representatives of the natural sciences, the social sciences and the humanities, said what they had to say about the condition of the liberal arts in the land today. Much of it was quite depressing. Dr. Norbert Wiener, the famous mathematician from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, took some pot-shots at the "nondescript school subjects in high school which combine the greatest possible consumption of time with the least possible acquisition of permanent tangible training." And then he continued: "There are several causes which lead up to this. One of them, and perhaps the most important, is the convention that the school child should normally hate his school education and hate it with impunity and with the backing of his parents. This is reinforced by the large number of elective subjects for the choice of which the high school child is supposed to exercise a discretion which is simply beyond him at his age and at the point of training at which he stands. Moreover, the American school system is in the hands of a powerful and self-perpetuating lobby of vested interests — the National Education Association. In teaching, content has been relegated to a position of the utmost unimportance and the Arcona method, a method which has nothing to do with the content to be imparted, has been elevated to top rank. Teachers are supposed by their training and education to be competent to teach any subject, whether they have given it serious consideration or not, and are in fact very generally called upon to teach subjects which they have never studied. In general, our mathematics teachers do not know mathematics and our language teachers do not know languages. The result is that a large part of the years of a high school student are spent in a lock-step marking time rather than marching anywhere in particular."

Dr. Whitney J. Oates of Princeton University talked about knowledge and freedom. The following paragraph should be of interest to all of us: "We are subtly invited to think of freedom as freedom from restraint, restraint of all sorts, on the somewhat naive assumption that everything would be just fine if these restraints were removed. This freedom from, or negative freedom, may be even more dominant in a curious way than perhaps we realize.

But a moment's reflection will reveal that if viewed only as freedom from restraint, it is a pretty sterile conception (let all teenagers note). It must be completed by insisting upon the positive aspect. In other words, 'freedom from' must be completed by the notion of 'freedom to' as in freedom to worship; or 'freedom for' or finally 'freedom why.'"

Here in a few sentences is something which should be trumpeted on all college campuses throughout the land.

Dr. Oates' next paragraph interested me, not because I agree with it, but because of the strange list of things which it embodied. He points out that there are certain creative and speculative moments in time and history which have stood the test of time. He feels that these monuments to man's creative ability occupy "their high position because they embody within them the most profound visions of the essence of reality." His list: The Iliad, the Oresteia, the Oedipus, the Book of Job, the Gospels, the Upanishads, the works of Plato, Aristotle, Kant, the B Minor Mass, the Ninth Symphony, Hamlet, Lear, the Sistine Chapel. He then quotes the famous phrase of St. Augustine: "Securus judicat orbis terrarum" — "the judgment of the world is sound." As I have indicated, I would never place the Book of Job and the Gospels in the same list with the other monuments to man's creative genius, but I feel that the list itself is quite significant.

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SECTION FOR MRS. THEOPHILUS: The response to my remarks concerning the ladies of our parsonages in the last issue of these jottings was overwhelming — three letters and one post card. The letters suggested that this feature be continued; the postcard was slightly negative. It said: "You evidently need a long vacation. Go somewhere where there are no pens or pencils." So — by a smashing majority of three to one, these paragraphs for the ladies are in. I have, however, already discovered several things. Item: When the ladies write, they write with eloquence and vigor. Item: They have kept their sense of humor. I suppose they have to. One, for example, writes vividly of a certain Mrs. Schnattergans, the secretary of the Ladies Aid, who regularly "beats her gums" (a lovely phrase) about "how bad the working man has it," while her husband (Mrs. Schnattergans') makes twice as much as Theophilus. She wants to know whether it would be a "small sin or a large sin" if she (Mrs. Theophilus) would one day just say to Mrs. Schnattergans: "Oh, shut up!" Since it involves a theological problem, I have submitted the question to St. Louis for a "Gutachten." By the way, this remarkable lady adds a P.S.: "I am mailing this to you in a church envelope. It's a means I use to supplement my husband's salary."

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QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION: Item: "My husband was elected fifth vice president of the District. Don't you think this rates a new dress?" Answer: "Yes. But perhaps you had better wait as he now climbs the synodical ladder. When he gets a little higher up he will become infallible and he can then choose your dress for you without any danger of making a mistake." Item: "I have been singing with the Girl Scouts quartet, but my husband says I am getting a little too stout for that. What shall I do?" Answer: "Tell him to jump in the lake. He hasn't lost any weight since he left the Sem."

