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OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE LUTHERAN
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About the Cover

"Remembering Reformation Day"

As Reformation day is fast approaching, our church history can help us trace the path of how the Lutheran Church got to where it is today.

It is good for us to review what took place on October 31st years ago, as well as the story of the 95 theses.

Although, it is true that many Lutherans are aware of the celebration of the Reformation being the last Sunday of October, many of us do not really understand the real meaning or events that took place on that day.

We may have read them from history books... Heard about them in school in our History subjects... Yet we are limited in our full understanding of the impact of that day

The truth of the Reformation should hold special meaning for us as Lutherans. Lutherans should be proud to be a part of the reformation as we pass the truth and history from generation to generation.

May we celebrate Reformation Day 2013, with gladness and realization of the truth as we continue to live as a Truly Reformed church and body of Christ.



After some time that the LCP newsletter had not been published, here is it again. The editorial board hopes and prays that this will be a start of an unending issue to be made.

This publication is open for contributions in either news, feature, testimonials, opinion, or photo news that speaks of the LCP. We assure that all contributions will be properly credited when published. However, the publication shall have the right to review and edit the articles as necessary.

Comments and suggestions are also much encouraged. Be part of the development of the LCP newsletter.

For contributions, comments, and suggestions, please send them through this email address: InVeritas.lcp@gmail.com or inveritas.lcp@gmail.com.

We also need volunteers for cartoonist, layout artist, and writers. If you're willing to commit your time then please contact Jovelyn Lao-e: 09108600019; email: jhoe_brandzie@yahoo.com, facebook: Jhovskie Layne.

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Rev. James D. Cerdeñola
LCP President



The Reformation Message- Help pass it on

Many significant events of our past, such as birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and the passing of love ones are worth remembering. Important dates are highlighted on our calendar, and every year we remember them. For Lutherans, the church reformation is among significant events worth remembering. All who cherish the truthful proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ who alone grants the forgiveness of sin and eternal life, will want to celebrate the Reformation.

The Protestant Reformation in the 15th and 16th (1517) centuries aimed to restore the church, which had become deformed over the course of centuries, because of false doctrine and wrong practices. The reformation would bring about the rediscovery of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, endorsing it with a resounding clarity of the great Biblical principles of SOLA GRATIA, SOLA FEDEI, SOLA SCRIPTURA.

It was in Wittenberg, Germany that sparked the pen and tongue of Martin Luther and thus ignited the Reformation. This fire burned brightly and blazed the three principles mentioned above, that are biblically based and have been known and believed by the Christian church throughout the ages, even at times they had been obscured. These three principles, mentioned in Latin above, translated in English mean: GRACE ALONE, FAITH ALONE, SCRIPTURE ALONE (Ephesians 2:8-9; Roamns 1:17; Romans 3:24-28; Romans 5:1-2 and Galatians 2:16,21). The Reformation is worth remembering. As we preserve its memory, it is important that the reformation message continue to be preached and shared with others. It is our privilege to help pass along and keep alive the Reformation message.

Brothers and Sister in the Lord, let there be no misunderstanding. Our redemption/salvation is complete. The saving work of Jesus Christ was fulfilled many centuries ago. What Christ did on the cross is sufficient for the salvation of everyone who has lived on earth and believes in Him. That is the central doctrine of Scripture, and Dr. Martin Luther did not reform or tamper with it in any way. There is nothing to add to the work of Christ. But something is still needed. The Message and saving Grace of Christ must still be proclaimed, confessed, and believed. It must shape the entire life of the church and preserve us from fatal error. Therefore, the reformation message is ours to share & pass on. The question is "how do we pass on the reformation message?"

Primarily, let us remember our leaders and those who spoke the Word of God to you and me. Remember the faithful pastors and teachers, your parents and relatives, and those who first brought you to Christ in Holy Baptism, who nourished your baptismal faith through instruction in the Word, and eventually, when you were prepared, brought you to the table of the Lord to receive His true body and blood. Remember and give thanks for these servants and leaders of the Lord.

