

## *Accedat verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum:*

### *A Study on the Consecration of the Lord's Supper in the Lutheran Confessions*

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#### *Introduction*

The intention of this essay is to determine the "what" of the consecration of the Lord's Supper in the theology of the Lutheran Confessions and to further illuminate its proper understanding and fitting practice, especially as it pertains to the issue of eucharistic prayers containing the Words of Institution. That there be a prayer of thanksgiving is no great issue to this author. In fact there ought to be thanksgiving in connection with the most holy and sacred meal of all. But whether this prayer includes the *Verba Testamenti* within it rather than as separate and distinct actions is of great importance. This author finds this area to be particularly relevant at this time due to the massive liturgical study that is going on now, given special impetus by the destructive character of the Church Growth Movement and "contemporary services", and the responding movements moving back to traditional liturgy, theologically Lutheran or not. As it happens when driving an automobile on icy roads, the problem is usually not in avoiding the initial danger, but in the crucial counter-steering that must take place, lest the vehicle end up in the ditch (the left ditch is as bad as the right ditch). Hopefully this essay will contribute to a better understanding of the clear Lutheran confessional stance with regard to the consecration and its form in the Divine Service order.

#### **An Augustinian Utterance: *Sharpening an Old Sword***

St. Augustine, in his lectures on the Gospel according to St. John, in discussing chapter fifteen, says of Holy Baptism:

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Why does He not say, Ye are clean through the baptism wherewith ye have been washed, but "through the word which I have spoken unto you," save only that in the water also it is the word that cleanseth? Take away the word, and the water is neither more nor less than water. The word is added to the element, and there results the Sacrament, as if itself also a kind of visible word.<sup>1</sup>

This passage in Augustine is cited by Luther in *the Large Catechism* under his discussion of the Sacrament of the Altar. Luther says:

It is the Word (I say) which makes and distinguishes this sacrament, so that it is not mere bread and wine, but is and is properly called the body and blood of Christ. For it is said: "*Accedat verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum.*" "If the Word be joined to the element it becomes a sacrament." This saying of St. Augustine is so explicitly and so well put that he has scarcely said anything better. The Word must make a sacrament of the element, else it remains a mere element. Now, it is not the word or institution of a prince or emperor, but of the Exalted Majesty, at whose feet all creatures should fall and say: "Amen, it is as he says," and accept it with all reverence, fear and humility [*The Book of Concord*, Jacobs one volume edition (1911), p.477].

*The Large Catechism* is very often ignored in understanding the consecration of the Lord's Supper in the *Book of Concord*. Most of the discussion immediately proceeds to *Formula of Concord - Solid Declaration*, Article VII. Luther is the *Western catholic par excellence* in his understanding of the consecration. It is the Lord's instituting Word that in Luther's theology and in that of the classic Western tradition which is the instrument of the special corporeal presence being in effect. Sasse notes:

In this respect Luther does not only follow the tradition of the Western church, but he also justifies this tradition as biblical and emphasizes more than any teacher of the church before him the uniqueness of these words.<sup>2</sup>

The Augustinian dictum drawn for service by Luther (whether used "Augustinianly" or not) needs to be confessionally unpacked lest it be misconstrued and misapplied in the Lutheran liturgy. We shall here venture to unpack the dictum (as a Lutheran sacramental principle) in the framework of the Lutheran Confessions' teaching pertaining the consecration of the Holy Supper. In this context we may acquire an improved grasp of *FC-SD*, VII, with regard to the consecration.

#### **I. The Word comes to the element and it becomes a sacrament.**

Two of the three Lutheran confessional applications of the Augustinian sacramental dictum are in connection with Baptism. This is to be expected given the original context in Augustine. This dictum is also applied to the Lord's Supper (similar to Luther's use in *the Large Catechism*) by Martin Chemnitz in his *Examination of the Council of Trent: Volume II* (1566-73). Chemnitz calls attention to

some, who in their efforts to reject Romanism, rejected what was necessary in the Lord's Supper, that is, the instituting words of Christ.

