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Life in a Nineteenth Century Lutheran Parish

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THE CENTRAL THEME in nineteenth century American Lutheran history was the struggle to establish a genuinely confessional church on this continent¹. This doctrinal concern dominated the development of the Lutheran Churches in the United States during the crucial five middle decades of the Victorian Age. A resurgence of confessionalism within the Lutheran Churches became evident in 1830, with the observance of the three-hundredth anniversary of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession to Emperor Charles V. Discovery of the theological heritage of Lutheranism initiated a process of recovery. The next fifty years were occupied with the effort to restore full confessional subscription by clergy and congregations as a hallmark of Lutheranism in North America. Happily, by 1880, the tri-centennial of the adoption of the Book of Concord by the Lutheran Churches of the Holy Roman Empire, it could be said that every significant Lutheran Synod in the United States was committed to confessionalism.

The victory was not easily won. Orthodoxy may have been the prize, but the price for such fidelity to the Confessions had been fifty years of controversy. This conflict, however, was not without precedent. In an amazing manner, the American struggle was parallel in purpose and equal in intensity to the very first fight for Orthodoxy in Lutheranism. That had occurred three hundred years earlier in Germany. As the German Church had been in labor for half a century before it gave birth to both unity and Orthodoxy, so the American Church was in travail for some fifty years before it found that its identity depended upon confessional loyalty as the only possible basis for synodical fraternity.

In a strange manner America and Germany, nineteenth and sixteenth centuries, met and merged. The issues were the same. The adversaries were identical. The German Church had been polarized between the "Gnesio-Lutheran" or Orthodox Party of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and the "Philippists" or "Melancthonians" or Heterodox Party of the *Augustana Variata*, who rewrote the Augsburg Confession to suit circumstances and who consequently "tended to modify Lutheran doctrine to the degree that some of them ended in Calvinism."² The Church in the United States split between two groups who have been variously named the "German" and "American" factions, the "Old" and "New" Lutherans, the "Symbolists" and the "Anti-Symbolists," the "Confessionals" and the "Recensionists," the "Traditionalists" and the "New Measures Men," the "Missourians" and the "Pennsylvanians," the "St. Louis School" and the "Gettysburg School," the "Waltherites" and the "Schmuckerites," and the "Westerners" and the "Easterners." Like most labels these epithets convey only part of the truth. The crucial issue was their attitude toward the confessional literature of the Lutheran Church.

The American Lutherans, like their forebears, the Philippists, were disposed to a revision of the Augsburg Confession in order to prepare the way for a fusion of the various Reformation or Evangelical Churches into some sort of Pan-Protestant amalgamation.³ The Confessional Lutherans, however, measured strength in terms of quality, not quantity. The mission of the Church is to proclaim the full counsel of the Word of God, and if that message is compromised, no matter how many members a denomination may count, it is no longer a part of Jesus Christ. Dr. Edmund Jacob Wolf, writing in 1889 at the moment of Confessional triumph, stated rather eloquently the perceptions of the "Symbolists":

Figures yield . . . an unsatisfactory and inadequate exhibit of a church's strength. Numbers are no proper expression of moral forces. Mathematics do not apply to what is spiritual. In that sphere one and one may be more than two and two . . .

A Lutheran congregation may be equal to a Methodist one, or to a Presbyterian, or to an Episcopalian. It may also, though numerically and externally weaker, represent more than either or many of these. Primarily the question is how much Christian truth does it represent? For what compass of the Gospel does it stand? What is the degree of its spiritual endowment? To what extent is it the body of Christ?

Surely in this the strength of the Lutheran Church is nowhere surpassed, is equalled by none. She holds and preaches the truth as it is in Jesus with a fullness and emphasis heard nowhere else. Salvation by faith alone, Christ the center of all her teaching, Christ exalted in her pulpit, her festivals and her liturgies, herein lies the essential strength of the Lutheran Church. "If the Lutheran Church does not compass the truth and salvation of God, they are not to be found on earth." And, what is of preeminent value, her faith is clearly defined and fully set forth in her Symbols, which are becoming more and more the study of her ministers, and adhered to with a firmness that has no parallel in any other Church.⁴

This was the position of such saints and savants as C. F. W. Walther in the Missouri Synod, Matthias Loy in the Joint Synod of Ohio, and Charles Porterfield Krauth in the General Council. Like Martin Chemnitz and Johann Gerhard, who had contended successfully for Luther's faith in an earlier age, they were able to see the victory of doctrinal purity and of fraternal unity in their own times.

Much attention has been given to this great doctrinal controversy on the national and synodical levels, but relatively little attention has been devoted to the quest for Orthodoxy on the local and congregational plane.⁵ The result has been a series of false impressions: that the Confessional party was primarily or even solely immigrant, not indigenous; that it was essentially European not American; that it was a scheme of the clergy rather than a desire of the laity; that it was a battle waged primarily in the assemblies of synods rather than the meetings of congregations; that the basic issue

was sociological not theological, i.e., the acculturation and assimilation of Germans, not the preservation of an ancient and venerable faith.

The purpose of this article is to look at a typical American congregation during the "critical period" in the struggle for Lutheran Orthodoxy. This particular parish, though bilingual from its formation, was composed primarily of native-born Americans. Situated in the "Old Midwest," in Central Ohio, it had been founded by circuit riders in the Muhlenberg tradition and numbered Anglo-Saxon, Irish, Scottish, Scotch-Irish, Huguenot, and Pennsylvania Dutch folk among its members. Established as a non-confessional Anglo-German congregation it was characterized by all those factors that marked it as a representative Melancthonian congregation—Calvinism, Pietism, Rationalism, and Unionism. After 1849, however, due to the influence of a confessionally-minded minister, the laity moved to recover their Lutheran legacy and to affirm their distinctive doctrines. The congregation moved beyond its previous position as a kind of German-American community church and became a model of Lutheran Orthodoxy for the entire Ohio Synod. The pastor, Matthias Loy, became a professor, author, theologian, and church president known from coast to coast as an advocate of Confessional Lutheranism. This is the story of the formation of the St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio, under the dedicated and dynamic leadership of Dr. Matthias Loy.⁶

A UNION CHURCH

Johann Conrad Weiser, the father-in-law of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, was in all probability the first Lutheran to have entered the future state of Ohio, meeting with Indians and traders at Logstown, some eighteen miles below the Forks of the Ohio River, in 1748, in his official capacity as a representative of the colony of Pennsylvania.⁷ It is quite likely that this frontier scout conducted the first "Lutheran" service within the boundaries of the Buckeye State. What is known for sure is that within a half-century Weiser's Pennsylvanian compatriots began to migrate in large numbers to the fertile valleys of Ohio. Like their predecessor, they represented a wide spectrum of German Protestantism. Some were "Sect Christians," as the Amish and Mennonites, who were to create in Ohio the largest concentration of Menno Simons' followers anywhere in the world. Others were "Church Christians," as the German Lutherans and Reformed. Among the latter were settlers from Northumberland and Berks Counties, Pennsylvania, who came to live on the limestone plains by the Olentangy River in Central Ohio. Chief among these Pennsylvania Dutch Lutherans was Frederick Weiser, a direct descendant of the "German-American pathfinder of the West."⁸ By 1810 they were plotting farms in the pleasantly rolling region around Delaware, Ohio. Desiring the ministrations of the Gospel, they warmly welcomed the appearance of the Lutheran circuit rider. The Reverend Charles (or Carl) Henkel, a son of the Virginia Patriarch, Paul Henkel, visited the Lutheran settlements along the Olentangy River north of Columbus in 1820 and 1821,

and under his guidance "services were held in the log cabin of the settler."⁹ Poverty prevented the construction of a church, for "the people usually found it difficult even to pay their taxes."¹⁰ The congregation, therefore, met in Shoub's Hall, a part of the local tavern, which stood on the site of the present Delaware City Building. In all likelihood it was in the village saloon that the first permanent organization of the Delaware Lutheran congregation occurred. A constitution was ratified and signed on January 28, 1821, by Pastor Charles Henkel and fifty-five laymen. It made no reference to the Augsburg Confession, or any specifically Lutheran theological or liturgical literature.¹¹

