

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY



Volume 70:3/4

July/October 2006

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In Memoriam

† Kurt E. Marquart †

1934–2006

The Reverend Kurt Erik Marquart, D.D., well known for his defense of confessional Lutheran theology, died at home at the age of 72 on September 19, 2006. He had been diagnosed the previous December with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), a progressive neurodegenerative disease also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. He had been a Lutheran minister for forty-seven years and taught at the seminary for nearly thirty-one years. At the time of his death he was associate professor of systematic theology and had served in previous years as that department's chairman.

Dr. Marquart was born in Tallinn, Estonia, on June 20, 1934, to Kurt Arved and Margarita Angelica (née Ulk) Marquart. To escape the Soviet invasion, he moved with his family in 1941 to Vienna, Austria, and lived for a time in the Displaced Persons (DP) Camps in North Germany (1945) and then came to the Hudson River Valley of New York where he was brought up. In 1952 he was confirmed in the Lutheran congregation in Nyack, New York. His upbringing in Russian and German schools provided him an avenue into the international Lutheran world. He also served as an instructor in French, which later served him well in his mission trips to Haiti where he frequently lectured at its Lutheran seminary.

Though students who did not attend the Preparatory School of Concordia Collegiate Institute, Bronxville, New York were required to take three years at its Junior College to receive the Associate of Arts degree, he received it in two years, receiving his diploma in 1954. He then entered Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, from which he received the Bachelor of Arts in 1956 and Bachelor of Divinity in 1959 for which degree he wrote a thesis comparing Gustav Aulén and Francis Pieper on prolegomena. From the University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada in 1982 he received his M.A. degree for a major paper titled "Bio-Teleology Reconsidered: Prolegomena to Some Future Metaphysical 'Episteme'-Shift." In recognition of his lifelong service to Christ and his church, Concordia University – Wisconsin awarded him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 2001.

He served his vicarage at Redeemer Lutheran Church in North Tonawanda, New York (1957–1958) and was ordained on July 19, 1959, to serve Trinity Lutheran Church, Weatherford, Texas. In 1961 he became the pastor of Redeemer and Good Shepherd congregations, Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia. Dr. Marquart was a member of the Lutheran Church of Australia's Commission on Theology and Inter-Church Relations, the Queensland District Church Council, and Concordia College (Toowoomba) Council.

In 1975 he joined the seminary faculty, a few months before it moved from its Springfield, Illinois, campus to Fort Wayne. His classroom style in engaging students in a lively theological discussion made him popular with students and instilled in them a love of the Lutheran Confessions. His faculty colleagues expressed their admiration for him by electing him to the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations (1976–1981, 1983–1992, 2001–2007). It is unlikely that anyone will surpass the number of years in which he served this commission. He was also a member of the ALC–LCMS Fellowship Commission (1978–1981). He had a lively interest in apologetics and lectured in universities and other venues against evolution. He was strongly opposed to abortion and was active in pro-life groups.

Dr. Marquart's articles appeared in many popular and theological journals and periodicals first in Australia and America. His bibliography extends to many pages. A vital source into the events leading to disruptions in the LCMS is his *Anatomy of an Explosion: A Theological Analysis of the Missouri Synod Conflict* (1977), as well as "*Church Growth*" as a *Mission Paradigm* (1994). He also authored *The Church and Her Ministry, Fellowship, and Governance* for the Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics series (1990) and at the time of his death was preparing the volume on prolegomena for this series. His influence was extended through numerous scholarly articles in the *Concordia Theological Quarterly*.

Widely sought after as a speaker at pastoral conferences, district meetings, and congregational events, Dr. Marquart will be long remembered for his incisive mind, quick wit, and genuine concern. He was regarded by all as a gentleman. In May of 2006 the graduating class provided a perpetual remembrance of him by presenting a portrait of him to the seminary, which can be seen in the lower hallway of Loehe Hall. Faculty colleagues will especially miss his thoughtful and cordial presence, recalling his particularly gracious words only two weeks before his death at the 2006 Fall Faculty Forum. There he thanked them for his service with them. He was in the classroom one week before his death and only his death prevented him from attending what he knew would be his last meeting with the commission on theology. He was buried from the seminary chapel on September 22 with over 130 robed ministers honoring his memory with their presence. Committal was at Covington Memorial Gardens. Dr. Marquart is survived by his wife, Barbara (née Martens) and five children—Danny, Cynthia (Johnson), Barry, Angela (Hill), and Anthony—eighteen grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

We mark his passing not as those without hope, but confident in the unfailing promises of the very Christ whom Dr. Marquart himself confessed and is confessing. "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. But it is good for me to draw near to God. I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all Thy works" (Ps 73:26–28).



Kurt Erik Marquart

1934–2006

We apologize for the error that occurred in printing the photo of Dr. Marquart in the July/October 2006 issue of CTQ (page 194).

The Editors