The saying of Augustine has it correctly: "Let the Word come to the element, and it becomes a sacrament." Likewise: "Take the Word out of Baptism, and what will the water be but water?" In no way, therefore, can there be a Eucharist without the use of the Word. For this reason Augustine says, *Contra Faustum*, Bk.20, ch.13.: "Our bread and cup becomes sacramental by a certain consecration; it does not grow that way." Therefore what is not consecrated, though it be bread and cup, is food for refreshment, not a religious sacrament.<sup>3</sup>

The Lord's Supper is what the Lord has made it. The Lord does this by His very own words. Chemnitz rejects those who imagine that they can have a true Mass or Lord's Supper without the *Verba Testamenti*. The Second Martin is saying nothing different from what the First Martin had already said in *the Large Catechism* (1529). In 1528, in a writing which might be regarded as "deutero-canonical" among the confessional writings, due to the Confessions' own use of it, Luther called attention to the Words of Institution as "action words."

Even the fanatical spirit [Zwingli] must acknowledge that Christ gave his body in the Supper. For they are action-words which Christ spoke at the first administration, and he did not lie, when he said, "Take, eat, this is my body," just as the sun and moon came to be when he said, Genesis 1[:14], "Let there be a sun and a moon," and it was no lying word. So his word surely is not merely a word of imitation, but a word of power which accomplishes what it expresses....<sup>4</sup>

Without the *Verba Testamenti* there is no Lord's Supper. In *Formula of Concord - Solid Declaration*, Article VII, the words are there in order to bless, change, consecrate the bread and wine. They are Christ's words and He is speaking them through the mouth of His called and ordained man. The words of Christ are directed toward the elements as consecratory words. This is not simply for "setting apart" the bread and wine (a generic consecration), but rather that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ. The Lutheran Confessions are not opposed to change talk, but they are opposed to change talk when it becomes an Aristotelian *jihad*<sup>5</sup> of theology, that is, transubstantiation *as a philosophical "explanation."* A similar intrusion of Aristotelianism into Lutheran theology takes place when it is posited on the basis of the Four Causes that the body and blood are not present until the host or the wine touches the lips, teeth or whatever. This kind of Aristotelian intrusion is not only a Roman Catholic problem.

Moreover, it is not being "overly Western" or "overly systematic" to confess that we are certain that the Words of Institution are the means by which the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus. When our Lord says it is His body, then it must be true. True as it is that the mere saying of these words is not all that is necessary for a certain and valid Sacrament, we would not be building on sand if in proper dominical context we understood our Lord's words in their plain sense. No *epiklesis* does this. Our Lord did not institute an *epiklesis* when He gave the mandate "This do in remembrance of me." An *epiklesis*, that is, a prayer invoking the Holy Spirit to descend on the elements of bread and wine (before or after the *Verba*) in order to make the body and blood present, does not add anything to, or improve the Lord's Sacrament. The *epiklesis* is not dominically instituted. Those who support an *epiklesis* still need to confess the relationship between the *Verba Testamenti* and the Holy Spirit.

## II. "The Word" is according to the mandate and institution of Christ.

In Luther's conflicts with Zwingli, as well as those with Rome, the explication of the consecration on the basis of the mandate and institution of Christ figured centrally. With Zwingli it was in the "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper" (1528), concerning the "action words" and the "command-words" given so that the body and blood of Christ are present in each Lord's Supper to the end of the world. Against Rome it was against those instances in which the institution was denied or violated (e.g., the private mass<sup>6</sup>, communion in one kind, the sacrifice of the Mass, the *corpus Christi* procession, etc.).

