

firmed not only as the first of the eleven to whom Jesus appeared, just as St. Paul reports in 1 Corinthians 15, but that Jesus' appearance to Him was at Emmaus. ✠

Commentary on the War: Toward Gaining Ground in the Ministry

Bishop, Pastor, Deacon

David H. Petersen



My thesis is that we need to clarify our thinking about and nomenclature for the Office of the Ministry and how its duties and functions have been and are rightly divided among us by human rite. I suggest that the best nomenclature would be “bishop,” “pastor,” and “deacon” and that we need to stop calling every ordained man “pastor,” so that the term doesn’t become meaningless or allow men to operate without proper calls.

The LCMS suffered a confusion in the late ‘80s and ‘90s that reduced the Office of the Ministry to functions. In its crassest form its slogan was, “Everyone is a minister.” Since the ministry was only function, anyone who carried out a duty of the ministry, such as proclaiming the Gospel to a child, was considered to be a minister. It was a vapid and silly thing, but in hindsight all errors are.

There was much talk in response to this about the ontological character of the Office and of the call. The Office of the Ministry *is*. It is because God has declared it to be, and what He says is. Thus, the Office can never be mere protocol or ceremony. It is neither arbitrary nor optional. God’s Word speaks the Office into being, and through it He delivers His promises to His people. Thus the Augsburg Confession:

To obtain such faith God instituted the office of preaching, giving the gospel and the sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith, where and when he wills, in those who hear the gospel. It teaches that we have a gracious God, not through our merit but through Christ’s merit, when we so believe. (AC IV [KW, 40])

For the filling of this Office, the Augsburg Confession insists that “no one should publicly teach, preach, or administer the sacraments without a proper [public] call” (AC XIV [KW, 46]).

The point in distinction, that which had to be defended, was that God instituted an actual Office and not

a mere function and that the authority and requirement to carry this out was mediated to qualified men by God through the Church’s call. But that too can be overstated. The Office does not exist apart from its function. Ordination and a call do not bestow magical power upon a man or give him authority in every place for every possible function. The Office is not an abstraction nor does it belong to the office holder. The Office belongs to God and exists among us in concrete ways as it is carried out. So also the Church that it serves:

The church is not only an association of external ties and rites like other civic organizations, but it is principally an association of faith and the Holy Spirit in the hearts of persons. It nevertheless has its external marks so that it can be recognized, namely, the pure teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments in harmony with the gospel of Christ. (Ap VIII 5 [KW, 174])

The Office was instituted for its function. God instituted the Office so that men would obtain the faith that justifies. It exists for the purpose of giving the Gospel and the Sacraments. Those marks, which are also marks of the Church, are also the marks of the Office. They are what the Office does and how it is known. If the Office does not function in this way, teaching that we have a gracious God, giving the Gospel and the Sacraments, then it is counterfeit and not the Office instituted by Christ.

If the Office is more than ordination, if it exists in its functions, then we need to know what those functions are and where they rightly take place. The primary functions are preaching the Gospel, forgiving and retaining sins, and administering Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. Thus, everyone who is prepared for the Office needs to develop competence in these areas. God works through means. Ordination is the means whereby a candidate is given public approval as competent and fit for these functions by the ministerium; thereby God sets a man in Office. The ordained man then provides these functions by divine right, as he is called to do so.

Thus have I been called to Redeemer in Fort Wayne. I perform these functions among the people here not by human right or arrangement but by divine command. Because of the call, I have jurisdiction at Redeemer. I do not preach by invitation but by right and command. I am rightly called to Redeemer and thus carry out the functions according to that call. No one should do otherwise. On occasion, however, I am invited to preach elsewhere. I may be invited by the proper authorities because I am ordained and thus qualified, but in such instances, I do not preach by right. I do not have jurisdiction there but instead preach under another’s authority. The same is true for administering the Sacraments and even hearing

confession. In the same way, I can invite seminary professors or brother pastors in my pulpit.

This reality raises a number of questions that we have been largely ambiguous about in the LCMS. In the first place, are the ordained district bureaucrats, theology professors, or even military chaplains in the Office or not? They are, but even as each parish pastor has unique jurisdiction based on his call, so do they. They should be careful and respectful of the jurisdiction of others. They should not, for example, be taking Holy Communion to people in the hospital or preaching or hearing confession without either a call to do so or by invitation, any more than any parish pastor would simply minister to another pastor's parishioners without approval and knowledge.