After seven years, Henkel moved on to another part of Ohio. The Delaware congregation was then "served by several successive pastors, none of whom it appears left a profound impression upon the people."¹² The congregation did not prosper materially or spiritually and sought to remedy the situation through closer ties with non-Lutheran Christians. The spirit of the times militated against confessionalism and the congregation "had almost lost sight of the old landmarks of Lutheranism."¹³ When the Episcopalians, therefore, solicited funds to build a church, the Lutherans assisted in the financing and erection of the structure, and used it for worship for some time. The Lutherans might very well have been assimilated into the Anglican parish had not language remained a distinguishing factor! German-speakers did not feel comfortable in a congregation related to the Church of England.¹⁴

Ties of language, culture, and nationality led the Lutherans to seek cooperation with the German Reformed settlers in Delaware County. Fewer in number than the Lutherans, the Reformed welcomed the idea of a "union church" arrangement as had often been the practice in Pennsylvania.¹⁵ The German-speaking Protestants of Delaware, therefore, obtained incorporation from the Ohio General Assembly on January 23, 1837, as the "Zion Evangelical Lutheran and Reformed Church."¹⁶ One of the leaders in this venture was none other than Frederick Weiser. By this time a building had been constructed and a constitution had been drafted by a committee of four men, two each from the Lutheran and Reformed "sides." This constitution was largely concerned with non-religious matters, such as the maintenance and governance of the parish. The only denominational reference was made in connection with the election of a pastor:

It shall be left to the vote of the congregation (so long as the congregation does not feel itself wealthy enough to afford a second Teacher) to elect one Teacher by a majority vote, he being in respect to faith either Lutheran or Reformed.¹⁷

For all practical purposes the Zion Church was a Union Congregation, or a German Community Church, which happened to be served by Lutheran ministers. This arrangement, however, was complicated after 1837 when the Reformed members of the Zion Church called their own minister, who led them into affiliation with the Reformed Church of the United States. Since the congregation had

previously been served by Lutheran pastors, and was a part of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio, theoretically it was three things—a Reformed Church, a Lutheran Church, and a Union Church!¹⁸ On November 2, 1837, the constitution was amended to make provision for these developments. There was one Zion Evangelical Lutheran and Reformed Church, which had two pastors, one Lutheran and one Reformed, with two “sides,” one Lutheran, belonging to the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio, the other Reformed, adhering to the Reformed Church of the United States. Each “side” or “body” should pay half the debts of the “corporation,” have use of the building on alternate Sundays, and this arrangement should continue for ten years.¹⁹

In spite of these provisions, complications arose. One of these was funerals. It was agreed, therefore, that each “side” was to continue to have use of the church-building for one week alternately, beginning on Thursday, except

We declare that cases of death shall have preference over the services of worship, namely, that if a Reformed corpse shall come on a Sunday when the Lutherans hold service, then the Lutheran service shall be postponed to a later time because of the corpse, and in similar fashion the other way around.²⁰

Mutual respect was another problem and the two “sides”

Decided and declared, that in the future no preacher or member of the Lutheran or Reformed side shall dare make reproaches against the other party in private or publicly concerning its teaching and customs, or shall defame the other party; and should such happen, then the church council of both sides shall call such person or persons before it for an accounting and shall punish [them] according to the nature of the matter. Should such member, however, after a hearing by the vestry backslide into the old fault, then he shall no longer be recognized and considered a member of either of these two congregations.²¹

Perhaps this stern declaration against defamation is a subtle confession of the appearance of some sense of denominational identity. Whatever that case may be, the two “sides” proclaimed their union to be “eternal” in a new church order adopted on November 26, 1847.²²

Within two years, however, the male members among the eighty communicants of the Lutheran “side” of the Zion Church took a step that would alter the history of their “corporation.” After hearing a trial sermon in the winter of 1849 by a young seminarian named Matthias Loy, the men of the Zion Church issued the student a call. The call stipulated that Loy should receive a salary of two hundred and fifty dollars, the Lutherans of Delaware to raise one hundred and seventy dollars, *the balance to be paid by a Lutheran parish in the village of Prospect.*²³ Loy responded by making it clear that it would be “impossible for me to accept the call pledging

me to treat the Reformed as if they were Lutherans."²⁴ It was understood, therefore, that Loy "was simply called to be pastor of the Lutheran congregation which worshipped in the same building" as the Reformed.²⁵ The new pastor did not sign the "union constitution of 1847" but instead announced he would adhere to the original document for the parish prepared by Charles Henkel in 1821. A first step had been taken toward the creation of a decidedly Lutheran parish. The "Melancthonian" or "Schmuckerite" era in Delaware Lutheranism was about to end abruptly.

A LUTHERAN CHURCH

"On a rather rough day" in March, 1849, a thin, pale youth, who had just turned twenty-one years of age, boarded the stage in Columbus for the twenty-four mile journey to Delaware, Ohio.²⁶ If this former printer's apprentice carried a newspaper with him, he could have read reports of gold discoveries in California, suppressed revolutions in Germany and Hungary, the arrival of immigrants from famine-stricken Ireland, or the promises and problems of the recent Mexican cession.²⁷ Matthias Loy's thoughts, however, were excited by other prospects. Through what to him seemed to be a series of miracles, Loy had been led by the Lord into the Lutheran ministry.²⁸ The fourth of seven children born to impoverished German immigrants in the Blue Mountains of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, Loy had early experienced suffering and deprivation. As a lad he had been sent by his father to labor at such varied tasks as farm hand, brickyard worker, bar-tender, and printer's devil. The material destitution of his childhood was matched only by its spiritual poverty. Loy's Pietist mother had insisted that he be baptized into the Lutheran Church, but in his boyhood he had attended a Union Sunday School under Presbyterian auspices, frequented Millerite (or Adventist) revivals, read Universalist literature, memorized Deistic poetry, joined the Masonic Order, and finally come under the influence of "New Measures" Lutheranism of the S. S. Schmucker variety. As a young man Loy almost enrolled in the Lutheran seminary at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, which was the center of "American Lutheranism." Loy was forced to move to Ohio, however, in search of both better health and employment. To his surprise he discovered the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio which operated a small theological seminary in Columbus. Means were found to provide for his tuition at this institution. Loy's course of study was limited to about two years of education—a combination of preparatory school, college, and seminary. Such was regarded as sufficient preparation for the pastorate in those frontier times. While studying in Columbus, Loy became acquainted with "Old Lutheran" literature, especially the writings of C. F. W. Walther. For all practical purposes this was his first exposure to authentic Lutheranism, as opposed to Pietism, Revivalism, Rationalism, and Unionism. Young Loy resolved to dedicate his life to the recovery of the theological treasures of the Lutheran Church and their effective employment in his ministry. Once committed to Confessional Orthodoxy, Loy never wavered. Unlike the liberal party within the Church, Loy knew from

personal experience the pain and uncertainty that comes with heresy, and the peace and joy that is derived from Orthodoxy. Once in his poetry he gave an insight into this transformation, telling of the new vistas that came when

. . . burdened souls could find no rest,
Through Luther God deliv'rance sent
By his pure Word and Sacrament.²⁹

Loy was determined to devote his career to the building of a Church in Ohio that would be evangelical, not rationalistic; catholic, not pietistic; and confessional, not unionistic. The young minister, scarcely into his twenties, would meet his first challenge on the congregational level, in the Delaware union church.

