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Editorials

"Springfield Welcomes New President"

WHEN RICHARD J. SCHULTZ is installed on May 17 as the twelfth president of the 125 year old Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, he will stand in the succession of such venerable patriarchs as Wilhelm Sihler, C. F. W. Walther, and August Craemer, which is enough to give any fledgling president pause for sober reflection—and perhaps also some inspiration.

The office of seminary president, even under the best of all possible conditions, is no sinecure. The uncertainties abroad in these latter days are not calculated to make the job any easier. At once the new president is confronted with the nightmare of a shrinking budget, and this in the face of the spectre of rising costs. More problematical is the apparent Don Quixote direction of theological education on the national as well as on the synodical scene. Whither Springfield? More agonizing is the question of "polarization" in the Synod as it also affects our seminary which, after all, represents a cross section of our church.

The new president brings to his demanding office a background of promise, as a former missionary at large in Los Angeles, as pastor of congregations in Michigan and New York, and as administrator in parish education for the Eastern District of Synod. A member of the Department of Practical Theology and an able classroom teacher at the seminary since 1965, Professor Schultz has won the confidence of the student body and the esteem of the faculty. His contributions to the faculty study program, his writings in the field of parish education, his presentations to various conferences and institutes throughout the country, his ability as a preacher, coupled with an expertise in educational psychology and philosophy are all plusses for a man about to take the helm of seminary administration. Although heretofore primarily involved in the field of practical theology, the new president has evidenced a much broader theological grasp and competence. To those who query regarding his theological and ecclesiastical stance, he has replied succinctly and pointedly: "I stand where the church stands." This is a good statement. Nobody should ask more or less of a servant of the church.

Like his immediate predecessor, Dr. J. A. O. Preus, Richard Schultz is a colleague who has been "kicked upstairs." Since this makes two in a row, the faculty may be pardoned if it betrays symptoms of reveling in reflected glory. We give to our elevated colleague and his family our good wishes; we pledge him our support; we assure him of our prayers to the throne of all grace that the Lord of the Church will bountifully bless his leadership at this school of the prophets.

E. H. H.

Seminary President Richard Schultz Outlines Policy

RESPONSIBLE SUPERVISION

WHAT KIND OF SUPERVISION ought to go on in a seminary owned and operated by a confessional synod? A new president of a seminary asks himself that question in great earnest. Moreover others wonder how he will answer the question. I have asked the editor of THE SPRINGFIELDER to give me a little space to present my point of view on this vital matter.

To begin with, the Synod which owns and operates Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois has a doctrinal position. The position begins with the Holy Scriptures, as *norma normans* and includes a *quia* subscription to the Lutheran Confessions as the *norma normata*. Furthermore, the synod has rather solemnly expounded its specific doctrinal position in a number of resolutions in its solemn conventions.

A perusal of the *Handbook* of the synod indicates that a cardinal reason for the creation of the Synod and for its continuance is the supervision of doctrine, practice and life. According to this *Handbook*, there is such a thing as "pure doctrine." The very term "pure doctrine" sounds pejorative to some people. Does it indicate that there can be "impure doctrine"? Of course it does! The only alternative is that there is no doctrine at all.

Does the existence of a "doctrinal stance" indicate that the synod is infallible? Of course not. For the *Handbook* of the synod provides reasonable and ordered means for the discussion of doctrinal positions and for the correction of them according to the norms.

It is important to note that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has provided an orderly process of "supervision" of doctrine among its congregations, pastors, teachers and colleges and seminaries. All along the way responsible offices and positions are provided for that supervision of doctrine may be carried on intelligently, evangelically and carefully.

It seems eminently sensible to say that "synod" means that the rest of us who have chosen to join ourselves in a common endeavor rightfully expect that we will speak with one voice. The teacher in the Lutheran elementary school, the pastor in the pulpit or at the sideboard, and the professor in the classroom share a common limitation here.

For this reason, machinery has been developed for the supervision of those who teach and preach. It is not inquisitorial machinery. It is an arrangement of love and brotherhood and patience—but it is a persistent arrangement.