What seems to baffle us is that not only can and should there be a division of function in the Office by human rite for the sake of good order in the Church, but there always has been. This division still exists among us even though we seem to have lost the language to speak and think about it. The Office of the Ministry has always had ranks and divisions within it. This was true in the Old Testament (prophets, priests, Levites, and kings) and in the New (apostles, evangelists, bishops, elders, and deacons), and has been true also among us (pastors, district presidents, administrators). When we lose the language to speak and think about the Office, and everyone claims the title "pastor," we get into messy territory and run the risk, at the least, of violating Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession or redefining "rightly called" to being the same as "ordained."

Those who serve parishes function the most fully as pastors. They have flocks. "Pastor" is the Latin word for "shepherd." Pastors are those most directly tasked with the care of souls and most obviously fulfilling the ministry as it is defined in the Augsburg Confessions. That being said, there are functions of the Office that they do not carry out. Chief of these is that they do not ordain by right. Nor do they have oversight, writ large, over other pastors, and ideally they wouldn't be establishing rites and ceremonies for a territory. While they may not like the terminology, our district presidents function as bishops. They have been given the jurisdiction of oversight and of ordination. Ideally, in my mind, they would be establishing and maintaining rites and ceremonies. Our district presidents might be invited to preach or to carry out other ministerial functions in a local parish as men qualified for such duties, but they don't do so by right. Because of their oversight responsibility, I do not think they should normally hear confession.

It is not fitting that district or Synod or seminary presidents call themselves "pastors." They don't have flocks. They don't have altars and pulpits. Calling themselves "pastors" is stealing valor in a strange way. It is like a colonel calling himself a sergeant. There is honor that belongs to their office. They have a noble, God-

ordained task. They need to learn to be content with that. Nor do I think they should call themselves "pastors of pastors." That is the role of the circuit visitors or father confessors.

What, then, of our bureaucrats and professors and all those ordained men who work for various Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) and institutions outside of the parish? They do not have flocks, but they aren't bishops. I say that they function as deacons. They are part of the Office. They are rightly ordained and qualified to be invited to preach and celebrate and such, and unlike bishops—since they do not have oversight—they might hear confession, but they are not pastors. They are specialists. This might be because they are particularly gifted in a certain area. It could also be that they are deficient in some skill necessary for normal parish duty, such as an ability to teach children well or the tact necessary to manage a church council. It could also be a combination of particular expertise and some deficiency. It does not matter. It is legitimate that they are in the Office, but they do not have parishes. In an ideal world, I think, they would be called to a parish to serve under a pastor and a bishop, along with their duties in their specialization to whatever institution they serve. In that parish, by that call, they would have duties even if they are limited. They should not be called pastors but should be called deacons. Again, presumably, the man who has a doctorate in psychology or theology or is an excellent business manager and has been asked by the Church at large to serve in that capacity has enough honor in that and doesn't need to have other people's titles.

I realize, of course, that this might sound like my own jealousy, as though my beef is that I think I, and my class, deserve the title "pastor" and no one else can have it. Perhaps there is some of that in me, but I think it is more than that. I think the wholesale grabbing of this title by everyone confuses a number of issues, the first being the jurisdiction and the necessity of a proper call as described in AC XIV.

There are other issues, as well, and I don't claim to have the answers. Is it fitting and proper for a seminary professor to give communion to a student in the hospital on the basis of his call to the seminary? In an emergency, it would be, but even then, shouldn't such an action be reported to his pastor or to someone? During the pandemic, can a pastor consider his own family to be shut-ins and commune them on Sunday morning when no one else in the parish is able to have communion? In the same vein, I have never seen a theological defense of the seminaries or colleges celebrating Holy Communion without a congregational sponsor. I am not sure it is wrong for them to do so, but that was the explicit understanding of the LCMS for a long period of time, and it seems to have been dismissed without an explanation.

