

IMMANUEL MONTHLY

April 1, 2014



From Pastor's Desk Why Did He Suffer?

by Rev. Jason M. Braaten

As we approach the most holy time at which Our Lord gave up His life for our sake, it is good for us to spend some time meditating on His Word, specifically, on the seven words (statements) He spoke when He hung for us upon The Cross. We will do this especially by praying prayers based on each word found in the altar book for *The Lutheran Hymnal*; we will also pray a Reformation-era chorale (TLH 177). I also encourage you to use along with these prayers TLH 180-186, a series of hymns of three stanzas each on each word; it would have taken up too much space to include them here as well.

Our Lord took on our flesh in The Virgin's womb in order to die for us. Everything He did for us was designed to

bring about our salvation and forgiveness from specific sins. This is one thing we can learn from these prayers. One of the great Lutheran doctors (teachers) of theology, Johann Gerhard, teaches us, in his *An Explanation of the History of the Suffering and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ*, that, when we consider our Lord's Passion, we should keep in mind these questions: Who suffered? What did He suffer? Why did He suffer? What did He gain with His suffering? and How are we to present ourselves in regard to (as a result of) such suffer-ing? The answer is that Christ, God's Son, suffered crucifixion (and many things throughout His life) in order to suffer in place of us sinners for the sins of all the world, so that we might rejoice with all His

saints in life everlasting, eternally freed from Satan, sin, and death. Therefore in this life, he adds, we should serve Him with all kinds of good works and flee from sin. With this in mind, let us meditate on our Lord's Seven Words.

Our Blessed Savior sev'n times spoke
When on The Cross our sins He took
And died lest man should perish.
Let us His last and dying words
In our remembrance cherish. (TLH
177:1)

The First Word: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (St. Luke 23:34).

Lord Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate, Who by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God wast taken, and by the hand of wicked men wast crucified and slain, and didst make intercession for the transgressors, we pray Thee, grant unto us all the blessed assurance that there is now no condemnation to them which are in thee, and that, if any man sin, we have an Advocate with The Father in Thee, The Righteous, Whose Blood speaketh better things than Abel's blood, Who livest and reignest with The Father and The Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end, Amen.

"Father, forgive these men; for, lo,
They truly know not what they do."
So far His love extended.
Forgive us, Lord, for we, too, have
Thro' ignorance offended. (TLH 177:2)

The Second Word: "Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" (St. Luke 23:43).

Lord Jesus Christ, Thou merciful King and Prince of Peace, Who didst veil Thy divine glory and wast robed in humility, crowned with thorns, nailed upon the tree of shame, and numbered with the transgressors, we thank Thee that Thou hast remembered us in our condemnation and hast translated us into

Thy Kingdom of Grace. We pray Thee, rule in our hearts and lives with the scepter of Thy Word, and when life's brief day is ended, take us with Thee into Paradise, Who livest and reignest with The Father and The Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Now to the contrite thief He cries:
"Thou, verily, in Paradise
Shalt meet Me ere tomorrow."
Lord, take us to Thy kingdom soon
Who lingers here in sorrow. (TLH 177:3)

The Third Word: "Woman, behold thy son!" . . . "Behold thy mother!" (St. John 19:26-27).

O Compassionate Lord Jesus Christ, we thank Thee for Thy perfect obedience which Thou didst render for us even to The Death of The Cross. We pray Thee, grant us Thy Holy Spirit, that He may write Thy holy Law upon our hearts, so that, following Thy example of filial love and obedience, we may honor and serve our parents, and, from the least to the greatest, may learn obedience and walk in Thy footsteps. And let Thy strength be made perfect in our weakness, Who liv-est and reignest with The Father and the same Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

To weeping Mary, standing by,
"Behold thy son," now hear Him cry;
To John, "Behold thy mother."
Provide, O Lord, for those we leave;
Let each befriend the other. (TLH 177:4)

The Fourth Word: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (St. Matthew 27:46).

Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Author and Finisher of our faith, Who didst tread the winepress of God's wrath alone and wast made a curse for us on the accursed tree, being forsaken of God, we pray Thee, grant that our faith in Thee may never know doubt or change. Strengthen us in the sure knowledge and confidence that nothing shall separate us from the love of God in Thee and

that, though Thy Father hide His face from us in a little moment of wrath, we may never despair of His loving-kindness, for the sake of Thy bitter agony, Who livest and reignest with the same Father and The Holy Ghost ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The Savior's fourth word was "I thirst."
O mighty Prince of Life, Thy thirst
For us and our salvation
Is truly great; do help us, then,
That we escape damnation. (TLH 177:5)

The Fifth Word: "I thirst!" (St. John 19:28).