Second, imitate the Faith of these leaders. Admiration for another's faith or a sense of inspiration from observing other's faith in action is important, but it must be added to, not substituted for, one's own faith in Jesus Christ. The righteous shall live by faith. Those who live by faith are righteous.

Finally, we pass on the message of the reformation by standing firm our ground, not to be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. Daily, we need to be strengthened by God's grace. Unfortunately, strange and diverse teachings are not in short supply. They are accessible everywhere at the bookstore, through TV shows & movies as well as the internet, etc.

The church that is faithful to the scripture will always find itself in conflict with twisted minds and erring consciences. However, if & when we are immersed in the Word and continue by means of grace, we will not be led astray. Through the Gospel, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ continues to strengthen us.

My brethren, the message of the reformation- SOLA GRATIA, SOLA FEDEI, SOLA SCRIPTURA, may we strive to pass it on. We need to go. We need to move. Happy celebration of the Reformation.

WE INCLUDE IN OUR PRAYERS:

*Edward Strohschein, Finance Manager of LCMS -Asia, and family are currently in the USA as Ed undergoes a bone marrow transplant. Ed's father, the late Arnold Strohschein, served as a missionary to the Philippines during the early life of the LCP.

*Upcoming National Pastoral Conference being held in Manila this December.

*For the Mission work being done in the four District of the LCP and those that tirelessly serve.

*The faculty and staff members and the students of our Lutheran Theological seminary, as well as the pastors that are taking colloquy studies. Also the TEE classes being held in the districts.



INSIGHTS

REV. ABEL CESAR VILLOS

Luther and the marks of the church

Luther argues that the church is best understood by the words "holy Christian people" (p.335-336). They are people who "truly believe in Christ" and "**have the Holy Spirit against sin**" (p.336). The Holy Spirit "sanctifies them daily, not only through the forgiveness of sin acquired by Christ, but also through the abolition, and purging, and the mortification of sins, on the basis of which they are called a holy people" (p.335-336).

The church is a people "in whom Christ lives, works, and rules" and in whom the Holy Spirit "gives people faith in Christ and thus sanctifies them" (p. 336-337). This sanctification is the renewal of the whole person, body and soul, through the inscription of both tables of "the commandments of God not merely on a tablet of stone, but in hearts of flesh" (p.337).

Luther then identifies "seven principal parts of the great holy possession whereby the Holy Spirit effects in us a daily sanctification and vivification in Christ, according to the first table of Moses" (pp. 357-358):

1. the "possession of the holy word of God" (p.340);
2. "the holy sacrament of baptism, wherever it is taught, believed, and administered correctly according to Christ's ordinance" (p.343);
3. "the holy sacrament of the altar, wherever it is rightly administered, believed, and received according to Christ's institution" (p.344);
- 4."the office of the keys exercised publicly... where you see sins forgiven or reprov'd in some persons" (p.345);
5. men consecrated, called or having offices to "administer, and use the aforementioned four holy possessions in behalf of and in the name of the church, or rather by reason of their institution by Christ" (p. 346);
- 6."prayer, public praise, and thanksgiving to God" [The Liturgy] (p. 356);
- 7."the holy possession of the sacred cross [of enduring] misfortune, and persecution, all kinds of trials and evil from the devil, the world, and the flesh [...] in order to become like their head, Christ" (p.356).

(Taken from - On the Councils and the Church, 1539" in ed. Theodore G. Tappert, *Selected Writings of Martin Luther*, Vol.4)

Reverend James Cerdenola, president of Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP), together with Reverend Reynante Lagadon and Reverend Abel Cesar Villos represented the country and the Lutheran Theological Seminary in the 4th International Lutheran Council's World Seminaries Conference hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church Lithuania last August 7-12.

The International Lutheran Council (ILC) is a worldwide association of established confessional Lutheran church bodies which proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of an unconditional commitment to the Holy Scriptures as the inspired and infallible Word of God and to the Lutheran Confessions contained in the Book of Concord as the true and faithful exposition of the Word of God.

The ILC Seminary relations committee also received reports and engaged discussions with the seminary

LCP takes part in 4th ILC



professors who participated.