### *"Tene certum, dimitte incertum"*

Luther makes the point in 1533 that the reason why he holds to the position on the consecration he does is that all may be certain for faith. In discussing the private mass, Luther says:

But I have not been commanded to perform the private mass and it is uncertain. In short, as St. Augustine says: *Tene certum, dimitte incertum* - "Rely on what is certain and abandon what is uncertain." Yes, I even add, because it is uncertain whether the body and blood of Christ are present in the private mass and because it is certainly a purely human trifle, therefore you should never in your life believe that Christ's body and blood are present; for faith should be sure of its affairs and have a sure basis concerning which one must not and should not be in doubt.<sup>7</sup>

Luther's point is that there is no divine promise regarding the private mass of Rome. The further one departs from the institution of Christ, the more doubt creeps into the picture and consequently the certainty and foundation of faith begins to fall away. The solidity of hope in Christ turns into nothing more than a wishful leap into the *deus absconditus*. Nothing can be more certain than that which is done according to the mandate and institution of Christ. No one has the right to change what Christ has instituted, especially not His last will and testament. What is done in that way is done by Christ Himself through the means He has chosen. There is no faith for the sake of faith or in faith present in Luther here.

So it is not our work or speaking but the command and ordinance of Christ which make the bread the body and the wine the blood, beginning with the first Lord's Supper and continuing to the end of the world, and it is administered daily through our ministry or office.<sup>8</sup>

Earlier, in 1528, Luther has spoken much the same.

Here, too, if I were to say over all the bread there is, "This is the body of Christ," nothing would happen, but when we follow his institution and command in the Supper and say, "This is my body," then it is his body, not because of our speaking or our declarative word, but because of his command in which he has told us so to speak and to do and has attached his own command and deed to our speaking.<sup>9</sup>

### *Stewards of the Mysteries of God*

So long as what is done is according to the mandate and institution it is without doubt. "Offices and sacraments always remain in the church; persons are daily subject to change. As long as we call and induct into the offices persons who can administer them, then the offices will surely continue to be exercised."<sup>10</sup> With regard to the office Luther says again:

Let me once and for all answer the question I raised above, how one should regard the pastor in the papacy because they have all been consecrated in no other way than by private bishops for private masses. This is what you should do: You should esteem and look upon his chrism and private consecration as nothing, for it certainly is nothing, and does not help or serve the church and you. You should, rather, consider the fact that he possesses the office of the ministry which is not his but Christ's office. Also do not let yourself be led astray as to whether he has been properly called or whether he has bought or forced himself into his office, how he obtained it, whether standing on his head or on his feet, whether he is Judas or St. Peter, do not concern yourself with that at all. Distinguish between the office and the person, and between the holy place and the sacrifice.<sup>11</sup>

Again, with regard to the office and the Supper, Luther continues in the same passage:

When the pastor celebrates mass diligently, note this difference: Insofar as he observes the institution of Christ and also administers the sacrament to others, be assured that Christ's body and blood are certainly there on account of Christ's ordinance and not on account of the pastor's work or holiness. Insofar, however, as he does not observe the ordinance and intention of Christ but changes and perverts them, it is not necessary for you to believe that it is Christ's body and blood.

Lest we think that the mandate and institution may be followed without a man in office, Luther remarks with respect to an exceptional situation in Turkey:

And what must the Christians do who are held captive in Turkey? They cannot receive the sacrament and have to be content with their faith and desire which they have for the sacrament and the ordinance of Christ, just as those who die before baptism are nevertheless saved by their faith and desire for baptism. What did the children of Israel do in Babylon when they were unable to have public worship at Jerusalem except in faith and in sincere desire and longing? Therefore, even if the church would have been robbed completely of the sacrament by the pope, still, because the ordinance of Christ remained in their hearts with faith and desire, it would nevertheless have been preserved thereby, as indeed now in our time there are many who outwardly do without the sacrament for they are not willing to honor and strengthen the pope's abomination under one kind. For Christ's ordinance and faith are two works of God which are capable of doing anything.<sup>12</sup>

Luther's teaching is faithful with *Augsburg Confession XIV*, that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the sacraments unless he be *rite vocatus* (or *ordentlichen beruf*). This is a position which belongs to the mature Luther (usually so after around 1525). Beware "existential" readings of Luther which do not take into account the original context and current phase of Luther's thinking (especially as regards the office of the ministry and the Lord's Supper). This happens so often when Lutheran clergy or professors offer "dueling Luther quotations" to prove a point.