One of the most astonishing responses to these paragraphs came from a brother who must for reasons of health and safety remain anonymous. Apparently he is the "mileage secretary" of a pastoral conference. His duties are to apportion traveling expenses and then collect the proper amounts from the brethren. Apparently he writes to the delinquent brethren first; if he gets no response, he writes to the lady of the manse. And the tone of this letter strikes a new and amazing note in the history of the Missouri Synod. He first refers back to her wedding and her romantic days, and then goes on:

"How could you in your innocence anticipate that he would turn into such a tightwad; besides, you thought his dad had money. But sis, you should have remembered his German Lutheran background. Moreover, you should have read the fine Latin print on his diploma. There was something about "Semper chasta et pauper in aeterni." The exact words have slipped my mind for the moment. We all make mistakes, of course, and the old pole-cat is the father of those lovely little angels and/or howling brats of whom you are so proud frequently and/or occasionally. But cheer up, sis, they do grow up, furnish you with beautiful grand-children and when in the chips send you on trips to California and/or New York all expenses paid. I know that I am rambling a bit, sis, but I'll get to the point. The forgetful old snake should have an extra ten spot from that last \$15.00 wedding lying around somewhere. The old horse thief told you he got only \$5.00 which you spent some time ago. Look on his desk under that pile of old Lutheran Witnesses, Advance, and Christian Economics. Having found it, send me \$6.00 and keep \$4.00 for yourself and then beat him on the head until he clips the little coupon below and hands it to his treasurer." What a diplomatic approach! I have often wondered how he is making out.

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UNIVERSITY NOTES: You will be happy to hear that Eli Lilly and Company has again recognized the work of the University by giving us a grant of Twenty Thousand Dollars over a period of two years in order to assist some of our younger faculty members in attaining their doctorates. This is one of the most important academic problems we have at the present time, and the help of the Eli Lilly Company is deeply appreciated. Perhaps I should add that the entire work of the Lilly Endowment in the field of higher education has been marked by a very high degree of intelligence and understanding of our real problems. This latest gift is another evidence of their thoughtful approach to the basic problems of our colleges and universities.

We have just made a check and find that we now have 1664 beds on the campus. This includes all dormitories, all fraternity and sorority houses, and all University-owned residences. Our total campus enrollment is just about 2380. This means that 716 are not housed on the campus. Where they are living is anybody's guess. Some, of course, are local; some are commuters; some are married students. But some must be sleeping under the bridges over the Pennsylvania railroad. The other day I heard that one

enterprising character was jay-walking one cold afternoon in the hope that he could spend a warm and comfortable night in jail. All this, of course, points up the problem that we shall require additional housing very shortly. The members of our Board of Trustees are now working on the problem. Since we are able to issue Lutheran University Association notes on income-producing property, we shall probably ask some of our good people to invest some additional funds in new dormitories.

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JOTTINGS: Someone will surely remember that occasionally I mention a book in these rambblings. Comes a letter from a brother in Chicago who says I should mention *The Inspiration of Scripture* by Robert Preus, which was published in 1957 by The Lutheran Book Company, Mankato, Minn. I have not read the volume too carefully, but I can recommend it wholeheartedly on the basis of what I have seen of it. It is a study of the doctrine of inspiration (which will certainly be one of the focal points of doctrinal discussion in the years to come, especially within the Lutheran Church) as set forth by the teaching of the Lutheran Orthodox fathers of the seventeenth century. My learned brother in Chicago feels that it may be one of the really significant books that have appeared in recent years. I have checked with my colleagues on the campus who do more reading than I do and they all agree that it is well worth your attention. Perhaps you can have somebody give it to you for Easter.

. . . . If you are blessed with a good memory you may recall that several issues ago I said something about the custodians in our churches. Comes now a letter from a good friend in Wisconsin in which he writes as follows: "The only thing that I could add to your description is that in our church we kids had to help the janitor ring the bells. He would take the rope of the big bell and two kids were hired to help pull the other ropes. This was done in cadence, and while the rope lifted his body heavenward we were to be on the downswing. Maliciously we would pull at the same time and have the bell sound like a bunch of anvils. In his wrath he would try to give us a sideswipe on the way down while hanging with one hand on the rope, but we would duck at the right time. When the ringing of the bells came to an end we could go down the steps a lot faster than he, and he never caught us.