With the theme "Suffering, Persecution, Martyrdom as Marks of the Church", this year's conference focused on the 7th mark of the Church which Luther identified as: "the holy possession of the sacred cross [of enduring] misfortune and persecution, all kinds of trials and evil from the devil, the world, and the flesh [...] in order to become like their head, Christ"¹

In Matthew 5:11 - 12 Jesus tells the faithful, "Blessed are you when men revile you and utter all kinds of evil against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven."

The conference highlighted the study of the Scriptures understanding that the cross (suffering for the sake of the Gospel) has been a mark of the Church ever since the account of persecution broke out in the book of Acts. And Jesus himself said that the world will hate His followers. This theme is very relevant

especially in the age of secularization, liberalism and modern rationalistic theology that attack the Gospel from all fronts: and if these threats are not enough; there also are attacks to the Christian Church from within.

And so as the church moves forward to the 21st century - we gird ourselves and prepare for the challenges that the Church will face in the future and the best and only way that we can prepare for the future is to look back in the past - 2000 years ago - to the Cross, to the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus. For in His death we find life.

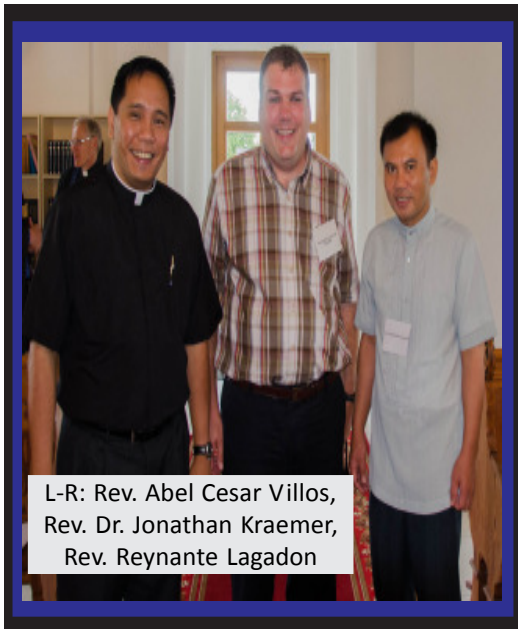
While we are hard pressed on every side, we

are not crushed and even in the midst of suffering for contending for the faith - we have a great resource in the Altar of our churches. For even as our bodies are wasting away in this sin filled world - we are renewed and fed by the Lord of the Church Himself, as He said, "whoever eats my



flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day." (John 6:54)" One thing is for sure, there will be suffering, persecution and perhaps even martyrdom in our church, and in the end we suffer all for the sake of Christ, but we dare not suffer the name of Christ and we pray that we will always be found in Christ, who was himself "THE FAITHFUL WITNESS" (Rev. 1:5)

On the other hand, Reverend Cerdenola also represented the LCP in the ILC as he was elected by his peers to be a member of the Executive Committee that makes plans for cooperative work among partner churches. One such example of cooperation among confessional Lutheran churches is the joint study of contemporary issues while drawing guidance from God's Word and the Confessions of the Church.



L-R: Rev. Abel Cesar Villos, Rev. Dr. Jonathan Kraemer, Rev. Reynante Lagadon

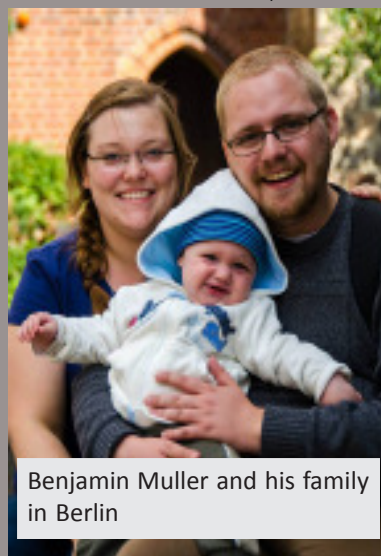
Church culture reconnaissance

Rev. Villos drops by Berlin, Wittenberg

To foster closer relations not only between two former alumni of CTS but also to learn from each other in terms of the history, background, and the work of their respective church bodies, Reverend Abel Villos made a brief stop in Berlin this past August 12-16 following the International Lutheran Council's World seminary conference.