The seminaries of such a synod exist as vital functionary agencies of the synod. The supervisory responsibility is given to the president of the seminary, to its board of control, to the Board of Higher Education and ultimately to the President of the Synod.

There can be no question about the fact that a professor in a theological seminary will recognize the ministry of his president. Nor does the president resent or seek to evade the ministry of his board of control. Nor does the board of control fail to recognize the ministry of the Board of Higher Education. And all recognize the ministry of the President of Synod.

Our forefathers who wrote the constitution of our synod, and those who have developed the *Handbook* over the years have wisely provided for processes of supervision and brotherly guidance for all who occupy public offices in the church.

They have not thereby stifled dissent or change. They have said that dissent and change should be orderly. It may well be that a specific position of the synod needs re-examining and re-evaluation in the light of the Scriptures and the Confessions. Such a situation need not send us into a state of shock. The shock comes when people bypass orderly procedures. Synod has repeatedly made provision for the reverent reconsideration of doctrine and practice. As recently as the Detroit convention of 1965 it pleaded that those who have serious questions should discuss the matter thoroughly with "peer groups" and follow procedure.

Does this process involve slavish submission? It seems, rather, to encourage freedom to speak one's mind. Exegetical questions, for instance, which need reconsideration, may be reconsidered under this system. A brother may see a need to redefine a position statement in systematic theology. Bless him! He has ways of expressing his concern. Our synod has existed and worked for a long time under the program the perspicacity of God's Holy Scripture will lead us to a brotherly consensus.

The possibility exists, of course, that a man may not, in all conscience, agree with the consensus of his synod. This does not mean that we then drop all attempts at consensus and assume that "freedom" means the right to deny and contradict the synodical position without hindrance.

It seems profitable, therefore, for a seminary of the church not only to submit to, but to welcome and *insist upon* evangelical supervision. The impression exists that as a synod we have been overzealous in supervision. It seems to me that we have leaned over backwards to avoid the stigma of overzealousness. For instance, the *Handbook* of our synod assumes that circuit counselors will "supervise" the doctrine and life of pastors. It assumes that presidents of seminaries will "visit classrooms." It assumes all kinds of machinery for brotherly guidance and admonition. We have not always lived up to this.

The result has been that those who are *not* given the responsibility of supervision have moved in. As well meaning as they may be, they can hardly help "supervising" without adequate knowledge. They are very prone to making judgments out of context.

To get back to plowing with my own heifer, let me go on record

as saying that I am very jealous of my responsibilities as a seminary president. My vows of office are to be taken seriously and in the context of my total ministry. If anyone asks me: "What are you going to do about such and such or so and so by next Tuesday?" may have to remind him of *my* call and the prerogatives of my office to act as a shepherd and pastor. I may have to be a bit haughty about my privilege to act in the spirit of Christ and in knowledge of a situation which only I can have. As a pastor in a congregation may have to close his mouth and say, in effect, "The Lord has called *me* to this office and not *you*," so a seminary president may have to bear the outrage of people who do not know the procedures he is following in fear and love.

Responsible supervision may mean that a supervisor must protect and defend against quick and uninformed judgments. For instance, if anyone assumes that students at our seminary *never* explore positions which are contrary to our synodical doctrinal stance he is dreaming. Of course, they do! They are working their way toward an understanding of a system of doctrine. We do not say to them "You must memorize this statement and never be caught questioning it." We encourage their questions so that the Word of God may lead them to pure doctrine.

Again, the fact that a professor may question or disagree with certain doctrine is not grounds for immediate dismissal. Responsible supervision means that we ask again to hear what he has said. It means that we listen and talk and pray. It means that we operate as brothers in Christ who can approach each other without fear. It means also, of course, that in due time the issue must be *settled*. It does *not* mean that we throw up our hands and say, "Everything is true."

Responsible supervision means working day by day with the very human problems which arise in the life of the church and dealing with them firmly, lovingly, patiently and persistently. It means that we call for frequent and responsible supervision by those who have been given authority over us. There is nothing hidden that shall not be made manifest.

RICHARD J. SCHULTZ

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(Prepared by William B. Wise)

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