



Inter-Lutheran Theological Seminary

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April 2024,

Dear Friends,

“Then when Jesus came, he found that he (Lazarus) had lain in the grave four days already. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: ¹⁹ And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. ²⁰ Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. ²¹ Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. ²² But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. ²³ Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. ²⁴ Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. ²⁵ Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: ²⁶ And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this? ²⁷ She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.” **John 11:17-27**

In this beautiful Gospel, we see the patience and tender compassion of Jesus as He addresses a grieving Martha. Jesus had heard that Lazarus was sick, and yet he delayed coming to Lazarus for two more days, because He knew that He would raise Lazarus from the dead. When Jesus finally arrives at Bethany, Martha anxiously comes out to meet Him. At first, Martha complains to Jesus ***“Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.”*** Many of us can identify with Martha’s frustration. When we experience a tragedy, such as the loss of a loved one, our first response is often to ask God “Why?” “Why did you allow this to happen? Why did this have to happen to me?”

But hidden within Martha’s complaint is a glimpse of her faith. In her very words, Martha implies *“You have the power that could have prevented this from happening.”* Her faith is further expressed in the next phrase ***“But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.”*** In other words, *“It is not too late. You can still help us.”* Jesus patiently listens to Martha and then assures her ***“... Thy brother shall rise again.”*** Martha already knows this. She knows of the great event that is promised on the last Day. *“But what about the here and now? What can help me deal with the pain of this loss?”*

“Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live...” Jesus gives Martha the answer to all of her problems, even though she is asking the wrong questions. The question Martha should be asking is not what, when or why, but *“Who?” “Who can help me in my time of need?”* The Resurrection is not merely an event that will happen in the distant future. The Resurrection is embodied in the person who now stands before Martha. It is Jesus Christ Himself. He is the One who shed His Blood on Calvary’s cross for the forgiveness of our sins. He is the One who swallowed up death in victory. He is the One who continues to help us in every time of need. All those who by faith embrace the Crucified and Risen Lord Jesus have life; right here and right now. May God grant us grace to continue believing in the One who is the Resurrection and the Life.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Chuck Bylka



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DEACONESS STUDIES OFFERED AT THE SEMINARY

The Deaconess program at the Inter-Lutheran Theological Seminary provides sound biblical educational opportunities for women. A deaconess is a woman who is a church-worker and is trained and dedicated to sharing the Gospel of Christ through acts of mercy and spiritual care. The role of a deaconess is to serve other women by engaging women in diverse settings and specialization, whether in a congregation, in an institution or on the mission field. The Deaconess serves congregations using her gift to bless and serve other women.

Titus 2:3-5 "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

Upon fulfillment of the program requirements which include the classes shown below, students receive a Deaconess Certificate endorsed by the faculty. Along with the Deaconess Certificate a student may also receive an additional degree outside the Seminary such as Nursing, Teaching, Counseling, etc. in order to focus on a specific calling. You may also take the deaconess courses without acquiring a Deaconess Certificate. The Deaconess courses of study include:

Orientation to Deaconess Studies. 3 credits

An overview of the issues of women's ministry in the contemporary church.

Deaconess History. 2 credits

A study of the role of deaconesses through the history of the Christian Church.

Working as a Deaconess I. 2 credits

A course which explores the use of Deaconess skills involving both congregational and personal care as well as the employment of such skills in the current church setting.

Working as a Deaconess II. 2 credits

A second course which explores the use of Deaconess skills involving community outreach and involvement with the employment of such skills in the current church setting.

Philippians 1:6 "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

If you are interested in learning about the Deaconess program, please contact the Seminary at (906) 482-3337 or email cilseminary@ilseminary.com. Also, additional information is available in our on-line catalogue at <http://www.ilseminary.org/catalog.pdf>

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We would love to grow our endowment into a major source of ongoing seminary support. Although the seminary still needs the financial ongoing regular contributions of our supporters, please consider the endowment fund for your planned giving needs. For more additional information, please contact Kirk Otto, Jr. at (715) 821-8574 or Cheryl Hendrickson at (906) 482-3337.

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