"This same man had to pump the pipe organ before the electric motor was installed. On one occasion we got a new teacher who was a whiz on the pipe organ. At the conclusion of the service the janitor went around to the front of the organ and said, 'We played good today.' This was an insult to the parish teacher who rose up in his dignity and said, 'I played the organ.' The next Sunday he sat poised, ready to play. He came down with his fingers spread to go into the prelude, but nothing happened. He looked at the wind indicator and found that there was no power. He got off the bench and went to tell the janitor to 'pump, pump,' but this estimable character sat there with his arms folded and said, 'First say, "we played well"'

. . . . Somewhere I saw again recently the famous quote from de Tocqueville: "Halfway down the stairs we threw ourselves out of the window in order to get to the ground more quickly." He was talking about the French Revolution, but his observation has a peculiar and significant relevance for our own time. . . . Have you seen Heywood Broun's old dictum recently: "Whenever I am in doubt as to what stand I shall take on any issue I wait to see what position Bishop Manning takes and then I take the opposite." . . . From an anonymous source: "Scholarship and learning are by their very nature not cooperative but individual pursuits inspired by casual conversation and unplanned debate, but never by the suffocating grip of organization. Had Moses relied on a committee to decide which mountain to climb, which route to take, and whether he should go alone or with a delegation, a succession of procedural approaches would have been resolved upon, reflecting the proper team spirit. But God, the Ten Commandments in His Hands, would in all likelihood still be waiting for him." . . . A very interesting and significant observation by Jacques Maritain, which should be read with careful attention: "A mutual love which would be bought at the price of faith, which would base itself on some form of eclecticism, or which . . . would say 'I love him who does not have my faith because, after all, I am not sure that my faith is the true faith' . . . in so saying would reduce faith to a mere historical inheritance and seal it with the seal of agnosticism and relativity. Such a love, for anyone who believes he has heard the Word of God, would amount to putting man above God . . . We can render judgment concerning ideas, truths, or errors; good or bad actions; character, temperament, and what appears to us of a man's interior disposition. But we are utterly forbidden to judge the innermost heart. . . . When it comes to that there is only one thing to do and that is to trust in God. And that is precisely what love for our neighbor prompts us to do."

. . . . A significant paragraph from a recent issue of *The Christian Century*: "The usefulness of the term 'neo-orthodoxy' has waned. Whatever value it may have had in the 1930's or early 1940's to designate a then-existing movement, has faded away. New problems have arisen; the issues have been reformulated; alignments are different . . . In fact when I hear the term I am irresistibly reminded of the reply D. W. Brogan recently received when he told someone he was an agnostic: 'I didn't think you were as old as that.'"

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. . . . Some of you may remember that last spring Rheinhold Niebuhr wrote in *Life* magazine a somewhat negative and mildly critical article about Billy Graham and his crusade in New York City. Several months later Niebuhr appeared again, this time in *The Christian Century*, with an article entitled "After Comment, The Deluge." Apparently he received more mail about his attitude over against Billy Graham than on anything else which he has written in the last few years. One paragraph was especially interesting. He writes:

"One surprising fact in this avalanche of mail was the number of letters from Lutheran businessmen. It was surprising because in the curious amalgam of American Protestantism in which perfectionist and Reformation interpretations of the Christian faith are so strangely mingled, one might expect the Lutherans to bear special witness against pietistic illusions. They might not know anything about Luther's rather too polemical attitude toward Schwenkfeld, whose message was almost identical with Graham's; but one would look for some remnant of Luther's insistence that righteous men are still sinners and just as much in need of the divine mercy as the sinners. However, the Lutheran laymen from whom I heard were not aware of

this issue. They merely affirmed that while they did not like Graham's 'methods,' these methods were perhaps more effective than those of their own church."

By the way, I have also noticed this among some of our own laymen, and it certainly indicates that there is still some educational work in theology to be done among us.

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A few months ago I happened to have lunch in Washington with a college president whose background was Presbyterian. In the course of the conversation he said that at a recent faculty meeting on his campus some one pointed out that Roman Catholics and Missouri Synod Lutherans build the boldest, most imaginative, and most experimental churches. When someone asked, "Why?" — the answer was that "these people are so sure of their faith, they know that it is so sound and so great, that it can live and grow in all manner of surroundings." An interesting observation!