It is for this same reason, with regard to the people, that the Words of Institution must be made audible and clearly so. Again in discussing the private mass (1533) Luther says:

Second, a lay person or ordinary Christian, or whoever hears the private mass, has further reasons for not believing that Christ's body and blood are present in the private mass in addition to the reasons a private priest has. Specifically, he does not know whether the private priest consecrates or (as they call it) effects transubstantiation; moreover, he cannot know and does not even have to know it; for he is not permitted to hear the words which the priest is supposed to speak over the bread and wine.<sup>13</sup>

Without the *Verba Testamenti* there is no Lord's Supper. Without the words pronounced over the bread and wine in a way audible and discernible to the people, the certainty of faith wanes. In times past these words were merely whispered, buried under the canon of the mass.

### **III. Into *Formula of Concord - Solid Declaration, VII***

The principle that, "the Word comes to the bread and the wine and it becomes a sacrament," became a point of issue among the theologians of the *Augsburg Confession*, especially noted in the years following Luther's death. In accord with the scope of this essay we shall confine ourselves to the understanding of the consecration of the Lord's Supper.

Concerning Melancthon and the consecration, Edward F. Peters writes:

Melancthon's theology of consecration is very unclear. He takes for granted that the Words of Institution are spoken at each celebration since this is part of the action Christ established, but he emphasizes the fact that the words are there for the sake of the hearers and not for the sake of the bread.<sup>14</sup>

Bjarne W. Teigen notes that even as early as 1528, Melancthon expressed doubts, privately however, that the consecration effected the bodily presence of Christ.

Subsequently it became the position of the Philippists that the recitation of the Verba do not effect the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament, but rather, they are merely a general proclamation of the Gospel. In 1563 Erhard Sperber records an incident where a Philippist insists that it is "magic" to teach that through the Words of Institution which the officiant speaks the bread and wine are consecrated to be the true body and blood of Christ, and the Words of Institution are not a part or a quality of the sacrament but only public proclamation to the people concerning the use and fruit of the sacrament.<sup>15</sup>

Comparatively speaking, Peters also points out that, "Luther speaks of the consecration as the chief part of the Sacrament, Melancthon ignores it almost entirely."<sup>16</sup> Already in the *Smalcald Articles*, we find evidence in the Confessions, if not earlier, that it is believed that the body and blood of Christ are present already in the "giving" or distribution of the Holy Supper.

Of the Sacrament of the Altar we hold that bread and wine in the Supper are the true body and blood of Christ, and are given and received not only by the godly, but also by wicked Christians.

Teigen summarizes the answer of the Gnesio-Lutherans to the Philippists' denials:

[...]it is not *magia* because what is done is done at the command and through the word of God, and what takes place is precisely what God says, because it is a powerful word. It would be different if evil people said something without the command of God. That might be termed the devil's magic. But there is no similarity of such activities to the institution of the Lord's Supper.<sup>17</sup>

Lowell Green summarizes aptly:

Sixteenth-century Lutheran often referred to the statement of Augustine: "Add the Word to the element and it becomes a sacrament." They held that it is the word of Christ, and not the office of the ministry or the faith of the communicants, that caused the Real Presence.<sup>18</sup>

### ***The Holy Office and the Consecration***

With regard to the office of the ministry we ought to bear in mind the fact pointed out earlier, that in "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" of Luther in 1533, he does not condone or recommend any attempts of "lay consecration" of the Supper but simply recommends for exiled Christians in Turkey to be content, given their situation, with their hunger and thirst for the Sacrament. This may not merely be ascribed to maintaining "proper order." Certitude would drastically diminish if such lay celebrations were to be attempted. Pretend faith without a true object is not true faith. There is much to be reflected upon here with regard to our vacancy situations, vicars and "lay ministry."

Below we shall quote at length from Ottfried Koch, from his *Presence or Re-Presentation?*, since he has proven helpful for the author in determining the place of the office of the ministry with regard to the Lord's Supper.