Reverend Villos was hosted by Benjamin Muller, alumnus of the Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Muller is also a Theology student and member of the independent Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (SELF) which is a partner church of the Lutheran Church of the Philippines (LCP). Both churches are also in fellowship with ILC. The LCP and SELK, headed by Reverend



Benjamin Muller and his family in Berlin

James Cerdenola and Dr. Voigt Hans-Jörg respectively, are completing the final tasks that will lead them into entering formal church relations.

Meanwhile, Reverend Villos had the opportunity to travel to Wittenberg, the land of reformation.



During the trip to Wittenberg, Rev. Villos had a glimpse of the University of Wittenberg where Luther taught, Wittenberg Town Church of Sta. Mary's, Castle Church,

where Luther posted the 95 Theses, as well as the International Lutheran Center (LCMS-SELK)

The Luther House, which was est. in 1504 as part of the University of Wittenberg, was the home of Martin Luther for most of his adult life and a significant location in the history of the Protestant Reformation. Luther was living here when he wrote his 95 Theses. The Augusteum is an expansion of the original building, and home of the Protestant seminary and library which still exist today. These buildings were constructed following the Death of Luther. Since 1994, both buildings have been recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

As for the Wittenberg Town Church of Sta. Mary's, this is where the reformers Luther and Johannes Bugenhagen often preached. Other key historical facts for this church include; the first celebration of the mass held in German rather than Latin, the first ever distribution of the bread and wine to the congregation, and the site for where Luther married his bride Catharine Von Bora.

SLD Youth empowers its ministry

The SLD Youth Organization conducts its student ministry program every last Friday of each month.

Lectures are conducted by various selected speakers. Participants are able to mingle and fellowship by joining together in worshiping and singing praises to God, as well as enjoying games and fun activities.

Furthermore, clubs had been organized for young people to join such as Dance, Music, Photography, Mountaineering, Book clubs to name a few.

For the past few month, the SLD Youth Fellowship has also had the privilege of visiting other various church in the area for fellowship and ministry.

SNAPSHOTS of SLD's activities:



LTS opens with 30 studes

This year, the Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) opened its door and welcomed a total of 30 students.

Of the 30, five are first year students, two are second year students, two are on their vicarage, 10 are colloquy students, and 11 are deaconess students.

This past September 29, the deaconess intensive training class opened with a divine service held at the St. Stephen Lutheran Church. Deaconess Grace Rao, the Director of Deaconess Ministries of Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod led this intensive training.

The following course taught already are The role of Women in the Church, the Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther and the latest was Lutheranism 101.



HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT:

- ✓ Why is seminary education so important? It is vital because this is where the formation of leaders and eventually Pastors will be trained and shaped by the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.
- ✓ Reformation Sunday is considered Seminary Sunday. It has been the practice that offerings on that particular Sunday will be allocated for the Theological Education Program of the church.
- ✓ Unfortunately, over the years donations and offerings from LCP Congregations for the seminary have declined.
- ✓ We encourage the congregations to give to the work of training men to become shepherd of souls. It should be considered as a privilege that we are able to give for this work, thankful for the work of the Pastors in our midst.



Using the theme "Army of God," St. Stephen Lutheran Church (SSLC) held its Vacation Bible School (VBS) at 3 different locations in a Bible Boot Camp style for nearly 90 children this past April 29-May 3.

This year's VBS theme Bible verses came from Ephesians 6:11, using the concept of integrating military practices and focusing on putting on the full armor of God as protection from the schemes of the devil.

Bible boot camps were conducted in Nangalisan which was hosted by the Quinopez couple, Teacher's Village in Atab which was hosted by the Abnasan family, with various activities being held at SSLC.