In all of his pastoral work Loy was persuaded that the faith which is held determines the labor that is done. *Credenda* (those things which are to be believed) give rise to *agenda* (those things which are to be done). A logical starting point for a parson is to review the doctrine of the Church. In the words of the Augsburg Confession the Church is

. . . the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached *in its purity* and the sacraments are administered *according to the Gospel*.³⁰

The power of any congregation depended directly on its obedience to this injunction. Doctrinal distortions or sacramental aberrations would seriously impair the vitality of a church. Years later, when Loy was asked to deliver the opening sermon of the Reading Convention, on December 11, 1866, he selected as his theme the correlation between sound theology and ecclesiastical prosperity. His text was Paul's counsel in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Loy then discussed the Pauline prescription for church unity under the theme, "The Conditions of Christian Union." These were to (1) hold the same faith in the same truth, (2) the same confession of the same faith, and (3) the same judgment under the same confession.³¹ The program that Loy recommended for the embryonic General Council had been formulated a quarter century earlier on the congregational plane. There could be no such thing as a Lutheran *and* Reformed congregation. Such unionism was an evil, and Loy felt "we must rather stand alone than be partakers of other men's sins."³² Historic Lutheranism and the confessional position "came to be occupied more and more during the period of Mr. Loy's ministry."³³ In sermons, Loy recalled, and

In my pastoral visits also the condition of the congregation and the superior claims of the Lutheran as the mother Church of Protestantism was a favorite topic of conversation.³⁴

Within three years Loy had persuaded his parishioners of the

correctness of his position, and the Lutheran members of the Zion Church organized themselves as an independent body under the name of the "St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession" on August 31, 1852.³⁵ Their constitution pledged them to all of the symolical books of the Lutheran Church and to membership in the Joint Synod of Ohio as long as that denomination held fast to those Confessions.

The separation of the Lutheran and Reformed congregations precluded the possibility of their continuing to share the same facilities. Furthermore, theology determines ecclesiastical architecture. A church designed for Calvinists would not suit the liturgical needs of Confessional Lutherans. In addition to the Zwinglian proscriptions against instrumental music and statuary, there was the even more fundamental problem of securing a proper altar and of moving the pulpit from the center of the chancel to a more appropriate position. Physically the Zion Church was not suited to the full Lutheran form introduced by Dr. Loy. Later Loy recalled that it was

. . . a house of worship which was a reproduction on a small scale of the barn-like structures called churches in Pennsylvania. It had no gallery; it was probably thought sufficiently capacious for the congregation without that. But its pulpit was just as lofty as if the gallery had been there, so that when, in the winter preceding my call I ascended the pulpit for the first time, I became dizzy and my nose bled . . .³⁶

The Lutherans, therefore, secured a nice plot of land in downtown Delaware, next to the Lamb house, the oldest residence in the community, and erected a handsome limestone Gothic sanctuary. On December 25, 1853, the new house of God was consecrated, the nativity of Our Lord was celebrated, a baptism was performed, the Rite of Public Confession was observed, the Sacrament of Holy Communion was distributed, and Pastor Loy was married. The building remains in use to the present time, though it was remodeled in 1964.

The organization of the parish was representative of Ohio Synod Lutheran Churches.³⁷ Male members in good standing and over the age of eighteen were permitted to participate in the two annual congregational meetings.³⁸ An elective Church Council was composed of two elders, two deacons, two trustees, a secretary, and a treasurer.³⁹ Except for one of the trustees, they all served a two-year term. The pastor was the president of this body which usually met on the last Saturday of each month. The work of the vestry was to assist the minister in spiritual duties, including the exercise of congregational discipline and the visiting of the sick and delinquent, and to attend to the physical needs of the parish.

One of the major problems faced by the Church Council was stewardship. It had been a common practice in the community for churches to raise money through the sale of goods and services, and entries in the local newspaper often praised such "ice cream socials," "fashion shows," "oyster suppers," and "pancake feasts." Loy frowned on congregations soliciting funds through

... chances and prizes, of beer and balls, of theatrical shows and ladies' kisses . . . Churches have sunk to a grade that is pitifully low when they can no longer see any harm in such wiles of the devil.⁴⁰

Not "tips and trash" but tithes were the rightful source of support. Loy informed his members that "there is no legitimate way of securing money for church work but that of exercising Christian faith and love in giving it."⁴¹ The congregation responded and was able to increase their level of giving, liquidate the mortgage on the new church, establish a parochial school, and pay not only the salary of a pastor but also that of a headmaster for the Lutheran academy.

The ministry of Word and Sacrament was the heart of congregational life. Because of the bilingual nature of his parish, and because of the necessity to supply one, later two, country chapels, Dr. Loy often preached between four and six times a Sunday. An accomplished orator in both English and German, Loy usually preached between twenty and thirty minutes on one of the prescribed lections for the Sunday or Festival Day. As he observed the homiletical efforts of his Reformed, Methodist, and Baptist counterparts, Loy came to believe that the danger of the American pulpit was "that of preaching law unto repentance until people are driven to despair, or unto holiness until they fall into a fond conceit of their own righteousness . . ."⁴² The purpose of the Lutheran pulpit, in Loy's opinion, was the proclamation of the Gospel:

It should be well observed that preaching does not show us how to save ourselves by our own efforts and accomplishments, but saves us. The gospel is glad tidings, not because it asks us to do what we cannot, which would render it merely a new law, but because it proclaims to us that a Saviour has come . . . The great fact of redemption is proclaimed, and the Word by which the proclamation is made contains the saving power.⁴³

Dr. Loy apparently lived up to his ideals, for the Joint Synod called him to Columbus in 1865 to be a Professor of Preaching in its theological seminary and the publication house of that denomination issued several volumes of his sermons.⁴⁴

The sermon was set within the context of the historic Lutheran liturgy. Traditionally the Lutheran Service has had two foci—sermon and eucharist, symbolized by pulpit and altar. Loy felt the Lutheran preacher should avoid "the partiality with which the Reformed Church gave prominence to the sermon as the only thing absolutely essential," for worship's "summit is the celebration of the Lord's Supper which is above all other parts of the cultus of a festive character."⁴⁵ Together with other "Old Lutherans" as Wilhelm Loehe, Loy could agree with the comparison of

... the arrangement of the parts of the main service to a twin mountain, one of whose heights is a little lower than the other. The lower is the sermon, and the higher the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper properly belongs to the full main service.⁴⁶

In keeping with the spirit of the Lutheran Service, Loy noted that

The clerical gown was thenceforth worn, the liturgy was used more fully, and our whole worship was rendered more solemn and more beautiful.⁴⁷

Because of the importance of the Lord's Supper as a means of grace, its frequency was increased. During the early days of Ohio Lutheranism Holy Communion was observed only once or twice a year, usually at plowing and harvesting season. Loy educated the congregation to the importance of the Sacrament of the Altar and by 1865 eucharistic services were held at least eight times a year.

As the leader of the congregation's worship, Loy taught that

... our public services must be open to all, whether they were of our faith or another faith or no faith at all; [but] ... the pastors' personal application of the Word in absolution and ministration of grace in the sacraments must be limited to those who fulfill the conditions of membership in the congregation ...⁴⁸

"Promiscuous communion" was replaced by closed communion. This had not been a widespread custom in Ohio Lutheranism, especially in congregations composed of Reformed and Lutheran members. Loy's rule was put to a test by "one of the most prominent and most generally esteemed members" of the faculty at the Ohio Wesleyan University, located in Delaware. Unannounced and unconfessed, he presented himself at the altar rail. Loy knew him to be a Methodist. To discover the motivation of the man, Loy

... simply asked him if he was prepared to accept the words with which I administered the body of Christ to the communicants as the very truth of God, and he declared that he was not. That was the very least that I as the minister of the Lord could ask, and upon his refusal to accept the very words of the Master, there was nothing left for me, but to pass him by.⁴⁹

It was, in Loy's words, a "sad affair," but rejection, he taught, was as much a mark of a confessional congregation as acceptance. One could not, in good conscience, commune with those who held "another faith."

