

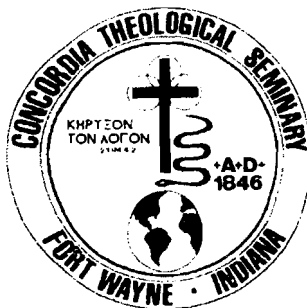
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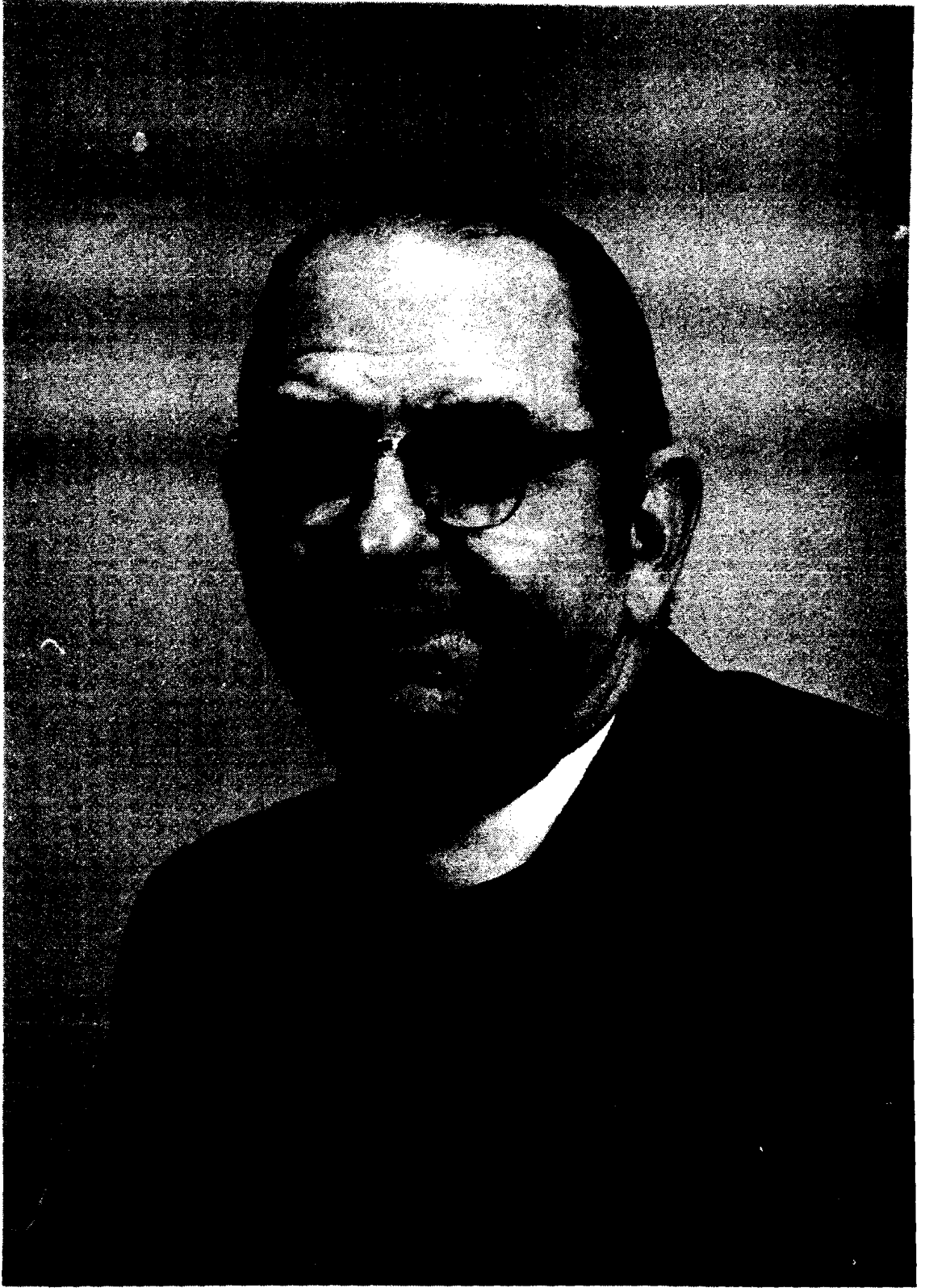
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**Henry J. Eggold**  
**1917-1982**

