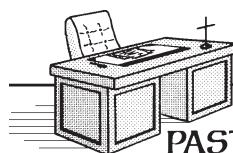


Trinity Tribune

Trinity Lutheran Church ✕ Paola, Kansas

2016



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

"They rob devout consciences of the consolation offered them in Christ."
Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article IV

The recent funeral of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia was broadcast on national television. The sermon was given by his son, Rev. Paul Scalia, a Roman Catholic priest. Up to a point his message was commendable, focusing not on his father, but on Christ and His suffering, death, and resurrection. Unfortunately, that was all undermined and overthrown by his closing comments, in which he actually *denied* that his father had entered the joys of eternal life:

"Christ was not yet perfected in him, and only those in whom Christ has been brought to perfection can enter heaven. We are here to lend our prayers to that perfection."

Next year we will be celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, begun on October 31, 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. It is widely assumed that today's Roman Catholic Church has abandoned most of the false doctrines and practices against which Luther was protesting. However, the sad comments above demonstrate in the most striking way that even after five centuries the same problems remain. For, Rev. Scalia couldn't preach that his father had entered the joys of eternal life, because his Roman Catholic theology forbids it.

The errors underlying his comments can be summed up with the three fundamental principles of the Reformation, in Latin *Sola Gratia*, *Sola Fide*, *Sola Scriptura*, which mean Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Scripture Alone.

Sola Gratia, Grace Alone

The Roman Catholic Church teaches a dual motivation for God to save us, not only His love, mercy, and grace toward us, but also our own inherent goodness, even before conversion, which is what moves God in the first place to bestow His gifts upon us. Luther refuted this very simply in his explanation of the Apostles' Creed in the Small Catechism: *"All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me."*

The Apostle Paul puts it this way in Ephesians 2:4-5: *"Because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved."* We weren't just somewhat spiritually injured or slightly hindered by our sinful state, but *"we were dead in transgressions."* Just as a dead person could do absolutely nothing to contribute to their resuscitation, we can do nothing to move God to save us. Paul beautifully expresses in these verses the true and only motivation for your salvation: *"Because of His great love for us"; "God, who is rich in mercy"; "it is by grace you have been saved."*

Sola Fide, Faith Alone

Having been brought by the Holy Spirit to faith in Christ as your Savior, is that faith alone sufficient for eternal salvation? The Roman Catholic Church teaches what could be called a "matching grant" theory of salvation. God has generously done His part to pay the bill for your sins, by granting you the merit earned by Christ. But, that doesn't cover the entire bill. You still owe to God an outstanding debt for your sins, so in order to be saved you—and others on your behalf—must match Christ's merit with your own good works. That is the disturbing meaning behind Rev. Scalia's

concluding comments about his father: *"Christ was not yet perfected in him, and only those in whom Christ has been brought to perfection can enter heaven. We are here to lend our prayers to that perfection."*

This is stated explicitly by the Roman Catholic Church in the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent:

"If anyone says that men are justified, either by the sole imputation of the righteousness of Christ, or by the sole remission of sins... let him be accursed" (Canon XI);

"If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than trust in divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this trust alone by which we are justified, let him be accursed" (Canon XII).

In contrast, the Augsburg Confession of the Lutheran Church sums up beautifully the Scriptural teaching of *Sola Fide*, Faith Alone:

"It is also taught among us that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God by our own merits, works, or satisfactions, but that we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, when we believe that Christ suffered for us and that for His sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us. For God will regard and reckon this faith as righteousness, as Paul says in Romans 3:21-26 and 4:5."

The Bible verses cited say in part:

"This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. . . God presented Him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His blood" (Romans 3:22-25);

"To the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness" (Romans 4:5).

So, the “matching grant” theory of salvation is completely contrary to Scripture, because God hasn’t just done “His part” in order to save you—in Christ He did and through the Holy Spirit He continues to do it *all*, on your behalf. As Paul declares in Ephesians 2:8-9: “*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.*”

Sola Scriptura, Scripture Alone

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: “[*Sin*] must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called Purgatory”(Para. 1472). However, such a teaching is absolutely found nowhere in Scripture. But, the Catechism of the Catholic Church also explains: “*The Church... does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the Holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence*”(Para. 82).