Loy's policies at Delaware were prophetic of the future course of Confessional Lutheranism in the Eastern United States. The procedures at St. Mark's anticipated the provisions of the Akron Declaration of 1872 which said:

- 1) The rule is, Lutheran pulpits are for Lutheran ministers only; Lutheran altars are for Lutheran communicants only.
- 2) The exceptions to the rule belong to the sphere of privilege and not of right.
- 3) The determination of the exceptions is to be made in consonance with these principles by the conscientious judgment of pastors, as the cases arise.⁵⁰

Inclusion and exclusion were important dimensions of congregational life. Inclusion was accomplished through the initiation and instruction of members. The major services of induction and assimilation were baptism and confirmation. Baptism was to be administered to the children of Lutheran parents in the presence of sponsors and the assembled congregation as soon as possible after birth, hopefully by the eighth day of life. The children were then to make the vows of their elders and godparents their own at the time of confirmation. The Ohio Synod *Formulary* of 1930 specified that youngsters to be confirmed should be at least fourteen years old, be able to read and write, and be required to memorize as much as possible. The catechist ought

. . . to be careful not only to expound to his pupils the sacred truths of religion; but also to impress their hearts and minds with a due sense of piety and godliness.⁵¹

Following a period of intensive instruction in Luther's *Small Catechism*, they were tested before the congregation, and it was held that "the examination ought to continue at least an hour."⁵² Loy adhered to these practices, receiving the catechumens into membership toward the end of Lent, usually on Palm Sunday so that they could take their First Communion on Maundy Thursday. A similar procedure applied to adult converts to Lutheranism, of which there was a significant number from the Reformed, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches and from Judaism.

The education of children was also accomplished through the establishment of a Sunday School which had seven German and eleven English teachers. The number of boys and girls in the parish is suggested by the fact that Loy performed four hundred and twenty-nine baptisms during his sixteen-year pastorate in Delaware.⁵³ This number was sufficient for the creation of a Lutheran Day School, offering instruction in reading, writing, German, language, music, and theology. Confirmation classes, Sunday School, and Christian Day School were three facets of an ongoing ministry to retain the youth. Strenuous efforts were also made to evangelize the unchurched in the community.

Pastoral visitation was another dimension of the ministry of inclusion. Dr. Loy write:

. . . I did not find it difficult to notice the absence at worship of such members as were ordinarily regular attendants, or of the continued absence of such as were irregular. Such absence was always made the subject of inquiry, partly because if the absentees were sick or otherwise disabled, they might be regarded as brethren who needed the consolations of the Gospel, partly because if they were not sick or disabled, they needed the pastor's attention on the ground of negligence.⁵⁴

The parishioners of St. Mark's remembered Pastor Loy as a faithful and loving minister, who did all in his power to comfort them in time

of sorrow, suffering, and sickness. Those confused by "the insidious schemes of sectarian prowlers," "hedge-priests," and "holy roller evangelists," who tried to steal sheep from my flock," recall him as a patient and skilled teacher.⁵⁵ Especially during times of revival at the German Reformed Church and in the Methodist camp-meetings, Lutheran members would feel themselves under great pressure because of the strong appeal made to the emotions and because of the reluctance on the part of many of the sectarians in the town even to regard them as Christians. At such moments Loy was a stable and steadying influence in the lives of hundreds. The "tent preachers" and the "hot-gospelers" came and went, but Dr. Loy remained and ministered to emotional, mental, moral, and spiritual needs "in season and out of season" from the deep resources of Scripture, the Confessions, "sanctified reason," and personal experience. Such pastoral faithfulness was not without effect, nor did it go unappreciated.

Another aspect of the ministry of inclusion was the restoration of the fallen through the rite of private confession. Because "private confession and absolution seemed to me to be the wisest provision for enabling the pastor to exercise his office in the care of souls," Loy restored these customs at St. Mark's.⁵⁶ Parishioners were urged to make their confessions to Pastor Loy during the week preceding a celebration of the Lord's Supper, when about one-half of his congregation came to see him in his home. The rest met with him in the church sacristy individually on Saturday during the hour before the preparatory service for Holy Communion. In this valuable ministry, Loy pioneered the revival of a venerable Lutheran custom that eventually became widespread in the Ohio Synod. By 1909 provision was made for its administration through the inclusion of appropriate texts in the service books published by the Church.⁵⁷

There was also a ministry of discipline and exclusion. This was necessary because "sin must be put away from us, that we may be a holy people."⁵⁸ Loy was referring to the exercise of the Office of the Keys. According to one popular handbook of Christian doctrine,

The Office of the Keys is the power, or authority, *to preach the Word of God, to administer the sacraments*, and especially the power *to forgive and to retain sins*.⁵⁹

Loy could have subscribed to that definition. Certainly he accepted the principle which it implies—that in a Lutheran Church pastoral practice must conform to the doctrinal standards of the pulpit. Consistency must prevail between the different roles performed by the minister, whether he is serving as preacher in the proclamation of the Word, or as teacher in the edification of the faithful and the instruction of the young, or as priest in the celebration of the sacraments, or as pastor in confession and absolution, or as ruling elder in the moral and administrative leadership of the parish. Faith and life, belief and behavior, creed and conduct, must be in substantial harmony. Doctrine cannot be separated from discipline.

Discipline was exercised in conjunction with the Church Council. The guiding principle was that when people "profess to be believers, we are to treat them as such until they themselves prove that

they are not."⁶⁰ The New Testament outlined the procedure to be followed:

If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican (Matthew 18:15-17 AV).

The vestry and the minister heard and initiated charges against those suspected of either heresy or ungodly life. The accused was invited to appear before the Church Council to give answer. If he did not come, the pastor paid him a visit. When this met with no success, Loy and the elders went to see him. If the offending brother was still impenitent, his name was announced to the congregation and he was given a set time in which to make amends, usually fourteen days. At the end of this period, if nothing had been done by the man to clear his reputation or to seek reconciliation with Christ and his brethren, then his name was stricken from the church roll and he was pronounced excommunicated following the Sunday morning service.

The causes of discipline ranged from such doctrinal aberrations as universalism to such moral offenses as "tippling" or chronic drunkenness.⁶¹ In all instances, however, discipline was administered biblically, according to the Gospel admonitions; evangelically, in order to lead the person involved to repentance and restoration; pastorally, with the welfare of the offending brother at heart; and democratically, in conjunction with the properly elected officers of the congregation and in keeping with the procedure of due process.

At the end of 1864 when Loy prepared his last annual report from the Delaware parish he could evaluate his work at St. Mark's. The Lord of the Church had rewarded faithfulness in doctrine and obedience in life. The number of communicant Lutherans had increased over four-fold in fifteen years to three hundred and fifty-nine. The average Sunday attendance was up from only seventy in 1849 to three hundred and thirty in 1864. The parish was weathering the ordeal of the Civil War with a minimum of difficulty. A system of benevolence had been developed to care for the needy in the congregation, and funds had been raised to found Lutheran missions. The local debt had been liquidated. A parochial school had been founded. Two self-supporting mission congregations with their own pastors had been created by the Delaware Lutherans. The parish had hosted the convention of the Joint Synod of Ohio, its pastor had been elected synod president, and now had received a call to teach at the denomination's college in Columbus, Capital University. Loy was found fit by his Master to work for Orthodoxy in an even larger parish—that of the nation. Soon Matthias Loy became one of the leading spirits of the Confessional Revival throughout North America.

CONCLUSION

In recent years it has become quite fashionable to accuse Orthodoxy of all manner of sins. According to the conventional "folk wisdom" of these days, Orthodoxy is allegedly cold, impersonal, and unpastoral. "Dead Orthodoxy," so the slogans run, is incapable of providing proper and compassionate ministerial care. If the adventures of Matthias Loy in the Delaware parish are at all representative (and we have little reason to think they are not), it is time for some revision of history. Three conclusions can be drawn:

1.) The parish ministry literally forces a man toward Orthodoxy if he desires to be a competent and conscientious pastor. Edmund Smits, over a decade ago, observed:

Every teacher of theology has had some gifted students with a keen interest in religious problems, yet at the same time a pronounced distaste for anything "dogmatic" or "orthodox." What happens when one of these students becomes a pastor responsible for his flock? It is easy to predict. Little by little he falls out of love with his own doubts and finds the sweetness of rebellion fading away. Instead of delighting himself and dazzling others with his dialectical skill, he discovers that he must search for a simple and direct means of presenting the true doctrine of the Apostles. In other words, our young friend is drifting toward a form of orthodoxy, whether or not he wishes to admit the fact to himself. In the case of a Lutheran the orthodoxy to which he inclines might very likely be the same seventeenth century orthodoxy which he once rejected . . .⁶²

Certainly "Smits' Law" is illustrated in the life of Loy, who moved from the doctrinal skepticism of American Lutheranism to the positive affirmations of Confessionalism.