Insofar as it carries out Christ's work the office of the ministry has executive power which is able to put into effect what is promised by the gospel. That is to say that by virtue of Christ's authority the ministry can put the atonement into effect in the sense of applying it. On the basis of the work of reconciliation an order of forgiveness through the pastoral office has been set up in the church. The office, then, is not the exercise of the universal priesthood, but a means of God's reign through the Holy Spirit, which precedes and

conditions the conditions of the "existential priesthood" [...] The doctrine of the ministry which regards the office as the presence of Christ's office is the theological expression of the fact of the *solus Christus* in the redemptive event of worship.<sup>19</sup>

Earlier, Koch makes the insightful and intriguing comment about how the office is to be regarded Christologically.

The work of the ministry consists in the "service of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18). Ministers are, according to Paul, "ambassadors for Christ." The ministry is therefore, in a certain sense, the office of Christ himself. One cannot talk about the ministerial office's being a representative of the congregation. We must rather see in the ministry the vicariate of Christ, even to the point of risking confusion with Roman terminology.<sup>20</sup>

So in its denial that, "No man's word or work, be it the merit or speaking of the minister," brings about the real presence is not to deny that the body and blood are, "distributed through our ministry and office" (cf. *FC-SD*, VII.74-77). Chemnitz states clearly that, "it is with those who are legitimately chosen and called by God through the church, therefore with the ministers to whom the use or administration of the ministry of the Word and the sacraments has been committed."<sup>21</sup> The office is not the source of the authority but the means by which Christ serves His people in the Lord's Supper, the Divine Service. It is "apostolic" in that pastors are called and sent by Christ. They have His authority in the mandates He has given the holy office. Thus we may point to *Apology* XXIV, under the discussion of the term "Mass," where the liturgy is identified with "the public ministry." There is no promise given to "lay consecration" of the Supper or whatever it might be in that case. Even if the "emergency" case is cited from the Tractate, it must be pointed out that this emergency only mentions Baptism and Absolution and not the Holy Supper. Arguments from silence or from a "general theory" of sacraments do not apply.<sup>22</sup> What is said concerning "lay consecration" may well apply to discussions concerning the acts of illusory "female pastors." The mandate of the Holy Supper belongs to the mandates of the Holy Office. Perhaps reference may be made here to the popularly named, "Great Commission" - St. Matthew 28. May it not be the proper meaning of that passage to indicate that the observation of all things which the Lord commanded is a particular reference to those things at which only the "twelve" were present and now in Matthew 28, only the eleven. Could it not be a reference to the specific mandates of the apostolic office, when our Lord says, "Lo, I am with you always..." Wasn't He saying, "Look, in those things which I gave you to administer, in them I am with you always." He is present in the working of the office.<sup>23</sup>

As Green points out<sup>24</sup>, the *Formula of Concord* maintains a threefold action of the Supper (in contrast to others that hold a fourfold action - Dix et al.). Consecration, distribution and reception are what belongs to the institution. The office bearer consecrates and distributes, all receive. Not only are the body and blood present in the reception, but also in the distribution (according to the Lord's word), in the thought of the Confessions. In summary, the Formula states what is done liturgically then, with the understanding of the consecration as we have examined it.

In the administration of Communion the words of institution are to be spoken or sung distinctly and clearly before the congregation and are under no circumstances to be omitted. Thereby we render obedience to the command of Christ, 'This do.' Thereby the faith of the hearers in the essence and benefits of this sacrament (the presence of the body and blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, and all the benefits which Christ has won for us by his death and the shedding of his blood and which he give to us in his testament) is awakened, strengthened and confirmed through his Word. And thereby the elements of bread and wine are hallowed or blessed in this holy use, so that therewith the body and blood of Christ are distributed to us to eat and to drink, as Paul says, "The cup of blessing which we bless," which happens precisely through the repetition and recitation of the words of institution.<sup>25</sup>