So, there you have it. That’s where they get the false doctrine of purgatory. Although it is not found anywhere in the Bible, this human-devised notion and tradition of purgatory must “be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence” to the divine declarations of sacred Scripture.

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The Bible in fact teaches the exact opposite of purgatory or any kind of intermediate state following death:

“Jesus answered him, ‘I tell you the truth, today you will be with Me in paradise’(Luke 23:43);

“*I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far*”(Philippians 1:23);

“*Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with Me, that you also may be where I am*”(John 14:1-3).

Another twist on the false doctrine of purgatory, painfully evident in the comments of Rev. Scalia, is that supposedly penalties not yet fully paid by those who die can be paid by others for them after their death. That is what Rev. Scalia meant when he said: “*We are here to lend our prayers to that perfection.*” Sadly, he meant that the funeral mass and the prayers of those attending would supposedly help free his father from purgatory.

This also is found nowhere in the Bible and is actually completely contrary to the teaching of Scripture: “*No man can redeem the life of another, or give to God for him a ransom*”(Psalm 49:7).

No doubt there are many faithful within the Roman Catholic Church who, despite their membership in that denomination, do not hold to these false teachings. Dr. C. F. W. Walther was the founder and first president of both the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod itself and the Synod’s Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (my alma mater). In a lecture to seminary students in 1885 he said emphatically:

“*Though we esteem our Church highly, may this abominable, fanatical notion be far from us, that our Lutheran Church is the alone-saving Church! The true Church extends throughout the world and is found in all denominations. . .*

Anyone who believes in Jesus Christ and is a member of His spiritual body is a member of the Church. . .

“*It is, therefore, an awful mistake to claim that men can be saved only in the Lutheran Church. . . There are Christians in the Reformed churches and the Roman Catholic Church. We have this precious promise in Isaiah 55:11: 'My Word shall not return unto Me void.' Wherever the Word of God is proclaimed and confessed or even recited during the service, the Lord is gathering a people for Himself. . . there are always some children of God in these communities because they have the Word of God, which is always bearing fruit in converting some souls to God*” (Law and Gospel, 32nd Evening Lecture).

However, this does *not* mean that we overlook false doctrine or consider doctrine unimportant. False doctrine is a most serious sin(Galatians 1:6-9), and it is God’s will that you seek out and only have fellowship with a church that adheres to the teachings of the Bible (John 8:31; 1 John 4:1), and that you avoid religious fellowship with those who follow false doctrine(Romans 16:17). But, we also rejoice in God’s promise that even among those with some false doctrine, if His Word is present among them, He is nevertheless, as Dr. Walther says, “*gathering a people for Himself*” through the power of His Word.

Nearly 500 years after the Reformation, we see in Rev. Scalia’s sad and strange denial at his own father’s funeral that he has entered the joys of eternal life striking evidence that these false doctrines remain the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. In the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Lutheran reformers sum up why this so serious:

“*For since they understand neither the forgiveness of sins, nor faith, nor grace, nor righteousness, our opponents confuse this doctrine miserably, they obscure the glory and the blessings of Christ, and they rob devout consciences of the consolation offered them in Christ*” (Article IV).

Pastor Kevin Vogts



Lenten Dinners on Wednesdays in March

Twin Valley 4-H invites you to enjoy a Taco Bar at the Lenten dinner in Trinity's basement Fellowship Hall before worship on Wednesday, March 2. Remaining dates for Lenten Vespers and dinners are March 9 and 16.

On March 9 Trinity Youth will serve a breakfast (like Ruritan), and the Blocktoberfest Committee will be serving on March 16. Thank you to all those hosting these fun fellowship events!



Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday on March 20. A special service of Holy Communion commemorating the Last Supper will be held on Maundy Thursday, March 24, at 7:00pm.



Twin Valley 4-H is sponsoring the annual Easter Egg Hunt, on Saturday, March 26 (day before Easter), at 10:00am on the church grounds. All children are invited to enjoy the Easter Egg Hunt and additional fun activities!



2016 Lenten Sermon Series

*Evening Services
at 7:00pm*

*Wednesday Lenten Suppers
Before Service in
Basement Fellowship Hall*

Sunday, March 6

Fourth Sunday in Lent

"Shall I Crucify Your King?"
John 19:15

Wednesday, March 9

Lent Service V

"What Is Truth?"
John 18:38

Sunday, March 13

Fifth Sunday in Lent

**"Why Do We Need
Any More Witnesses?"**
Mark 14:63

Wednesday, March 16

Lent Service VI

**"My God, My God,
Why Have You Forsaken Me?"**
Matthew 27:46

Palm Sunday, March 20

"Who Is This?"