2.) Orthodox theology is, next to Scripture, the best pastoral resource available. Here is truth—time-tested, positive, and proven by repeated application to the varied problems of real people. As Johann Gerhard, himself a bishop, or pastor of pastors, by the age of twenty-five, remarked, Orthodoxy is "totally orientated toward the practical life." Confessional theology is nothing less than "spiritual medicine" administered by the cure of souls.⁶³ Conversely, heresy is not merely "an intellectual misconception, but a pattern of thinking and living which is no longer Christian."⁶⁴ It is impossible for a pastor to shun his responsibility to be a theologian. Like Loy, he must study the Scriptures, search the Confessions, profess his faith, and live his loyalties. It is no wonder that the symbols of ministry are both the Book and the stole.

3.) Lest we forget, it is not only in the solemn assemblies of synods or in the deliberations within theological seminaries that the Church struggles to proclaim and apply the Word of God. Synod and seminary are in fact support stations, located far behind the lines. The battle-front is the parish. There Kingdom and world confront one another. The struggle is for souls. It is, in the final analysis, matter of life and death.

FOOTNOTES

1. During the nineteenth century the Lutheran Churches in the United States faced many perplexing problems. One was the preservation of the inherited faith in the midst of a pluralistic and increasingly secular society. Another was "Americanization," or the adaptation of a church of Continental origins in such a way that it could successfully be transplanted to the New World environment. Still a third task was that of unification—the creation of a single denomination out of a multitude of independent and often antagonistic synods which were diverse in language, tradition, and national origin. Missionary extension was necessary to reach millions of Lutheran immigrants with the ministrations of the Gospel and to keep pace with a highly migratory domestic population. Educational and welfare institutions had to be established and the publication of Lutheran religious literature was a crying need. But the central question, around which all the others came to revolve as a rim turns around the hub of a wheel, was doctrinal: What was essential and what was non-essential to the existence of a Lutheran Church? Which confessional statements could be changed to meet new circumstances and which could not? Once that issue was resolved, solutions could be found to place the other problems in proper perspective.

Unfortunately, each party in the dispute phrased the question in a different manner. Confessional Revisionists saw the issue as one of the relative importance of various doctrines. For them it was a matter of determining which beliefs were of the *esse* ("being" or "essence"), the *plene esse* ("fullness" or "completeness"), and the *bene esse* ("well-being" or "welfare") of the Church and which were *non esse* ("non-essential"). This faction was persuaded that it was merely a matter of distinguishing between "fundamental" and "non-fundamental" doctrines. To the Confessions would be applied a procedure previously devised for the Canon. (For a definitive and orthodox discussion of "Fundamental and Non-Fundamental Doctrines" see John Theodore Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics: A Handbook of Doctrinal Theology for Pastors, Teachers, and Laymen*, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955, pp. 47-60.) Confessional Loyalists, however, saw the issue more clearly. The question was more fundamental than merely distinguishing between doctrines. It was the matter of confessional subscription that was at stake. Subscription to the Confessions (*quia*, not *quatenus*) was critical because, while Scripture was "the deciding norm (*norma decisionis*)," the Confessions were "the distinguishing norm of the Church (*norma discretionis*);" and "the former decides which doctrines are true or false; the latter, whether a person has clearly understood the true doctrines of Scripture. (*Norma discretionis discernit orthodoxos ab heterodoxis*)." See Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 129.

The two sets of combatants, however, converged in their recognition that they were engaged in a quest, an internal search, the result of which would be self-identification, the determining of the essence of Lutheranism. One could correctly call it "an identity crisis." As such, it was probably the most serious soul-searching done among Lutherans since the mid-sixteenth century.

Some have suggested that this quest for identity is nothing less than the struggle to preserve Orthodoxy in the Church. And this has been the central theme in every century of Lutheran history. In the sixteenth century the initial battle was to distinguish between Lutheranism and Romanism. This was not, as some German scholars have contended, a conflict between Evangelicalism and Catholicism. The Lutheran Reformers regarded themselves as the true Catholic Church. Instead the conflict was that of grace opposed to works, or Pauline Orthodoxy (*sola gratia*) as opposed to the Pelagian Heterodoxy (*gratia et labora*) which had subverted pristine Catholicism into Roman Catholicism. The Augsburg Confession of 1530 was both a proclamation of the Orthodoxy of Lutheranism as well as a demonstration of its continuity with the Catholic Church of Scripture and the Fathers. In the late sixteenth century the necessity was to differentiate between Lutheranism, on the

one hand, and Calvinism and Crypto-Calvinism, on the other. Again, the critical doctrine (as in all these controversies through the centuries) was that of justification. The Reformed faith seemed to compromise the affirmation of justification by grace alone through faith by qualifying references to the teachings of predestination, election, regeneration, and good works. The Book of Concord of 1580, which was accepted as binding by most of the German Lutheran Churches, made clear the difference between the Lutheran and Reformed varieties of Protestantism. A John Calvin might sign an abridged form of the *Augustana*, but his adherence to the Formula of Concord would have been an entirely different matter. In the seventeenth century the challenge was to preserve authentic Lutheranism from degenerating into Pietism. Pietism at its worst failed to distinguish between Law and Gospel. Many felt Moralism to be the way of salvation! Once more the doctrine of justification was in danger. In the eighteenth century the threat to Lutheranism came from Rationalism, which confounded Natural and Revealed Religion. Had the Enlightenment been successful, doctrinal theology would have deteriorated into ethical philosophy, reason would have replaced revelation, and the works-righteousness of paganism would have obscured the merits of Christ. In the nineteenth century the problem was Unionism, the effort to eliminate all distinctive doctrines in order to create a Pan-Protestant Church in opposition to the revived power of Rome. The problem was that this "reductionism" eliminated the distinctive doctrine of the whole Christian faith—that of justification! Throughout the four centuries the adherents of Lutheran Orthodoxy maintained that they were evangelical, or the Church of the Gospel; that they were Biblical, or the Church of the Scriptures; that they were catholic, or the Church of the Fathers and Ecumenical Councils; that they were confessional, or the Church of the Living Witness; that they were Lutheran, or the Church of the Saxon Reformation. See Willard Dow Allbeck, *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), ix.

Part of the current difficulty within American Lutheranism is that of identifying the challenges to Orthodoxy within our own generation. At the fourth triennial convention of the American Lutheran Church the late Kent Knutson, President or Presiding-Bishop of the ALC, spoke of five problems: "times of tumultuous change; of church renewal; an ecumenical age; an age of Lutheran consolidation; and an age of the laity" (see John R. Nyberg, "Resurrection, Renewal, Response," *The Lutheran Standard*, XI, August 3, 1971, p. 10). Possibly a more plausible explanation is Secularism, or Worldliness. This has expressed itself in the denial of the supernatural dimension of life. For the Church this has meant serious doubt concerning the authority of Scripture as a supernatural revelation of a Sovereign God. If the centrality of Scripture within the Church is denied, then the doctrine of justification is lost, for nowhere else but in the Bible is it possible to learn of the gracious and saving God. A Missouri Synod observer at the Lutheran World Federation's Fifth Assembly in 1970 was quoted as having said, "Rome has its hierarchy and the Methodists have their discipline, but Lutheranism cannot live without the Scripture" (see "The Gospel: Lutheranism's *Sine Qua Non*," *Christianity Today*, XIV, August 21, 1970, p. 29).