## Henry J. Eggold, Th.D., D.D. 1917-1982

It is almost two years since Dr. Henry J. Eggold learned that he was suffering from disease of the lungs. A recuperation period of two months following an operation permitted him to return to the classroom in January 1981 for the winter and spring terms. As in many years before, he again interviewed the 1981 graduating class for their first assignments as pastors. Early in the summer of 1981 the illness reoccurred, and his teaching assignments for the approaching school year were cancelled. Throughout the autumn he was seen on campus and managed to muster the strength to attend the annual Christmas dinner for faculty and staff. Shortly afterward he became permanently bedridden with paralysis, and as spring turned into summer he gradually slipped away until the Lord finally took him to Himself. This time gave his colleagues and students an opportunity to wish him farewell. The seminary touring choir, the Kantorei, under the direction of Richard Resch, gave him a concert in his study, which had been converted into his bedroom. In his house near the campus, he received a steady stream of visitors who provided him with news of daily events. As a final token of affection and honor, the faculty awarded him the degree of Doctor of Divinity *honoris causa*. A long-time member of the committee which sifted through the details of doctoral nominations, he would have objected with his usual self-effacing modesty to receiving any such honor. He never considered himself as doing anything extraordinary. Certain jobs were there to be done and he just happened to be there. That was how he looked at it. The faculty's award to him was a statement to itself that his wisdom would be greatly missed.

The success of any institution is built upon certain individuals in the institution who themselves become living institutions. Henry Eggold had become a living institution within the seminary in a career that began in Springfield in 1951 and concluded thirty-one years later in Fort Wayne. All the graduating classes from 1952 to 1983 knew him in some capacity. This number of students may amount to nearly forty percent of the present ministerium of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

After ten years as a parish pastor, Dr. Eggold came to the seminary where he would teach, represent the seminary on high-

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level synodical commissions, and serve as dean of students and acting president. He left his most indelible impression in his position as placement director. Beginning each autumn the graduating seminarians with their wives would wait their turns for an interview which, they thought, would forever seal their geographical destinies and professional fates. The academic work of these seminarians was never an end in itself but only preparation for their life's calling of preaching the Gospel. Henry Eggold, a master in the calling process and completely devoted to the work, never considered himself the ultimate authority. It was a job that had to be done, and he was there to do it. This attitude of doing a job so characterized his entire service for the church that he never got caught up in self-importance. Rather than issuing magisterial memoranda with overtones of sovereignty Henry Eggold used quiet persuasion.

In the autumn of 1973, shortly before the sad and disrupting events of February 1974 at our sister seminary in St. Louis, Dr. Eggold assumed the leadership as acting president of Concordia Theological Seminary, then at Springfield. With the seminaries less than one hundred miles from each other, it was not beyond the realm of possibility that the torrential torrents of those difficult days would sweep us away also. It was the same "job to be done" attitude of Henry J. Eggold that kept the seminary on an even keel during those rough days. The story may have been forgotten or may even be untold how an impasse occurred at the assignment meeting when the Council of Presidents refused to place any candidates from any seminary, including Springfield, unless the graduates of the dissident group also received placements. Dr. Eggold insisted against great odds that our seminary students were being unjustly punished for an act in which they had no part. The calls were delayed, but then delivered. In 1974 any number of possibilities were open to Dr. Eggold. His success as acting seminary president in trying times could have meant new positions of prominence for him, but he asked not to be considered for the office of permanent seminary president. His main interest was the direct preparation of pastors for future generations. So it was back to the classroom and the placement office for another seven years.

Dr. Eggold's academic forte was homiletics. He contributed regularly to *Portals of Prayer* and *The Concordia Pulpit*. He translated *Selected Sermons by C.F. W. Walther* (Concordia Publishing House) and set forth his own homiletical philosophy in *Preaching Is Dialogue* (Baker Book House). To the end he was

a man who lived and worked for his church, a rare virtue at a time when some attempted to tear it down and not build it up.

With the death of Henry Eggold, a seminary institution has passed away. Already during the past year, he was missed and now we must accustom ourselves to his absence. He must have had the satisfaction that the church and seminary, both of which had come upon hard times, were both at the time of his passing vital institutions. Yes, he lives with Jesus, but he also continues to work through the many pastors who learned their pastoral and preaching skills from him. The annual call service is always a confluence of high emotions, great satisfaction, and not infrequently disappointment. As placement director, Dr. Eggold found himself annually in the middle of the joys and disappointments of the candidates and their families. Yet he seemed to rise above these ephemeral emotions. Each call was, after all, only a job, but what a job! It is the job through which the Gospel is preached, the kingdom extended, and the church strengthened. And it is a job that was well done by Henry J. Eggold.

David P. Scaer