This year's theme was a real eye-opener to the children as the activities were quite different from the previous VBS styles run by SSLC these past few years. Participating children were divided into platoons with a sergeant-in-charge. Each platoon was given a schedule to rotate within the various activity stations. Activity stations included Craft/Weaponry, Sing & Dance, Story Telling, Module Class, Interactive Class (Games), and Wrapping Up. The children were tasked with understanding the armors such as; the Belt of Truth, Breastplate of Righteousness, Shoes with the Gospel of Peace, Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit. Other activities included a water war, amazing race, and overnight with boodle fight and camp fire, jogging and a work out regime. Participants had also created their own jingle and group presentation. Through this VBS - the Children now have a better understanding of the battle that is out there in the world and how, with the Help and Armor of God, to fight in this battle.



Faith Community Church holds Community Outreach Program

Faith Community Lutheran Church in Las Vegas Nevada (USA) came to the Philippines this past May to serve the LCP, not only to hold eyeglass clinics to help improve the sight of those in the community who struggle with their physical vision. The Clinics main goal and purpose was to be able to share the life saving Gospel message and Love of Jesus Christ with over 880 people who came to the Clinics. Quite a number of the *patients* were either un-

churched/ non-practicing or other than Christian (Mormon's or local cults such as *Iglesia Ni Cristo*).

Members of local LCP churches had the opportunity to share with many of these folks the True Gospel message for the first time. Another unexpected blessing was the opportunity for healing to take place between family members and broken relationships within the LCP church as fellow LCP members were able to reconcile and pray for one another.



The Race

Time is running out...

We race against time as it continues to tic-tock, often complaining of running out of time at the end of a long and tiring day.

According to M. Sanjeeta in his essay "The Importance of Time," time is a free flowing force that is fixed and cannot be changed. No matter how hard we try, we are unable to adjust time by adding or taking away from it.

The Bible itself states in Ecclesiastes 3, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens."

Thus, do we really need to race against time or complain about all the things we are not able to accomplish in life because of the lack of time? How we manage time, is not necessarily a race against time and life, but rather how we spend every single second that is given to us before our time runs out and is finished. How are you using your time that God has given to you? As the saying goes, it is not how much time we spend in work and life, but rather how was the quality of the work and life we experienced and accomplish with the time we were given.



TRUE Love WAITS

"I love you..."

These three words are most likely the most popular and commonly used words in any and all languages.

Many people, nowadays, do not really understand the true meaning of this phrase. "I Love You" is often used between people who have a close and special relationship with one another. However, there are many people today who easily use this phrase, even if the relationship is casual or simply friendly.

From the beginning of time, people have forgotten or misunderstood the concept of true love waits, where an individual remains pure until the proper and appropriate time of marriage. Nowadays, many teenagers and young adults, do not have proper guidance and instruction from their parents or public school and are easily confused between the concept of love and infatuation. Often, young people will find their guidance and instruction from the TV or movies or what society wants to teach.

Even in the church, we cannot deny the fact that there are now many young people who engage in relationships with the opposite sex without completely understanding God's plan and design for intimacy and therefore easily deceived by the enemy and the ways of the world.

As part of the Lord's church body, it is our duty and privilege to protect the purity of our young people by educating and teaching them God's plan for relationships.

What is True Love Waits?

True Love Waits is a way of encouraging teenagers and college students in today's society to make a commitment to God and one another towards sexual abstinence until marriage.

True Love Waits is designed to encourage moral purity by adhering to biblical principles. This youth-based international campaign utilizes positive peer pressure by encouraging those who make a commitment to refrain from pre-marital sex, and to challenge their peers to do the same.

It is a movement of helping teenagers differentiate between infatuation and true love especially in regards to the conflict and confusion to what society teaches.

Its Commitment

Lifeway Student Ministry outlines the True Love Waits concept with five commitments. These are: to God, to one's self, to family, to friends, and to the future spouse and children.



To God: It is stated by Christ in Matthew 22:37, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'

To one's self: Matthew 22:39 states, "And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Commitment to family: is defined in Philippians 4:5 - "Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near."

John 15:13 states our **commitment to our friends:** "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

To our future spouse and children: II Timothy 2:22 states, "Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

What now?

Since the enemy is hard at work to confuse many youth and young people regarding the biblical context of true love and further tempts them to engage in relationships that go against the will of the Lord. The Church then has a real opportunity to guide and teach those who struggle to follow the biblical God-given instructions for living a pure life.