The Gospel is the *sine qua non* of Lutheranism in a double sense: the doctrine of justification (the "good news" of salvation by grace alone through faith) and the doctrine of revelation (the preservation, presentation, and proclamation of that news through the Scripture as a "means of grace"). Classical Lutheran theology spoke of material and formal rules of faith. Almost a century ago Dr. Revere Franklin Weidner, Professor of Theology at the Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary, showed the interrelationship of these two teachings as follows:

[Protestantism] . . . answers the question put to the sinner who yearns for salvation, **answers with the truth that *salvation is in Christ alone*, "*solus Christus, sola gratia*."** Christ the only one, grace the only thing. Subjectively stated, this is the doctrine of *justification by faith alone*. This is the *material* principle of Protestantism, i.e.,

it forms the central matter about which it gathers.

The question now arises: By which principle of cognition does Protestantism reach this principle in results? The answer is, on the grounds that the only secure, authentic, and consequently absolutely authoritative witness in regard to this salvation of Christ, is given in the Scriptures and nowhere else. This is the *formal* principle of Protestantism, i.e., that which pertains to the form, shape, or manner, in which the matter or *material* principle is reached.

(See Revere Franklin Weidner, *An Introduction to Dogmatic Theology*, second edition, revised, New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1888, pp. 59, 60.)

Secularism is the challenge to both of the principles, for the denial of the supernatural rules out both divine revelation and God's salvation. The one-dimensional world of modern man will allow neither divine manifestation nor divine justification.

The current discussion within the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, therefore, is much more than an academic debate about the mode of biblical revelation. It involves a recognition of the inseparable unity of the formal and material principles of the Reformation and of the proclamation of that unity in the face of modern secularism. It is really quite simple—no Scripture, no Christ. No Christ, no salvation. Thus, the Missourian debate is part of the ongoing struggle to maintain Orthodoxy within the Lutheran Church.

2. Allbeck, *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions*, p. 244. In the half-century between the Augsburg Confession (1530) and the Book of Concord (1580) the German Church had faced the Antinomian, Adiaphoristic, Majoristic, Osiandrian, Crypto-Calvinistic, and Synergistic Controversies. These struggles had threatened both the identity and the authenticity of historic Lutheranism because they could have subverted the doctrine of justification by grace alone through faith. As Martin Chemnitz observed, justification "is the chief topic in the Christian doctrine" (see *Examination of the Council of Trent*, Part I, translated by Fred Kramer, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971, p. 461).

Perhaps it is helpful to define "orthodox" and heterodox." Orthodox, from the Greek meaning "having the right opinion," means "adhering to traditional and established beliefs and practices"; while heterodox, from the Greek root suggesting "differing in opinion," conveys the idea of "not in agreement with accepted beliefs, especially departing from church doctrine." See Peter Davies, editor, *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1971), pp. 502 and 334.

3. Dr. Benjamin Kurtz, along with Dr. Samuel Sprecher and Dr. Samuel Simon Schmucker one of the three leading leaders of "American Lutheranism," even founded a Melancthon Synod in 1857 that was not committed to the historic Confessions of the Lutheran Church. See Abdel Ross Wentz, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1955), pp. 137 ff.

The architect of "American Lutheranism" was Dr. Samuel Simon Schmucker of Gettysburg Theological Seminary. He has been described as noteworthy for "his liberal attitude toward other denominations and his qualified acceptance of some of the distinctive tenets of his own Church . . ." See Edmund Jacob Wolf, *The Lutherans in America* (New York: J. A. Hill and Company, 1890), p. 346. Because of his influence "the Gettysburg Seminary was the chief theological school of this Neo-Melancthonian theology." Schmucker was "a true son of his age. His subscription to the Augsburg Confession was conditional. In his devotional life he was essentially puritanic. He disliked the liturgical element in the Lutheran services. . . . The rise of a new confessionalism in Europe and among the new type of immigrants he viewed with deep distrust. In a paper read before the Synod of Western Pennsylvania in October, 1840, 'Portraiture of Lutheranism,' the author pointed out six features of the Lutheran Church which needed improvement: (1) the church should commit herself to the Bible, to the whole Bible, and nothing

but the Bible; (2) the teaching of the presence of the glorified human body of Christ in the Eucharist has become obsolete; 'bread and wine are merely symbolic representations of the Savior's absent body'; (3) the Lutheran practice of confession in the preparation for holy communion should be relinquished; (4) a new systematic adjustment of the doctrines of the Lutheran Church is needed; (5) the merely advisory power of the General Synod should be changed in favor of a more rigid system of church government; (6) as to the confessional subscription of the ministers, all that should be required is a subscription to 'the Bible and the belief that the fundamental doctrines of the Bible are taught in a manner substantially correct in the Augsburg Confession.' " See O. W. Heick and J. L. Neve, *History of Protestant Theology*, volume II of *A History of Christian Thought* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1946), pp. 300, 301.

4. Wolf, *The Lutherans in America*, pp. 524, 525.

5. Three of the standard studies of this development are Carl Mauelshagen, *American Lutheranism Surrenders to the Forces of Conservatism* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1936); Vergilius Ferm, *The Crisis in American Lutheran Theology: A Study of the Issue Between American Lutheranism and Old Lutheranism* (New York: The Century Company, 1927); and Paul Spaude, *The Lutheran Church Under American Influence: A Historico-Philosophical Interpretation of the Church in its Relation to Various Modifying Forces in the United States* (Burlington, Iowa: Lutheran Literary Board, 1943).

6. In the Archives of the St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio, the following records and manuscripts are preserved:

"Die Kirchen-Ordnung der Zions Kirche in Delaware, Ohio von 28ten Jenner im Jahre unders Herrn 1821" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Die Kirchen-Ordnung der Zions Kirche von Delewar, Delewar County, Ohio vom 18. September 1835" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Zusatz zu den Kirchen Artikeln der Delewar Gemeinde vom 2. November 1837" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Neue Kirchen-Ordnung der Zions Kirche in Delewar, Ohio vom 26. November, 1847" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Confirmation-Register, 1836-1859" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Birth and Baptismal Register, May, 1832-February 10, 1860" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Communicanten Register der Lutherischen und der Reformitten Deutschen Gemeinde in der Stadt Delaware, Ohio, seit dem Jahre 1837" (from Spring, 1837, until April 29, 1855) (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Record of Communicants, September 30, 1855-April 8, 1859" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Kirchen-Ordnung fuer die Evangelisch Lutherische St. Marcus Gemeinde ungeaenderter Augsburgischer Confession, zu Delaware, im Staate Ohio, angenommen am 31st. August, A.D. 1852" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Membership Roster, 1852-1865" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Baptisms by M. Loy, 1860-1865" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Confirmations by M. Loy, 1860-1865" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Marriages by M. Loy, 1856-1865" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Communion Record, M. Loy, 1860-1865" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Funeral Records, M. Loy, 1862-1865" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"English Translation of Church Constitution of August 31, 1852" (handwritten, made in 1866, in records of the congregation);

"[Annual] Parochial Reports, M. Loy, 1855-1864" (handwritten, in the records of the congregation);

"Minutes of the St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church Council, Delaware, Ohio, January 13, 1861, to September 27, 1885" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

"Minutes of the St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church Congregational Meetings, Delaware, Ohio, 1861 to July 28, 1885" (handwritten, in records of the congregation);

Undated letter from Matthias Loy to the St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Congregation (handwritten, in records of the congregation). The author had access to these valuable records. Because of such complete information, it is possible to get a very accurate and detailed view of life within a representative Ohio Synod congregation in the middle years of the nineteenth century. The author also conducted a series of interviews with people knowledgeable about the years of the Loy pastorate in Delaware. Especially helpful was the conversation with Dr. Henry Schuh, President Emeritus, The American Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio, on January 25, 1965. Dr. Schuh was Loy's grandson. Professor Harry F. Truxall of Capital University published a short history of the congregation—*These Many Years, 1821-1971, History of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio* (Delaware, Ohio: St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1971).