O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Redeemer of the world, Who on The Cross didst endure the pains and anguish of body and soul to accomplish all things for our redemption and in Thy cry "I thirst!" didst reveal Thy fervent desire and zeal to draw all men unto Thyself, grant that the souls of men everywhere may hear Thy gracious Gospel and drink of the waters of life and be satisfied, Who livest and reignest with The Father and The Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The fifth, "My God, My God, O why Forsake Me?" Hark, the awe-full cry!
Lord, Thou wast here forsaken
That we might be received on high;
Let this hope not be shaken. (TLH 177:6)

The Sixth Word: "It is finished!" (St. John 19:30).

Lord Jesus, Who on the Cross didst cry out: "It is finished!" we thank Thee that Thou didst complete the work which Thy Father gave Thee to do: Thou didst fulfill The Law of God for us; Thou didst bear its curse in our stead; Thou didst reconcile all men to God. Grant that we may with our whole heart believe this and that we may never rely on any work or merit of our own, but always trust in Thy finished work on Calvary, Who livest and reignest with the same Father and The Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The sixth, when victory was won,
"Tis finished!" for Thy work was done.
Grant, Lord, that, onward pressing,
We may the work Thou dost impose
Fulfill with Thine own blessing. (TLH 177:7)

The Seventh Word: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit" (St. Luke 23:46).

Lord Jesus Christ, Who in Thy dying moment didst commend Thy soul into Thy Father's hands, thereby assuring us that Thou didst finish the work of our redemption and that Thy Father is well pleased in Thee, we pray Thee, grant us by Thy Holy Spirit such confidence in Thy redemption that, washed of our sin in Thy Blood, we, too, in our dying hour may confidently commend our soul into The Father's hand, trusting wholly in Thy merits, Who livest and reignest with the same Father and the same Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The last, as woe and sufferings end,
"O God, My Father, I commend
Into Thy hands My spirit."
Be this, dear Lord, my dying wish;
O heavenly Father, hear it. (TLH 177:8)

May our Lord richly bless your meditation on His Passion this year and at all times. For it is solely through His Passion that we can be saved. There is no other name under heaven that saves except JESUS. We need nothing more than to be saved by Him, so that our sins will not condemn us. Remain in Him, remain in His Word and Sacrament, and He will remain with you and His Blood shall cover all your sins when you appear before The Father.

Whoe'er, by sense of sin opprest,
Upon these words his thoughts will rest,
He joy and hope obtaineth
And through God's love and boundless grace
A peaceful conscience gaineth.

O Jesus Christ, Thou Crucified,
Who hast for our offenses died,
Grant that we e'er may ponder
Thy wounds, Thy Cross, Thy bitter Death,
Both here below and yonder. (TLH 177:9-10)

From the President The Joy of Everyday Life

by Rev. Matthew C. Harrison

The word for “church” in the New Testament is ecclesia. It means, literally, “called out.” Christians are “called out” by Christ—out of and away from sin, death, and the devil. But this does not mean that we are called away from living real lives, or as Luther put it, should “live in a corner.” To be sure, Jesus from time to time retreated to “rest for a while” (Mark 6:31) with His apostles, but quickly returned to the fray, to His sacred vocation of accomplishing our salvation. Our souls find their “rest” in Christ (Matt. 11:29), but this very spiritual peace and joy in Christ drives us back into life with both feet. If peace is joy at rest, then happily meddling in the affairs of folks around us who need us is joy in action.

“There is [according to Martin Luther] nothing more delightful and lovable on earth than one’s neighbor. Love does not think about works, it finds joy in people” [Gustaf Wingren, Luther on Vocation (Muhlenberg, 1957), 43]. The gravitational pull of Christ draws us to Himself for grace and mercy and peace and joy, and then hurls us into the world around us. For the great majority of us, that does not mean being called to serve as a missionary in Africa, or even as a pastor or deaconess or parochial school teacher.

No matter what or where our calling, we are placed in a context to serve those right around us.

It means that we are driven—freely compelled (“The love of Christ compels us;” 2 Corinthians 5:14)—to serve our spouse in love, to care for our children, to help our next door neighbor, to help the poor, hurting, and suffering in our church, to love our grandparents, and to serve our community. And no matter what or where our calling, we are placed in a context to serve those right around us. “Truly, I say to

you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:40). That goes as much for changing diapers as it does for slogging to make a buck to put food on the table and pay the bills. “For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin” (Romans 14:23). But it is also true that whatever we do in faith is delightful and pleasing to God. We can do it with full confidence that, in Christ, all our sins are covered, and our vocations as father, mother, son, daughter, clerk, farmer, technician, teacher, fireman, or nurse are vocations in which the Lord delights with joy.