Matthew 21:10

Thursday, March 24

Maundy Thursday Communion Service
**"Do You Understand What
I Have Done for You?"**
John 13:12

Friday, March 25

Good Friday Tenebrae Service
**"What Crime Has
He Committed?"**
Matthew 27:23

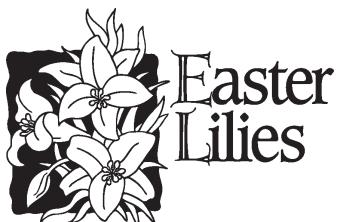
Easter Sunday, March 27

"Why Are You Crying?"
John 20:15



On Good Friday, March 25, at 7:00pm we will have a traditional Tenebrae Service. "Tenebrae" (TEN-uh-bray) is the Latin word for "darkness" or "shadows." The Tenebrae Service is marked by a gradual extinguishing of candles and other lights, symbolizing the death of our Lord, interspersed with readings, prayers, hymns, and other musical selections related to His Passion. Our Tenebrae Service will feature seven candles, gradually extinguished as we read Christ's seven last words from the cross.

Bring your family to meditate upon our Savior's sacrifice for your salvation.



We have again arranged for Easter Lilies to be ordered through the Church Office from Price Chopper, for \$8 each. Sign up on the counter in the church office indicating that you wish to have these plants purchased for you, and put your payment in the offering plate marked "Easter Lilies."

The deadline to sign up for ordering through the Church Office is Palm Sunday, March 20. You are also welcome to bring your own plants, if you wish to purchase them elsewhere or receive them as gifts. Please still sign up on the list indicating that you will provide your own plants and drop them by the church the week before Easter Sunday. When you sign up, please indicate whom your plants are in memory or honor of, the way you want it printed in the newsletter.

SUNRISE SERVICE

You are invited to an Easter Sunrise Service at Trinity on Easter Sunday, March 27 at 7:00am. This simple service will feature the Easter story and favorite Easter hymns.

A second Easter Service will be held at the regular time of 10:00am. Both services will feature Holy Communion and the same Easter message by Pastor Vogts, "Why Are You Crying?" based on John 20:15, which is the conclusion of our *Questions at the Cross* sermon series (see page 3).

Easter is one of the most moving and meaningful worship opportunities of the year. Bring your family and holiday guests to celebrate the real significance of Easter.



Our thanks to the Generations group for serving a light Easter Breakfast in our basement Fellowship Hall between our services on Easter Sunday, April 5, beginning at 8:00am. All are invited to enjoy the food and fellowship!



Each month we remember in prayer in our worship services—and you are encouraged to remember in your personal prayers—specific missionaries around the world supported by our congregation through our Synod.

March 6

Rev. Lawrence & Tina Matro
Papua New Guinea

March 13

Susan Dorn
Belize

March 20

Rev. Eric & Johanna Stinnett
Ethiopia

March 27

Bill & Nicole Lohmeyer
Dominican Republic



Check out Trinity's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/trinitylutheranblock. You are invited to post information about events, comments, photos, etc. Stop by and give us a look—and a "like"!



Could you—individual, family, or group—serve snacks after worship? There is a sign-up sheet on the table with the snacks. Our Generations group has generously agreed to provide and prepare the coffee and juice each week! So those signing up are only asked to provide some treat. Consider signing up for special occasions such as birthdays or anniversaries. Thanks to all those providing snacks for Coffee Hour!

March 6

Jan Minden

March 13

Jacob & Allyssa Henry

March 20

Need Volunteers

March 27

Easter Breakfast



Nursing Home Services March 6

You are invited to help Trinity provide brief worship services for nursing home residents at Country Club Estates and Vintage Park on March 6. The simple services are approximately 20 minutes in length at each home. We begin at 1:30pm at Country Club Estates and then go to Vintage Park for the second service.

The residents really enjoy these services, especially singing their favorite hymns. It's great to have church members there to greet the residents and sing along. We have a faithful few members who help but we could use your help too!

