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# Talking about the Son of God: An Introduction

The articles found in this issue were first presented as papers at the third Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Theology Professors' Convocation that took place on March 1–4, 2007, in Dallas, Texas. These biennial convocations have each focused on a single article of the Augsburg Confession.<sup>1</sup> "Talking about the Son of God," based on Article III (The Son of God), was the theme. As in the past, this convocation was funded by The Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation, which supports the concord and harmony cultivated in our church by these convocations. Article III of the Augsburg Confession states:

Likewise, they teach that the Word, that is, the Son of God, took upon himself human nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary so that there might be two natures, divine and human, inseparably conjoined in the unity of one person, one Christ, truly God and truly a human being "born of the Virgin Mary," who truly "suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried" that he might reconcile the Father to us and be a sacrifice not only for original guilt but also for all actual sins of human beings. He also "descended into hell, and on the third day he was" truly "resurrected." Thereafter, "he ascended into heaven" in order to "sit at the right hand of the Father," and he will reign forever and have dominion over all creatures. He will sanctify those who believe in him by sending into their hearts the Holy Spirit, who will rule, console, and make them alive and defend them against the devil and the power of sin. The same Christ will publicly "return to judge the living and the dead . . .," according to the Apostles' Creed.<sup>2</sup>

The papers and responses that follow exhibit unique Lutheran scholarship and research that contributes to the world of theological education and to the church that lives the life of God on earth. As you read them, you will journey to the land of Jesus for a view of archeological digs in Galilee. Then you will look at what the gnostic gospels—so popular today—say about Jesus. You will also taste afresh the vibrant waters of Christology in Luther. Finally, you will discover the various Jesuses in American Christianity so that your own understanding and proclamation of Jesus' identity will be clear and faithful. It's a joyful journey!

L. Dean Hempelmann  
Executive Director of LCMS Pastoral Education  
St. Louis, Missouri

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<sup>1</sup> The focus of the first convocation in 2003 was on Article I (God) convening under the title, "Confessing the Trinity Today." Presentations were published in *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 67:3/4 (July/October 2003). The second in 2005 centered on Article II (Original Sin) with the theme "Talking about Sin and the Wrath of God." The major presentations were published in *Concordia Journal* 31:4 (October 2005).

<sup>2</sup> Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, tr. Charles Arand, et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 39.