For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:25–31).

Excerpted from *A Little Book on Joy*.

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The LCMS News Desk

LCMS Debuts New Mission Journal



“Is there a distinctly LCMS approach to mission?” That question is at the heart of the *Journal of Lutheran Mission*, a new e-publication available from the Synod’s Offices of National and International Mission.

The journal, which will be published three times a year, may be downloaded in a variety of formats at lcms.org/journaloflutheranmission.

Individual articles from the journal also are available for download and may be shared through social media. Read more at <http://blogs.lcms.org/2014/mission-journal>

Harrison Talks Healthcare, Hobby Lobby

You’re tired of hearing about Hobby Lobby and the Supreme Court, tired of all the talk of fines and health-care plans and reproductive rights, tired of being bombarded with words spoken in anger from both sides of the aisle. You want to put your fingers in your ears, switch the channel, and wait for the ruling and the rest of it to just go away.

But even though you are tired, even though you’ve grown weary of having the same discussions about the same points, Hobby Lobby and fines and health-care plans still matter. They matter because your country – the United States of America – was founded on the principle that you were born with certain rights: the rights to seek and follow truth, to live according to your beliefs, to worship freely.

And no one, not even the government, gets to tell you how to do that.

Read the rest of the statement at <http://blogs.lcms.org/2014/tired-of-hobby-lobby>.

Higher Things Adds Fourth Conference

With registration filled and a waiting list for its July 8-11 youth conference at Mequon, Wis., Higher Things has added its first-ever “campference” July 15-18 at Camp LiWiSoMo in northern Wisconsin.

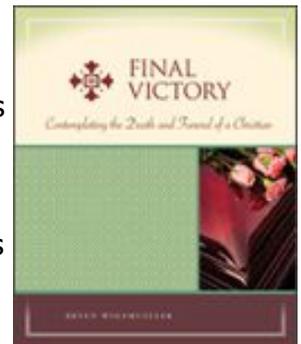
The filled conference will take place at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon.

Registration remains open for Higher Things’ other 2014 summer youth conferences — set for July 1-4 at the University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla., and July 22-25 at Utah State University, Logan.

Crucified — the theme for all four events — is based on 1 Cor 2:2: “For I decided to know nothing among you except Christ and Him crucified.” Read more at <http://blogs.lcms.org/2014/higher-things-adds-fourth>

Book of the Month *Final Victory: Contemplating the Death and Funeral of a Christian*

This is one of the four books intended to address the spiritual needs of Christians during milestone events of life. The death of a Christian is an important event as we receive all that God has promised, however grief and sorrow often hinder this thinking.



Final Victory gives the pastor or Christian counselor a theologically sound, organized way to briefly present the hope and comfort of Scripture; provides resources to help the pastor and mourner make and record the decisions of what will constitute the details of the funeral service; provides a source of comfort in the days after the funeral for loved ones. Order at www.cph.org.

Facts and Figures; Dates and Times

Greeters

6 April Jim Dyer (West)
 Joan Vukelich (East)
 13 April Laverl Byers (West)
 Ruth Sims (East)
 20 April Tim & Teri Pollock (West)
 Donna Campbell (East)
 27 April Harold Wattjes (West)
 Jim Dyer (East)
 4 May Joan Vukelich (West)
 Laverl Byers (East)
 11 May Ruth Sims (West)
 Tim & Teri Pollock
 18 May Donna Campbell (West)
 Harold Wattjes (East)
 25 May Jim Dyer (West)
 Joan Vukelich (East)

Coffee Committee

April Arleigh & Mary Jane Jones
 May Greg Nau

Funeral Committee

April Theresa Fields
 May Ruth Sims

Altar Committee

6 April Theresa Fields
 13 April (PALM SUNDAY) Theresa Fields
 17 April (HOLY THURSDAY) Pastor Braaten
 18 April (GOOD FRIDAY) Pastor Braaten
 20 April (EASTER) Sharon Allen

27 April Sharon Allen
 4 May Sharon Allen
 11 May (MOTHER'S DAY) Janice Arthur
 18 May Janice Arthur
 25 May Janice Arthur
 29 May (ASCENSION) Pastor Braaten