#### **IV. Implications for Eucharistic Prayer & the *Verba Testamenti***

The Words of Institution "are under no circumstances to be omitted." More than this they are to be spoken or sung "clearly and distinctly before the people." Through this, the bread and the wine are consecrated. Hence in the understanding of *Formula of Concord-Solid Declaration* VII and *the Large Catechism*, the Words of Institution are said simultaneously over the elements and before the people. Therefore also, it is fair to say that they are given a certain prominence.<sup>26</sup> They are, after all, the words of the Lamb who sits upon the throne (Rev. 4,5). They are not to be merely present "somewhere." What belongs to the institution of the Supper is centrally the Words of the Lord. Norman Nagel writes:

We are told that our Lord was celebrating the Passover. From the Words of Institution we would hardly know this, and what is not clearly and fully stated here cannot be the main thing. So although it was a Passover, it was one such as there had never been before, a Passover to end all Passovers. What is unique is Jesus' uniqueness, what is there which could not have been there except for him. This what is given by what he says.<sup>27</sup>

Ottfried Koch states insightfully:

The implication is that our search for what is unconditionally commanded for the church's meal should be sought in the new elements of the Last Supper--those which cannot be derived historically from other meal celebrations. The specifically new element at the Last Supper lay "in the instituting words of Christ, which he spoke over the two elements."<sup>28</sup>

Nagel again points out the uniqueness of the Last Supper (or perhaps the "First Supper"):

The uniqueness of his Passover is shown also by the fact that while the Passover was a family occasion, at his Passover even his own mother was not there, only the Twelve, the apostles who were to go on doing what had never been done before. Jesus deals with the Passover as if it belongs to him, as he had done with the Sabbath (Mark 3:1-6). [...] What the Messiah does and bestows cannot be held within the old wine skins.<sup>29</sup>

In the Gospels the new things are what is given to the office to carry on. Not just anyone could have instituted the Lord's Supper. Not just anyone has the authority to do as the Lord has done in the first Supper. Those who forgive sins and do the things of the Lord better have the authority to do so. Christ had the authority and the power. The pharisees would have been rightly offended if it had been anyone other than Jesus who went around forgiving sins. (Of course they didn't recognize Him.) Therefore in I Corinthians Paul gives the words of Christ as he received them "from the Lord." Paul has been given this authority as apostle. There is no authority to change or improve on what Christ has given. It is the Lord's Supper, not the pastor's supper. Paul simply repeats them as Christ gave them. There is no mandate to speak the Words of Institution back to God. What they are there for is stated succinctly by Nagel:

We are the ones to whom our Lord is speaking: "for many," "for you." It is only from him, his body and blood which he gave and shed for us. The words of Christ to us, they say and do and bestow what follows.<sup>30</sup>

Again, we cite the words of Koch:

What establishes the new rite and the new pneumatic reality is Christ's word of institution. The fact that Jesus spoke a table prayer according to Jewish custom is not what matters, but rather that he spoke the instituting word over the elements of bread and wine entirely without analogy.<sup>31</sup>

Martin Chemnitz speaks to the matter stating in summary form all that we have said above:

And surely this blessing or consecration is not to be divided between the Word of God and words handed down by men. For it is not just any word, but the Word of God which is necessary for a sacrament. And to the Word of God, seeing it has been tried with fire, nothing is to be added (Prov. 30:6). And especially, nothing is to be added to the testament of the Son of God (Gal. 3:15-27). In short, Christ has commanded us to do in the action of the sacrament what He Himself did. He did not, however, perform a mute action, but spoke. And what He said is reported to us in Scripture, as much as the Holy Spirit judged to be necessary for us.<sup>32</sup>

Chemnitz calls further attention, repeatedly, to the fact that Gregory the Great asserts that the apostles did not use the canonical prayer but only the *Verba Testamenti* next to the Lord's Prayer. St. Gregory the Great writes in Epistle XII to John, Bishop of Syracuse, a passage also cited by Friedrich Lochner in *Der Hauptgottesdienst*, a liturgical classic for the early Missouri Synod:

[...] it was the custom of the apostles to consecrate the host oblation to (ad) that same prayer only. And it seemed to me very unsuitable that we should say over the oblation a prayer which a scholastic had composed, and should not say the very prayer which our Redeemer composed over His body and blood.<sup>33</sup>

Luther stings those who would turn the Words of Institution around into something other than consecration and proclamation together.