It may be pure fantasy for us at this point, but I think we could do better. We could at least attempt to talk about these things and take our words seriously. Just to be clear, I mean no disrespect to anyone in this. I fully recognize that the ordained men in various synodical positions, ecclesiastical supervisors, professors, librarians, advancement officers, administrators, etc., are all part of the Office of the Ministry. I don't doubt at all that they are. I just think that many of them are specialists and that we would do well to recognize them as such rather than pretending they were parish pastors. For my part, I would not call President Harrison "Pastor Harrison." I understand the sentiment and I don't doubt that he longs in some sense to be a pastor, but I think that pretending he is a pastor cheapens both his office and also the one in which I serve—as though being a pastor were something anyone and everyone could and does do and simply means that one is ordained. ✠

Taking Pains

Reverence is not primarily a matter of feeling pious, but rather of taking pains. – The Anglican Breviary

Service of Holy Communion, part 2

Mark P. Braden

In the Easter 2019 issue of Gottesdienst, this column began a series on the rubrics for the reverent conduct of the Mass. We continue the series this issue beginning with the Preface.



In the Common Service, the altar is typically prepared during the Offering, although *The Lutheran Liturgy (TLL)* includes a "may" rubric for a hymn after the General Prayer and notes, "During the singing of the Hymn the Minister shall go to the altar and, after Silent Prayer, reverently prepare for the Administration of the Holy Sacrament."¹ In his *Formula Missae* of 1523, Luther includes the rubric, "After the Creed or after the sermon let bread and wine be made ready for blessing in the customary manner."²

The altar prepared, the Missal now positioned to the left, or liturgical north, of the prepared eucharistic vessels and turned at a forty-five-degree angle, the celebrant returns to the middle of the altar, facing it. The deacon stands to the celebrant's right, at the Epistle horn, a step "down" from the celebrant, who stands on the predella. The deacon may stand before the altar, facing it, or may move to the south side of the altar and stand "in choir," facing north. The subdeacon, standing on the north side of the altar, mirrors the deacon's position. The Offertory

is sung as all the servers take their respective places. The Offertory finished, the congregation still standing, the celebrant turns by his right to the congregation and chants the Preface.

The words of the Preface are ancient: "In the exalted responsive sentences of the Preface we have, apart from the very words of Scripture, the most ancient and the least changed liturgical text of the Christian Church."³ In the eighth book of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, conservatively dated to 375 AD in Antioch, the beginning of the great *Anaphora* gives us the words we use⁴:

Bishop (ὁ ἀρχιερεύς): The grace of Almighty God and the love of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Communion (κοινωνία) of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Response: And with thy spirit.

Bishop: The mind (τὸν νοῦν) upwards.

Response: We have *them* toward (πρὸς) the Lord.

Bishop: Let us give thanks to the Lord.

Response: *It is* worthy and just.

More than a history lesson, these ancient texts should remind each of us that we unite our voices to those of our first fathers in the faith, and to the one holy catholic and apostolic Church as we speak the same words, and as the celebrant turns by his right shoulder (honoring the position of the deacon) to the congregation and chants, "The Lord be with you!"

At the Preface the celebrant separates his hands slightly, palms inward, as he chants. Thus, the ceremony on the part of the celebrant is the same as at the Salutation before the Collect for the day.⁵ The proper response of the faithful is "And with thy spirit." Paul H.D. Lang supplies the rubric for the celebrant: "he will turn right to the congregation and say, 'The Lord be with you.' Then he may turn left to the altar and continue the Preface, or he may turn to the altar after the verse, 'Let us give thanks . . .' At 'Lift up your hearts,' he may raise and extend his hands as in the ancient prayer posture, only a little higher . . ."⁶

To "have the mind upwards" and to "lift up your hearts" are two distinctly different actions, although one can easily see the relationship between the two. With the understanding that the celebrant faces the congregation for the entire Preface, Piepkorn supplies this rubric: "the celebrant raises and extends his hands to the width of his breast, with palms facing each other, and says: 'Lift up your hearts.' The old Latin rites have "Sursum corda," the adverb "up" with the word for "hearts." The old Latin response of the congregation is "Habemus ad Dominum," "We have *them* to the Lord." The Sarum Rite of the eleventh century has the same.⁷

The Preface is "really part of the Canon,"⁸ the "first part of the Eucharistic Prayer."⁹ There is no example in the history of the Mass before the sixteenth century of a