For biographies of Dr. Loy see: C. George Fry, "Matthias Loy: Patriarch of Ohio Lutheranism, 1828-1915," unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1965; C. George Fry, "Matthias Loy: Theologian of American Lutheran Orthodoxy," *THE SPRINGFIELDER*, XXXVIII (March 1975), pp. 319-333; C. George Fry, "Matthias Loy, Leader of Ohio's Lutherans," *Ohio History*, LXXVI (Autumn, 1967), pp. 183-201; George Harvey Genzmer, "Matthias Loy," *Dictionary of American Biography*, edited by Dumas Malone (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), XI, pp. 478-479; T. E. Schmauk, "Dr. Loy's Life and Its Bearing on the Lutheran Church in This Land," *Lutheran Church Review*, XXVI (January, 1907), pp. 190-200; "Mathias Loy," *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography* (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1904), XII, p. 191. See also the autobiography, Matthias Loy, *Story of My Life*, second edition, (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, 1905).

7. Carl Bridenbaugh, "Johann Conrad Weiser," *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. Dumas Malone (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), XIX, pp. 614-615. I use the term "Lutheran" loosely in Weiser's case. He was born a Lutheran, married by a German Reformed minister in 1720, became a chief elder of the German Reformed congregation in Tulpenhocken, Pennsylvania, in 1735; then he joined Conrad Beissel's Ephratha Community (basically a celibate congregation of Seventh-Day German Baptists) in what has been described as a "religious somersault." In 1742 he made a trip to save the life of Moravian leader Count von Zinzendorf. By 1743 he severed his connections with Ephratha, "probably with the advice of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg," and affiliated with the Lutheran Church in 1747. He was, therefore, a Lutheran at the time of his visit to Ohio! In his later years he joined the German Reformed Church once more and died a member of that body. Cf. Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America: The Saga of the Immigrant* (Cleveland, Ohio: The Press of Western Reserve University, 1939), pp. 76-77. Muhlenberg had married Anna Mary Weiser in April, 1745. Cf. Ross, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America*, p. 40.
8. See A. A. Ahn, *The Centennial Anniversary of the St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1821-1921* (Delaware, Ohio: St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1921), p. 5.
9. *Ibid.*, Paul Henkel, scion of a long line of Lutheran ministers descended from Jacob Henkel of Mehrenberg, Nassau, Germany, was appointed in 1806 as a traveling missionary by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. From his headquarters in New Market, Virginia, he

- roamed far and wide along the Appalachian frontier. Of his nine children, five sons became ministers, two of whom, Charles and Andrew, served in Ohio. See B. H. Pershing, "Paul Henkel: Frontier Missionary, Organizer and Author," *The Lutheran Church Quarterly*, VII (April, 1934), pp. 125-151.
10. H. Perrin and J. H. Battle, *History of Delaware County and Ohio* (Chicago: O. L. Baskin and Company, 1880), p. 399.
 11. "Die Kirchen-Ordnung der Zions Kirche in Delaware, Ohio vom 28ten Jenner im Jahre unsers Herrn 1821" in the parish records, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio.
 12. Ahn, *The Centennial Anniversary*, p. 7.
 13. Perrin, *History of Delaware County*, p. 399.
 14. Pennsylvania German Lutherans were often bilingual. When Charles Henkel preached on Sunday, February 24, 1828, the English service was at 10 a.m., the German at 2 p.m. See *Delaware Patron*, February 21, 1828. A goodly number of colonial Lutherans became Anglicans, as the Swedish congregations in the state of Delaware. Even Peter Muhlenberg, eldest son of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, was ordained by the Anglican bishop of London in 1772 after subscribing to the Thirty-nine Articles and then served a Lutheran Church in Woodstock, Virginia.
 15. In the German Rhineland such churches existed, called *Simultankirchen*. From there the custom came to Pennsylvania. This antedates the Prussian Union of 1817 by a considerable period. See Abdel Ross Wentz, "Relations between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *The Lutheran Quarterly*, VI (July, 1933), p. 313.
 16. The church records, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio.
 17. *Ibid.* The ecclesiastical nomenclature, however, seems to reflect a Reformed bias. When John Calvin reorganized the ministry of Geneva according to his understanding of St. Paul (Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28; Romans 12:7), he created four offices: pastors, doctors (or teachers), elders, and deacons. See Harold J. Grimm, *The Reformation Era, 1500-1650*, second edition (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1973), p. 278. The Puritan ministry in Massachusetts (as in some later Congregationalist communities) was composed of pastors and teachers. See Robert C. Whittemore, *Makers of the American Mind* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1966), p. 21, note.
 18. Perrin, *History of Delaware County*, p. 401.
 19. See appendix to "Die Krichen-Ordnung der Zions Kirche von Delaware, Ohio vom 18. September 1835" which was added on November 2, 1837; in parish records, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio.
 20. See "Neue Kirchen-Ordnung der Zions Kirche in Delaware, Ohio vom November, 1847" in parish records, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio.
 21. *Ibid.*
 22. *Ibid.*
 23. Loy, *Story of My Life*, pp. 97, 118. See also Communion Register of the Zion Church, Delaware, Ohio, 1849 (in parish records of the St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio).
 24. Loy, *Story of My Life*, p. 97.
 25. *Ibid.*
 26. *Ibid.*, pp. 94, 95.
 27. Columbus, *Ohio State Journal*, March, 1849; Delaware, Ohio *Democratic Standard*, March, 1849.
 28. Dr. Loy had a strong sense of divine providence. This is evident in his poetry, especially many of the forty-two different hymns which he composed. One noteworthy example of this quiet confidence in the wisdom of God in everyday events is this hymn composed in 1880:

O Lord, who hast my place assigned,
 And made my duties plain,
 Grant for my work a ready mind,
 My wayward thoughts restrain.

- Matthias Loy, "O Lord, Who Hast My Place Assigned," *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnal, Published by Order of the First English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States* (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1908), No. 328. Loy's radiant trust shines through in prose that sometimes reads like poetry, his recollections of his early tribulations and his final triumph, *Story of My Life*. Loy's theological odyssey from heterodoxy to orthodoxy has been told in an earlier issue of *THE SPRINGFIELDER*, XXXVIII (March 1975), pp. 319-333.
29. Matthias Loy, "When Rome had Shrouded Earth in Night," *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnal*, No. 150.
 30. Augsburg Confession, VII, as translated in Theodore G. Tappert *et al.*, translators and editors, *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959), p. 32. Italics mine.
 31. The sermon can be read in full in the *Lutheran and Missionary*, VI (December 27, 1866), 37.
 32. Matthias Loy, *The Christian Church in its Foundation, Essence, Appearance, and Work* (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1896), p. 186. This is Loy's most complete discussion of ecclesiology.
 33. Perrin, *History of Delaware County*, p. 400.
 34. Loy, *Story of My Life*, p. 98.
 35. "Kirchen-Ordnung fuer die Evangelisch Lutherische St. Marcus Gemeinde ungeaenderter Augsburgischer Confession, zu Delaware, im Staate, Ohio, angenommen am 31st August, A.D. 1852" in parish records, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio.
 36. Loy, *Story of My Life*, p. 118.
 37. See the *Liturgy, or Formulary for the use of Evangelical Lutheran Churches: Compiled by a Committee, appointed by the Synod of Ohio, and ordered to be printed* (Lancaster, Ohio: John Herman, 1830), pp. 87-92.
 38. "Kirchen-Ordnung fuer die Evangelisch Lutherische St. Marcus Gemeinde," August 31, 1852 (in parish records, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio).
 39. *Ibid.*
 40. Loy, *The Christian Church*, pp. 360-361.
 41. *Ibid.*, p. 357.
 42. Loy, *Story of My Life*, pp. 157-158.
 43. Matthias Loy, *Christian Prayer: A Jubilee Gift Published by Authority of the Publication Board of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio and Other States* (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1890), p. 37.
 44. See Matthias Loy, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Practical Study of Chapters V-VII of St. Matthew's Gospel* (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1909), *Sermons on the Epistles for the Sundays and Chief Festivals of the Church Year* (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, n.d.), and *Sermons on the Gospels for the Sundays and Chief Festivals of the Church Year* (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, n.d.).
 45. Matthias Loy, "Encyclopedia and Methodology of the Theological Sciences, as Dictated by Prof. M. Loy During the Term Beginning September 3, 1884 (copied by Harry Loy), Capital University, Columbus, Ohio," unpublished manuscript in the Archives of The American Lutheran Church, Dubuque, Iowa, p. 23.
 46. John O. Lang, *The Liturgy of the Joint Synod of Ohio: A History and Criticism* (unpublished B. D. thesis, Capital University, Columbus, Ohio, 1929), p. 107.
 47. Loy, *Story of My Life*, p. 160. While a parish pastor, Loy wore a clerical collar and black vest in public. For the Service he wore a black preaching gown and tabs (*talar und baeffchen*). This was quite an innovation in Ohio Lutheranism, where, due to Methodist and Pietistic influence, no ecclesiastical garb had ever been seen. By 1900 one would have been able to see the reintroduction of the surplice and colored seasonal stoles in Ohio Synod congregations.
 48. *Ibid.*, p. 111. The distinction is that of the Ancient Church. The Service of the Word, or the Mass of the Catechumens, was open to the public, but the Service of the Altar, or the Mass of the Faithful, was reserved only for baptized believers in good standing.