This word is the whole gospel. You will observe and understand that it says nothing about a sacrifice or a good work but about a present and a gift, which Christ offers and gives to us, and which we should receive and with faith appropriate and hold fast. He tells you to take and keep, and would you make an offering of it and give it away? **How can you say to God: "I will give You your word"? Neither can you say to another person: "I am offering God his Word on your behalf."** On the contrary, you should say: "Dear Lord, since you say that you freely give it to me, I receive it with gratitude and joy." [Emphasis is mine].<sup>34</sup>

But we must remember that the distinction is not merely between "prayer and proclamation" but also that the *Verba Testamenti* is the consecration of the bread and wine, according to the mandate and institution. The problem of eucharistic prayer is not simply regarding the content of the prayer, but whether the *Verba* ought be directed back to God in a prayer. The problem is not solved with a linguistic argument for the proclamatory element of liturgical prayer (e.g., as some pastors "repreach" the sermon in the Prayer of the Church). Lutherans understand the *Verba* as consecration of/toward the bread and wine in the presence of the people, spoken with a prominence that is unmistakable. Proclamation and consecration over the elements may not be made to compete with each other. Those who argue against eucharistic prayers must also watch themselves so that proclamation does not eclipse consecration.

Koch points out that to subordinate the *Verba Testamenti* under the rubric of "giving thanks" is to take priority away from the unique instituting action of Christ at the Last Supper. Thanksgiving happened at every Passover. The Words of Institution were not in every Passover.<sup>35</sup> *Anamnesis* [remembrance] is not given to be a "liturgical component" that the church must invent as a new rubric. The consecration, distribution and reception of the body and blood of Christ in faith, receiving the forgiveness of sins, are (collectively) the remembrance. It is a confession of the death of Christ as we enjoy the distribution of His last will and testament.

The Words of Institution do not assume an absence of Christ or His body and blood, which we need to "make present." Christ is present in His *corpus mysticum*, the Church (which must include the *fides quae*)! The Lord's Supper is that the bread and wine,

according to His mandate and institution, are His very body and blood, the same body and blood described in the Creed. The Lord has bound Himself to those words when they are spoken according to His original mandate and institution. The Divine Service does not make the Passion contemporary, but distributes the benefits of Christ's work to us. Our history is now included in salvation history.

To say the least, it would be an oddity and a curious thing if the liturgical form of the Western Mass historically and theologically identified with confessional Lutheranism would be abandoned by those who purport to be its heirs and confessors. It bears some weight at least, to ponder the fact that the official *kirchenordnungen* of the churches of the *Augsburg Confession* (especially those which adopted *the Formula of Concord*) did not encapsulate the *Verba Testamenti* into a prayer of thanksgiving. This, perhaps, might serve as a partial test for us in our theologizing about liturgical forms. To be sure, our pastors do not take their vows on the basis of sixteenth-century church orders, but they do show us concretely how the confessional doctrine was practiced by those most immediate to its official expression. Yet notably, part of the examination process, prior to the ordination of a candidate, included an examination on how the candidate was to conduct the services of the Church on the basis of the official *kirchenordnungen* (cf. the *Enchiridion* of Chemnitz).

A certain Lord's Supper is one in which the mandate and institution are carried out. One may find this where a called and ordained, male pastor celebrates the Supper with the Words of Institution clear and distinct, where the body and blood are distributed and received by the people. Bread and wine are the elements determined by our Lord for the Supper of the New Testament. Where one departs from the institution and mandate of Christ, doubt increases and it becomes something of our invention. But where this is done accordingly, it is truly the Lord's Supper and Holy Communion in Jesus.