Elder On Duty—Communion

6 April Mark Whitson
 13 April (PALM SUNDAY) Ronald W. Legg
 17 April (HOLY THURSDAY) Josh Whitson
 18 April (GOOD FRIDAY) Ronald W. Legg
 20 April (EASTER 6:00 AM) Josh Whitson
 20 April (EASTER 9:00 AM) Steve Hilgendorf
 27 April Mark Whitson
 4 May Mark Whitson
 11 May (MOTHER'S DAY) Steve Hilgendorf
 18 May Steve Hilgendorf
 25 May Josh Whitson
 29 May (ASCENSION) Josh Whitson

Altar Flowers

6 April NO FLOWERS
 13 April Palm Branches
 20 April Easter Lilies
 27 April OPEN
 4 May Ruth M. Sims
 11 May OPEN
 18 May Pastor & Lauren Braaten
 25 May OPEN

ATTENDANCE				OFFERINGS		
Date	Saturday	Sunday	Special	General	Missions	Building
3/2/14	23	75	83	\$2,568.00	\$20.00	\$200.00
3/9/14	23	70	27	\$2,977.60	\$0.00	\$10.00
3/16/14	27	80	45	\$3,093.35	\$0.00	\$230.00
3/23/14	23	90	40	\$2,299.50	\$5.00	\$35.00
3/30/14	29	87	0	\$2,488.87	\$0.00	\$0.00
Subtotal	125	402	195	\$13,427.32	\$25.00	\$475.00
Average	25	80.4	39	\$2,685.46	\$5.00	\$95.00

APRIL 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
<p>6</p> <p>9:30 AM Divine Service (Communion)</p> <p>10:30 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:30 AM Catechism Class (Sharing Hour)</p> <p>Catechism Recitation Day</p>	<p>7</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>8:00 PM Elders Meeting</p> <p>Harold Muller</p>	<p>8</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>9:00 AM Circuit Previer Meeting</p> <p>Dave Stauffer</p> <p>Gene Hedley</p> <p>Joan & Bob Vauvich</p> <p>Lane Crawford</p>	<p>9</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>7:00 PM Lenten Service</p> <p>8:00 PM Refreshments (LWML)</p> <p>Jill Turbin</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>Dan & Stephanie Crabbier</p> <p>Jessica Tauber</p> <p>Eric Russo</p>	<p>11</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:30 PM Divine Service (Communion)</p> <p>Eric Prondel</p> <p>Ten & Mat Fingbaum</p>	
<p>13</p> <p>9:30 AM Divine Service (Communion)</p> <p>10:30 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:15 AM Church Council</p> <p>11:30 AM Catechism Class</p> <p>Joyce Alexander</p> <p>Children's Service Day</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>8:00 PM Missions Meeting</p> <p>Scott Dufine</p>	<p>15</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p>	<p>16</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>Adrian Tauber</p> <p>Dorothy Cook</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>7:00 PM Monthly Thursday Divine Service (Communion)</p>	<p>18</p> <p>7:30 PM Good Friday Divine Service (Communion)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:30 PM Easter Vigil Divine Service (Communion)</p>	
<p>20</p> <p>8:30 AM Easter Sunrise Divine Service (Communion)</p> <p>7:30 AM Easter Breakfast</p> <p>9:30 AM Easter Day Divine Service (Communion)</p> <p>10:30 AM Easter Egg Hunt</p> <p>Catechism Recitation Day</p>	<p>21</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>1:20 PM Previer on Vacation</p> <p>8:00 PM Board of Education</p> <p>7:30 PM Voters Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pastor on Vacation</p>	<p>22</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>Avery Alexander</p> <p>Doug Roggers</p> <p>Kathleen & Leonard Boungay</p>	<p>23</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>11:30 AM TABBA Meeting</p> <p>Leona & Don Cisewski</p>	<p>24</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>1:30 PM Ladies Aid</p> <p>Daily Reflection</p>	<p>25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>26</p> <p>9:00 AM Youth Group</p> <p>9:30 PM Divine Service (Communion)</p> <p>Emily Ham</p> <p>Tony Baumgart</p> <p>Walter Hoyer</p>	
<p>27</p> <p>9:30 AM Divine Service (Communion)</p> <p>10:30 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:30 AM Catechism Class</p>	<p>28</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>Virginia Henderson</p>	<p>29</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>Erica Whelan</p> <p>Marge Seibel</p>	<p>30</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p> <p>Mary Rowan</p> <p>Paul Wils</p>				

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Immanuel's stained glass window in the Narthex.

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