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Now we are moving toward Lent. Last year there was a warm and significant argument in my correspondence concerning my remark that Lent finds the Lutheran pulpit at its best. Some of the brethren seemed to feel that we were not striking the heart of Lent just as sharply as we should.

A few thoughts from a recent chapel address which may give you a small start toward an approach to Lent which might be relevant: As the great twentieth century staggers past its halfway mark no observer of the course of history can possibly deny that few generations in the long and shadowed story of mankind have made more terrible mistakes. The whole story of our age, of course, still remains to be written. We know enough, however, to know today that our long and blind rebellion against the logic of history, our forgetfulness of the truth of life, has brought us to the dark edge of unprecedented disaster. Our generation has become history's greatest prodigal, lost and alone in a far country.

If we ask why this has happened we discover immediately that the basic reason for our trouble lies in the fact that man has again forgotten who he is or what he is. One of his great preoccupations these past fifty years has been this strange business of trying to "rediscover" himself — as if he were crying to the far corners of the Universe, to his philosophers and scientists, to his teachers and preachers: "Won't somebody please tell me who I am?"

The answers which he has received in our century have been bad answers, half-true answers, false answers, proud answers. There were some who told him that he was an inseparable part of biological nature and that his humanity is but a branch on the tree of nature. They have told him that he is an animal; of the highest order, it is true, but still an animal. There were others who have told him that he is most truly a man when he can satisfy his material wants. He is the economic man. In the words of the people in the great Russian novel: "Give us bread and do with us what you like." Our only destiny is social security.

Still others have told him that he is most fully man when he lives in harmony with his reason. He is naturally good. Virtue is knowledge and knowledge is virtue. We can be optimistic about the future just as long as we try to work things out reasonably.

The black, evil results of these answers are written clear today. If we are really animals there is no reason why we should not live like animals — and some of us have. If we live only to satisfy our material wants, then let us adopt the philosophy of get and grab — and some of us have. If we live by reason alone, then we are really self-sufficient, and no bond of obligation or duty ties us to our fellowman — and some of us have done that.

The tragedy of all this lies in the fact that man is, according to God's Word, something infinitely higher than all these modern answers, now so suddenly obsolete, would have us believe. And because he is infinitely higher he can also sink incredibly lower. He can march toward heaven or toward hell. His range of being includes the highest good and the lowest evil. This is true because man is essentially a believing being. He must believe in something, he must worship something, he must have something that reaches down into the deep wellsprings of life.

Here now comes an axiom in history. If he no longer believes in God, he will believe blindly and passionately in something else — in himself — in his nation — in his mind — in his Fuehrer — in his science — but he will believe. When he dethrones God, that throne never remains empty. Something human climbs up and sits where God once was. Man comes to the last futile bitterness of life — the worship of something which is only a part of himself, which has no life and no power and no glory which he has not given it himself, which collapses when man collapses, and which ends when he ends. This is the last tragedy of modern man — the substitution of a dark mirror of himself for the living God.

This proud, materialistic humanism has been crushed under a cross. We now have a growing number of men and women who see that the true and eternal interpretation of life and man, the final terrific impact of the Divine upon the human, the voice from eternity, the cry from the cross, is the final answer to our problems. Under a crown of thorns, it says that man is a sinner, that God has loved him with an everlasting love, that the mirror of God in man has been partially restored, and that man's destiny can now be great and eternal — by faith — not in the broken idols of our generation, but in God, creating, redeeming, and sanctifying — lifting men into the presence of God by the everlasting arms of the God-man, Christ Jesus.

This is really the ultimate meaning of the Cross for our days and years. Fifteen hundred years ago St. Augustine, in a day much like ours, when an old civilization was dying and a new one was being born, used the striking phrase "adhaerere deo" (to stick to God). This is what our generation must now do. Through the power of the Cross with its prayer of pity at the beginning, "Father, Forgive them for they know not what they do," and its prayer of trust at the end, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit," we shall once more be able to stand up before God, and all our days — dark and anxious though they may be — will be filled with the saving, glorifying grace of eternity. And that is the only way, I truly believe, we shall be able to live through them at all.

My good wishes for your life and ministry.

O. P. Kretzmann, President