#### END NOTES:

1. Philip Schaff, ed. *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: Volume VII*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986); p.344
2. "Consecration and Real Presence" in *Scripture and the Church: Selected Essays of Hermann Sasse*. Edited by Jeffrey J. Kloha and Ronald R. Feuerhahn. (Saint Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1995); p.303
3. Martin Chemnitz. *Examination of the Council of Trent: Volume II*. Trans. Fred Kramer. (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1978); p.225
4. "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper" (AE:37; p.181)
5. Aristotelian philosophy was imported into Western theology largely through the scholastics' readings of second-hand source quotations, in translation, in Islamic philosophical sources.
6. The condemnation of the private mass (*Winkelmesse*) should in no way be understood or used to condemn the self-communion of celebrants in the normal parish celebration of the Divine Service. This has been the Lutheran norm until recent times. Chemnitz and Luther both practiced and accepted the self-communication of the celebrant within a normal Divine Service. The same can be said of Wilhelm Loehe. In fact, one might question the necessity, and perhaps the propriety, of the Holy Communion celebrated today for what in Missouri Synod circles is called, ironically and inaptly, the circuit Winkel meeting. It might be advisable that if such a Divine Service is held, it ought be publicized as taking place and that the communicants of the parish are welcome to attend (under the pastoral care of the celebrating pastor).
7. "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" (AE:38; p.163)
8. Ibid, p.199
9. "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper" (AE:37; p.184)
10. "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" (AE:38; p.201)
11. "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" (AE:38; pp.203,204)

12. "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" (AE:38; p.207)
13. "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" (AE:38; p.164)
14. Edward Frederick Peters. *The Origin and Meaning of the Axiom: "Nothing has the character of a sacrament outside of the use," in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Theology.* (Unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1968); p.115
15. Bjarne Wollan Teigen. *The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz.* (Brewster, Mass.: Trinity Lutheran Press, 1986); p.83
16. Peters, p.223
17. Teigen, p.83
18. "The Holy Supper" in *A Contemporary Look at the Formula of Concord.* Edited by Robert D. Preus and Wilbert H. Rosin. (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1978); p.226
19. Otfried Koch. *Presence or Re-Presentation? [Gegenwart oder Vergegenwaertigung]* (Munich: Claudius Verlag, 1965) An unpublished translation by Oliver K. Olson.; pp.169,170
20. Koch, p.168
21. *Examination of the Council of Trent: Volume II*, p.97
22. As is the case in our Synodical fellowship, such emergencies as vacancies and budgetary concerns coupled with the assertion that a seminarian, vicar or "lay minister" is "almost" a pastor do not fly in the face of the Confessions' understanding of the Holy Office and the consecration of the Supper. Conclusions as to the actuality of the Supper can be dubious at best. "Emergency" is life and death emergency. "*Rite vocatus*" is not simply that things be done in an orderly way. The certitude of faith is at stake.
23. As we might derive from Koch's assertion regarding the Office and the *solus Christus* principle, there ought not be "concelebration" in the Divine Service. Perhaps also, if a chasuble is worn, only the celebrant should be so vested.
24. Preus/Rosin, p.224,225
25. FC-SD, VII.79-82 (Tappert ed.)
26. Some attention ought to be given to the way many celebrants speak the Verba Testamenti. Many simply rattle through them as if they were reading a telephone directory. Learning to chant the Verba well may also help alleviate this problem. It perhaps might be worth re-instating an adoration of the Christ in the Sacrament within its use, perhaps in the way of the celebrant genuflecting after the consecration of the bread and again after the consecration of the cup, and perhaps also the return of the eucharistic vesture of the chasuble. Perhaps in the case of congregations which are renovating their sanctuaries or building a new building, that a freestanding altar (not a table) be considered. Indeed altars that stand against the chancel wall are "theocentric", but is that a theocentric "one-way-street"?
27. "Holy Communion" by Norman Nagel in *Lutheran Worship: History and Practice.* Edited by Fred L. Precht. (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1993); p.302
28. Koch, pp.224,225
29. Precht, pp.302,303
30. Precht, p.300
31. Koch, p.233

32. *Examination of the Council of Trent: Volume II*, p.226

33. Philip Schaff, ed. *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: Volume XIII*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989); p.9

34. "The Adoration of the Sacrament" (AE:36; pp.288,289)

35. Koch, p.239