Our other nursing home services scheduled for 2015 are:

- ✖ April 17—North Point and Medical Lodge
- ✖ May 22—Country Club Estates and Vintage Park
- ✖ June 19—North Point and Medical Lodge
- ✖ July 24—Country Club Estates and Vintage Park
- ✖ August 28—North Point and Medical Lodge
- ✖ October 2—Country Club Estates and Vintage Park
- ✖ November 6—North Point and Medical Lodge
- ✖ December 11—North Point and Medical Lodge

2016 Confirmation

Confirmation for 2016 will be held on Sunday, May 1, with the public examination on Friday, April 29 at 7:00pm. This year's confirmands are Lance Elliott, Karlie McMullin, and Olivia Mitchell.

Easter Egg Hunt

*Saturday, March 26, 10:00am
On Church Grounds
Sponsored by Twin Valley 4-H
All Children Invited!*



Sunrise Service

*Easter Sunday, March 27, 7:00am
Second Easter Service at 10:00am
Both Services Include Holy Communion
and Same Easter Message*

Easter Breakfast

*Easter Sunday, March 27
8:00am
Sponsored by Generations*



All Invited—Everyone Welcome!



Our records of birthdays and anniversaries may not complete. If your information is missing or inaccurate, please accept our apologies and notify the Church Office at 849-3344 or email Church Secretary Stacey Elkinton at blocktlc@midwest-connections.com.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| March 1 | Devan Boydston |
| March 1 | Vera Kaiser |
| March 1 | Guylene Klein |
| March 1 | Johnny Prothe |
| March 1 | Dave Trickett |
| March 2 | Lance Elliott |
| March 3 | Justin Hieber |
| March 3 | Addison Kettler |
| March 5 | Lorranda Baldridge |
| March 5 | Billy Green |

March 5	Joshua Pemberton
March 5	Aaron Maisch
March 6	Gary Prothe
March 6	Sandra Schultz
March 7	Andrew Thompson
March 7	Jackie Thompson
March 8	Megan Prothe
March 9	Faith Ordonez
March 10	Jim Mueller
March 10	Betty Oberheide
March 11	Diana Deering
March 12	Dylan Shoemaker
March 13	Karen Garrison
March 14	Darrel Rodewald
March 15	Allyssa Henry
March 15	Jacob Henry
March 15	Kyle Kettler
March 15	Judy Parks
March 15	Randy Rausch
March 17	Steve Cook
March 17	Breanna Prothe
March 17	Marcia Raines
March 17	Roger Smith
March 17	Robyn Weatherbie

March 17 Emersyn Chapman
 March 18 Johnny Grother
 March 18 Jennifer Rethman
 March 18 Chris Smith
 March 19 Jordan Harper
 March 20 Paul Haley
 March 21 Rusty Morton
 March 21 Harry Stubbs
 March 21 Becky Stutzman
 March 23 Arnold Debrick
 March 23 Karla Debrick
 March 23 Elizabeth Kettler
 March 23 John Schlegel Jr.
 March 25 Laura Prothe
 March 26 Loren Windler
 March 28 Joyce Brown
 March 28 Zach Holtz
 March 28 Justine Prothe
 March 28 Tyler Tesar
 March 29 Wilda Bunch
 March 29 Lauren Wood
 March 31 Alvin Thoden
 March 6 Steve & Bobbi Debrick (17)
 March 7 Dave & Suzie Prothe (24)
 March 9 Rich & Sally Wood (25)
 March 10 Jim & Shelisa Mueller (37)
 March 20 Mike & Linda Giager (30)
 March 21 Sean & Robyn Weatherbie (18)
 March 28 Tom & Nancy Green (37)
 March 28 Arlin & Venita Prothe (51)

*The Epistles of Love
1st, 2nd & 3rd John*

What is the meaning of love? What are the four kinds of love found in the Bible? How does God want you to show love toward Him and toward others? Come learn the answers to these questions and more in Adult Bible Class as we study, *The Epistles of Love—1st, 2nd & 3rd John*.

John is often called the “Apostle of Love” because the word “love” occurs in his writings over 100 times—more than any other books of the Bible.

Join in Sundays at 9:00am in the Overflow as we learn about love from the Author of love with our study of *The Epistles of Love—1st, 2nd & 3rd John*.