LCP youth celebrates unity in Christ through Sports

Unity of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP)

was once again proven after its National Sports Festival on May 26, 2013 to June 01, 2013 with the theme “*Celebrating Unity in Christ*” held at Christ Lutheran Church, Moreno Binalonan, Pangasinan.

The Sports fest was actively participated by at least seven competitive teams from Baguio City, Ilocos, Isabela, Mindanao District (MDD), Pangasinan 1, Pangasinan 2, South Luzon District (SLD), and a guest team all the way from Faith Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, Nevada.

The event started with a motorcade around the municipality of Binalonan. This motorcade was led by the officials of the community followed by a horn blowing motorcycles, and music filled tricycles and cars of the participants.

All of the 342 registered participants (athletes plus Pastors) was so proud shouting along the streets and drivers never hesitated to blow their horns during the motorcade, an insinuation of Lutheran presence in the community.

Games began soon as Rev. James Cerdenola (President of LCP) formally opened the Sports Festival with the phrase “LET THE GAME BEGIN”. Athletes enjoyed the games especially that they were given the chance to have more games with the Double Elimination ramification of most of the games.



In congruence to the theme, they also had a lot of activities that promotes unity in a team; they had devotion, lectures, and a whole lot of action songs, and fellowship songs.

With the talents of Lutherans, Literary - Musical contest was made part of the contested activities, where the Las Vegas team was the judge in some of the Literary - musical contest. Most of the evening activities were conducted on the basketball court, the priority project of Faith Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, NV.

Last night of the long week event was an exciting evening for everyone as they watch the Search for Mr. and Miss Sports fest 2013, it was a night with a jam-packed audiences from the community and the participants. Beauty, wit, and performance in the sports fest were the basis of judging the candidates for the Mr. and Miss Sports fest and the contest was limited to non-obscene portions.

After a long night judgment of the candidates, Marlon Daysa of NLHD and Keziah Huevos of MDD received the crown and a loud of applause from the audience as they were declared as the Mr. and Miss Sports fest 2013.

After all of the exhausting games and contested activities, South Luzon District nailed 206 points and became the over-all champion of the National Sports fest 2013.

It was followed by Pangasinan 2 who got 175 points as the first runner up and Ilocos who got 172 points to be on the spot of second runner up. Other teams fully tried their best to be on top but these three teams were incredibly great in their performances on most of the games. However, all teams are on equal footing when it comes to winning friends from other places.

The National Sports Festival was no ordinary event for the Philippine Lutheran Youth League (PLYL) since it is the very first time that youth from united LCP was gathered together in the national level. It was another historic moment in the timeline of LCP that makes Lutheran say "It is more fun to be a Lutheran".



Uncovering the pages of Luther's Life

I was reading a book by Stephen Nichols when my kids asked me, "who is the man on the book's cover page." I answered them, "It's Martin Luther." Children are born with curious minds, and tend to fire many questions off, one after the next, expecting an answer for each question. "Who is Luther," they asked. And so, to satisfy their curiosity, I lay down the book and tell some facts about who the man on the cover page is.

As I trace back the things I know about Luther, I came to realize that there are still many details that I do not know about Luther. It's a good thing, the kids were there to be asking questions which allowed me to refresh my memory and gain a renewed inspiration and interest to continue turning the pages of Nichols' book which is a guided tour on Luther's life and thoughts.

Being a Lutheran since birth, I am proud to know that Luther is really a blessing to us in what was accomplished through him during the Reformation. Luther was indeed an instrument used by our Creator, so that the truth in the Word of Scripture would be unveiled, so people could learn and live by it.

As I go through the pages of the book, I came to the realization, that the story of how the Reformation came about through the dedication of Luther, must be passed on – not just to the youth and adults but even to the new minds of children. Psychologists have proven that the children of today's generation can understand things that are happening around them. Thus, we have an opportunity to share the truth and help them realize the essence of celebrating Reformation Day. Furthermore, they themselves can and will be an instrument for spreading to the world that man is saved by Faith alone that comes to us through the Death and Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

to Young Minds