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 127-128. It was the custom at St. Mark's, as in other Confessional Ohio Lutheran congregations, to have private confession with the pastor before coming to the Lord's Table.
50. Quoted by Fred W. Meuser, *The Formation of the American Lutheran Church* (Columbus: The Wartburg Press, 1958), pp. 145-146.
51. *Liturgy, or Formulary for the use of Evangelical Lutheran Churches*, p. 53.
52. *Ibid.* Loy's view of Confirmation was similar to that of Martin Chemnitz, who taught that it "embraces the following: (1) Instruction on the meaning of Baptism, including the renunciation, (2) public confession of the confirmands, (3) examination in the true faith, (4) admonition and pledge to avoid all heretical opinions, (5) exhortation to remain in the baptismal covenant, (6) public prayer for the confirmands, with the imposition of hands . . ." Friedrich Kalb, *Theology of Worship in Seventeenth Century Lutheranism*, tr. by Henry P. A. Hamann (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), p. 133.
53. In the same period he confirmed two hundred and thirty-five confirmands, including Mary Willey, his future wife.
54. Loy, *Story of My Life*, p. 185.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
56. *Ibid.*, pp. 168-169. By "private confession" Loy meant what Roman Catholics called "auricular confession," some Anglicans named "sacramental confession," and Martin Luther described as "secret confession." According to Henry Eyster Jacobs, the distinguished historian and theologian of an earlier generation in America, the Lutheran Reformation recognized four types of confession: (1) the confession of the individual alone to God in the form of private prayer; each time a Christian repeats the Lord's Prayer, especially the passage, "forgive us our trespasses," he is making such personal confession; (2) the confession of a man to his neighbor, especially in a case where he has in some manner wronged his brother, as Jesus suggested in the Model Prayer, "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"; (3) private, secret, or auricular confession to a minister of the Gospel, especially in the case of those sins which consciously deprive the conscience of comfort; (4) finally, the public, general, or congregational confession, made either in a special service (*der Beichtgottesdienst*) or as a preparatory act to the Service of the Word (*die Allgemeine Beichte*). See Henry Eyster Jacobs, *A Summary of the Christian Faith* (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1905), pp. 441-442. The Augsburg Confession viewed the custom with approval, stating, "It is taught among us that private confession should be retained and not allowed to fall into disuse," Augsburg Confession, XI, "Confession," as translated by Tappert, *The Book of Concord*, p. 34. Ludwig Dunte, seventeenth-century theologian, wrote of it, confession "is a very useful and edifying ceremony and custom of the church that should by no means be abolished," as quoted by Kalb, *Theology of Worship*, p. 132. The classic Lutheran position was similar to that recommended by Canon B. K. Cunningham of Westcott House, Cambridge, who said of private confession, "None must; all may; some should." See Stephen Neill, *Anglicanism* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958), p. 425, footnote. Lutheran Church Orders of the sixteenth century kept the rite and it was common in Germany for centuries. In the Age of Orthodoxy it was the rule for everyone to confess privately at least four times a year. See Theodore G. Tappert, "Orthodoxy, Pietism, and Rationalism, 1580-1830," *The Lutheran Heritage*, Vol. II of *Christian Social Responsibility*, edited by Harold C. Letts (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), p. 50. J. W. von Goethe recalled in his *Autobiography* going to confession in the Lutheran Church, and Johanna Schopenhauer recalled as a child in Danzig that, "kneeling before our spiritual guide, enthroned in full canonicals, we made our confession." See Andrew Landale Drummond, *German Protestantism Since Luther* (London: Epworth Press, 1951), p. 102, footnote. It was the usage in the Lutheran Church that:

Absolution was received privately, by each one individually kneeling . . . the confessor imposing his hands at that time. Private

confession was given . . . in the church, in which the confessional was so located near the pulpit that no other person could be near or hear what was said by the penitent.

See Altman K. Swihart, *Luther and the Lutheran Church, 1483-1960* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1960), p. 518.

Rationalism and Pietism both attacked the rite. P. J. Spener condemned it, saying that "in the Lutheran temple there were four dumb idols—the font, the altar, the pulpit, and the confessional." Its use, however, was revived by the "Old Lutherans," as Wilhelm Loehe in Bavaria and the Prussians who formed the Buffalo Synod. The Saxon Lutherans, led by C. F. W. Walther in Missouri, were practitioners of private confession. It served as a main source of criticism on the part of such American Lutherans, as S. S. Schmucker. Loy was impressed with these theological and historical precedents, as well as such biblical texts as the story of David, who, feeling contrition for his sin of adultery with Bathsheba, made confession to Nathan, the court preacher, saying, "I have sinned against the Lord," and then received the comforting absolution, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die" (2 Samuel 12:13 RSV).

57. See Loy, *Story of My Life*, p. 170. See also *Agende fuer Evangelisch-Lutherische Gemeinden Ungeaenderter Augsburgischer Konfession*, Herausgegeben von der Allgemeinen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Ohio und anderen Staaten (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1900), pp. 48-56.
58. Loy, *Story of My Life*, pp. 171-172.
59. *A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism: A Handbook of Christian Doctrine* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1943), pp. 181-182. Jesus said, "I am the door" (John 10:9). Doors open and close. They include and exclude. The door is narrow (Luke 13:24) and "When once the householder has risen up and shut the door, you will begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, open to us.' He will answer you, 'I do not know where you come from.'" (Luke 13:25 RSV). Using a similar comparison, Christ talked of the "keys." To the apostolic congregation he gave "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 16:19), meaning the power to retain and release from sin (cf. John 20:22, 23, Matthew 18:18).
60. Loy, *The Christian Church*, p. 120.
61. For example in January, 1862, one read of discipline for adultery; a year earlier "Complaints were made against John Tafel . . . namely, that he denied the eternity of future punishments contrary to the Holy Scriptures, Matthew 25:41-46, and the Augsburg Confession, Article XVII, and he having confessed his error, and notwithstanding repeated admonitions refused to relinquish it, it was unanimously resolved that John Tafel be and is herewith expelled from the congregation." Minutes of Church Council meeting, February 23, 1861, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Delaware, Ohio (in parish records). This shows a high degree of biblical literacy and Confessional comprehension.
62. Edmund Smits, "Introduction," *The Doctrine of Man in Classical Lutheran Theology*, edited by Herman Preus and Edmund Smits (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1962), xxii.
63. *Ibid.*, xx.
64. *Ibid.*, x, footnote.