

dancy, and may with good reason be annoyed by the repetition, as are the church members.

Some might argue that the Apostles' Creed as the baptismal creed can be followed by the Nicene Creed as the eucharistic creed without being formally repetitious, but this argument is artificial. The latter is only an elaboration of the former from which it derives its substance. To be historically exact, the Nicene Creed is an expansion of the baptismal creed of Jerusalem. Through custom going back to Charlemagne around A.D. 800, the Nicene Creed has earned its place in the liturgy of the eucharist, but this is not a hard and fast rule and nothing is lost where the Apostles' Creed and not the Nicene Creed is used. The creed confessed at baptism is as Trinitarian as its Nicene offspring. In any event, for a few centuries the Nicene Creed was dropped altogether without the church falling into the lap of Arius. Errors of ancient and modern Arians are better addressed from the pulpit in sermons where the preacher can be intelligibly explicit. Since these suggestions have to do with redundancy, they are only made for Sundays where baptism is part of the service.

One of the marks of eastern rite liturgies is their constant repetition. Western rites are more efficient, and their brevity has its own appeal. Arguments offered do not have to deal with brevity for the sake of brevity, but to make certain that the first part of the service is understood as much as a service of baptism as it is a service of the Word. The Word leads us to baptism and back to it. I am not sure this is clear by repeating in the Service of the Word what was already done in a service of baptism.

### *Scaer: Categorically Speaking*

Here are the age categories for LCMS parish pastors: 1,195 are in their 30s; 1,895 are in their 40s; 1,592 are in their 50s. 563 are between 60 and 64, and only 125 are 65 and over. If the 125 are under 70, this means that 688 are in their 60s. Statistics can be twisted, but let's scan the figures. There are 700 more pastors who are in their 40s than in their 30s. A good explanation is that the average age of seminary graduates is already around 35. Also striking is the comparatively low number of pastors still active in parishes in their 60s. The highest possible figure for that age group is 688. At 65 and over only 125 active pastors are left. Here are some possible explanations for these figures.

Some pastors with emeritus status are still active and are supporting themselves on their pensions, so they are not counted. Since they are receiving only minimum reimbursement to complement their pensions, they are in effect supporting their congregations. They are not "worker-priests," but "retired-priest priests." (Someone might explain why if a pastor holds down a secular job, he can be called a "worker-

priest," but if a full time pastor, he may not call himself a "priest.") Another explanation for early and on-time retirements is that to many parsons caught between the pressure of their congregations and the expectations for more members from outside sources, retirement at 65 looks pretty good. This is only a guess.

In previous eras, 40 years could be anticipated for God's field hands. That's what the late Dr. J. A. O. Preus often mentioned. It was not unusual for some to be picking grapes in the vineyard for over 50 years. With ordination at 35 and retirement at 65, it looks like the 40 years will be lowered to 30 years of bringing the sheaves. Since the American male has a life expectancy of 75 years, we could easily have over 1,000 healthy retired LCMS pastors at one time. This should make it easier for active pastors to have an extra Sunday here and there off. We are waiting for ages of the non-parish pastors, those at schools, seminaries, and district and synod offices. Our guess is that here a good portion is over 60. Get your scratch pads ready. With only 12 percent of all parish pastors 60 or older, what is the percentage of ordained ministers without congregations over 60 years old still working? These earlier retirement numbers among parish pastors may show that some ministers have begun to see themselves as some congregations see them: their employees.

### *Scaer: The Computer as Liturgical Meat Grinder*

The recent case of contaminated beef at a Nebraska packing company was an inspiration for an editorial in the October 1997 issue of *The Lutheran Layman*, published by the Lutheran Laymen's League (LLL). Its regular editor, Gerald Perschbacher, relinquished his space to Mark Eischer, a coordinator for the LLL's radio programs, including "The Lutheran Hour." Eischer begins his editorial with an unsavory reference to a landfill where twenty-five million pounds of hamburger lie rotting because of possible contamination by meat grinders.

"Some say the church needs to follow the example of the fast-food industry and 'market' the church to a wide world of 'consumers.' In fact, some churches have grown to almost obese proportions by slickly adapting themselves to the tastes and prejudices of busy, bored Baby Boomers.

"Every week, many pastors create their own orders of service by running the liturgy through meat grinders known as word processors. Who would order a recall should false doctrine find its way into these homemade liturgies? Unfortunately, in our efforts to make the church more 'appealing,' we may lose those very things that nourish the Christian—the forgiveness of sin, the focus upon Christ, his cross, and the sacrament—all that bloody business."

To spare the forests and save the environment, it might be time to put a moratorium on computer-generated liturgies.