

THE SPRINGFIELDER is published quarterly by the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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 An Introduction

TO MANY readers this journal will doubtless come as a stranger, but a stranger who is eager to make your acquaintance. To others, especially the alumni of our seminary, this issue of THE SPRINGFIELDER will appear as an old friend who has had his "face lifted." We are, of course, referring to the new format.

The present journal is a further flowering of a previously existing magazine, which for many years served its purpose well. Formerly published by the students under faculty supervision, it was read by students, faculty, and alumni of the school. Besides news items it contained devotional, doctrinal, and other feature articles. In recent years other papers, THE SEM QUILL, THE CHALLENGE, and the ALUMNI NEWSLETTER, have appeared on our campus. These publications in general fulfill the original role of THE SPRINGFIELDER. Therefore, the faculty recently resolved that THE SPRINGFIELDER should be altered "to serve as a theological voice of the seminary, placed in charge of the president, to appear about four times a year, and to reach a wider circulation." The current issue is the initial attempt to implement that resolution.

As a theological voice of the faculty, THE SPRINGFIELDER will carry articles reflecting the thought of the seminary on subjects relating to the various theological disciplines. It will also contain editorial comment on questions and issues confronting the Church and offer a number of book reviews. While the intention is not to stress seasonal material such as festivals of the church year, sermons and homiletical studies will occasionally be included.

Obviously, most of the copy for the issues will be furnished by members of the faculty and will largely be the fruit of the faculty's departmental study program. Plans, however, include studies by contributors from the field, and possibly an occasional article of merit by a seminary student.

To characterize this journal as a theological voice by no means implies that the voice must be a monotone. While the variety of contributors will always endeavor to speak with one voice "the things which become sound doctrine," the accents will understandably vary; especially in those areas where the Scriptures do not speak or where they present difficulties, and in the realm of the *adiaphora*

which runs the gamut of everything from upholstered pews to synodical policies. Here there are and must be allowable differences of opinion. There must also be the freedom to discuss these differences among brethren. An author who is compelled to disguise or betray his true convictions simply cannot write with that integrity demanded above all of a Christian scholar.

This, then, poses the old question of "academic freedom" for committed men. It also imposes a concomitant responsibility. Evidently, for the Christian scholar "academic freedom" must be sought somewhere between two devastating extremes: the constrictions of the intellectual and spiritual "straight-jacket" on the one hand, and on the other, the fruitless vagaries of the "unguided mental missile." We believe that in the great "in-between" our contributors will be able to find a sufficiently wide range in which to employ their gifts with honor, while "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ . . ."

As already indicated, *THE SPRINGFIELDER* will appear quarterly. One of the issues will be the seminary catalog. Furthermore, we are pleased to state that publication costs have been underwritten. This miracle of economics makes it possible to send copies to all pastors of Synod without the usual subscription fee.

Additional remarks risk being anticlimactic. We request your prayers and good wishes, and constructive criticism for this effort on the part of your seminary to be of further service to our Lord and His Church.

The Editors.

THE COVER

The 12-foot bronze statue of Martin Luther, placed on a pedestal of stone, was unveiled on the Springfield campus May 26, 1957. It is an original design by the German sculptor Frederick A. Soetebier of Hanover. Showing a young Luther at the age of 38, it was modeled after the portrait by the artist Lucas Cranach. The statue was cast in a foundry in Cologne. Within the hands, held tight to the breast, is an open Bible. The face conveys firmness, conviction, and character.