

Ministry, Word, and Sacraments: An Enchiridion by Martin Chemnitz

1. The Ministry (Office) is instituted/ordained by God...to perform functions
2. Those functions are to feed the Word/administer Sacraments/use of keys
3. Call only? No. Examination also
4. Examine them for 4 things. A. Call, B. Doctrine, C. Ceremonies, D. Life and Conduct
5. To faithful and able men
6. Need a call, not self-willed
7. Don't hear those without a legitimate call
8. Desire office? Yes. But do not thrust yourself into it
9. **Christians are priests, but no general call to the Ministry**
10. Christians have a general call to proclaim the virtues of God...
"But the public Ministry of the Word and of the Sacraments in the church is not entrusted to all Christians in general, as we have already shown."
11. **Importance of a Legitimate Call**
 - A. **God works through that man**
 - B. **God promises needed gifts to that man**
 - C. **God is present in that man's work**
 - D. **Stirs up ministers**
 - E. **Stirs up hearers (to receive this man)**
12. The right to call and to send laborers into the harvest **belongs to the Lord**
13. God's call is twofold, either without means(immediate) or with means(mediate)
14. A call without means as the patriarchs, prophets and apostles
15. Don't believe fanatics, God confirms calls without means by signs and true doctrine
16. After the apostles, God gives no promise to work apart from means
17. Mediate call uses means instituted and ordained by God
18. The Word of God directs men to the mediate call by examples
19. Scriptural statements show that mediate calls are legitimate and divine
20. The one mediately called can rely on the same promises as the immediately called
21. **Regular Means** - Mediate call uses the ministry of the church (royal priesthood)
Christ has entrusted to His church the keys, the Word and Sacrament, ministry and ministers
22. **The regular means uses ministers, and the rest of the church (laymen)**
{The Roman pontiff wrongly excludes rulers and the laity, from election and call}
23. If the ruler is Christian and pious, he too is included as "father" of the church
24. But the ruler cannot exclude the church in the calling
25. The Calling is not to be entrusted to the Laity alone, excluding the minister and ruler
(As the Anabaptists wrong do.)
26. A Mediate call with due order observed...handled by the chief members(pastors) and with the consent of the whole church. See page 34-35—Here is how it was done!
THUS the whole church includes clergy, pious ruler and the faithful people.
27. Those pious laity who gave money to support the work... have a say
28. Those the church calls should qualify in doctrine and conduct, as God has prescribed
29. Public Rite of Ordination
 - A. **Public testimony of the Church (against those who run without a divine call)**

- B. The ministry is publicly committed to a man (in the name of God and church)
 - C. His vow obligates Him to faithfulness
 - D. The church recognizes the man's divine authority
 - E. The whole church (clergy, laity, ruler) commits him to God in prayer
30. Rite of Laying on of Hands – solemn public and outward testimony that “God Himself calls, sends, and appoints that person for the ministry, though by regular and legitimate means.”
-yet the mode of laying on of hands is “a thing indifferent.”
 31. Dismissal or Removal from Office is also done by God Himself and to be handled mediately.
The whole church is to be involved showing that the man errs in doctrine and/or life
 32. Ministers are to be paid.
 33. The work of Ministry is to **A.** Study the Word, and **B.** Teach the people.

Pastoral Office (Ministry)

“He (Loehe) opposed Walther’s formulation of the “transference theory,” according to which the congregation, as participating in the universal priesthood of all believers, held all the rights and powers of the ministry and transferred the public exercise of these functions to a pastor through its call.” (Nelson, p. 181).

Walther taught:

1. Christ has given the keys of the kingdom of heaven directly to “the Church...the communion of the saints”
 - a. so that the believers individually possess the same authority as the pastor, only using it in a different way.
 - b. The congregation, as participating in the universal priesthood of all believers, holds all the rights and powers of the ministry.
2. The believers transfer the public exercise of these functions to a pastor through its call.

Walther writes, “when the Smalcald Articles say **the keys belong** to the church or to the whole church, this does not mean that only entire congregations which have a pastor, possess the keys through him, as a whole [congregation], but even ‘two or three’, who are gathered in Jesus name, therefore in short, **all true believing Christians.**” (C.F.W. Walther, *The Congregation’s Right to Choose its Pastor*, trans. by Fred Kramer, (Ft. Wayne: The Office of Development, Concordia Theological Seminary, 1987?) p. 25. [From *Der Lutheraner*, Nov. 13, 1860.]

Indeed, “all believing Christians, have the command and therefore the right to preach, therefore also **have the office originally.**”¹³

“This view is carried over into **the Brief Statement** of the Doctrinal Theology of the Missouri Synod (1930): “Since the Christians are the Church, it is self-evident that they alone originally possess the spiritual gifts and rights which Christ has gained for, and given to, His Church. Thus

St. Paul reminds all believers: “All things are yours,” 1 Cor. 3:21, 22, and Christ Himself commits to all believers the keys of the kingdom of heaven, Matt. 16:13-19, 18:17-20; John 20:22, 23, and commissions all believers to preach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments, Matt. 28:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25.” (§30)” (The Office of the Keys in the Ecclesiology of C.F.W. Walther and the Lutheran Confessions” by The Rev. James D. Heiser, footnote #13, p.21).

“Let the papistic Lutherans show that a pastor has something different to do than every Christian is admonished in the Word of God to do, or let them confess that they themselves have no Christian church office. For the fact that pastors exercise the office publicly in behalf of the congregation and the common Christians only privately, proves, as already said, not a different office which pastors and Christians have, but only a different way and manner of exercising the office of the Word, a different use of the same.”¹⁵
15 *ibid.*, p. 129. [From *Der Lutheraner*, June 11, 1861.]

When Grabau and the Buffalo Synod declared, “Church and teacher of the church are divinely combined, where the one is, the other is to be. They are correlatives; as no bride can be without a bridegroom,” Walther shot back, “What do you think, dear reader of this Buffalo teaching?—I probably do not need to tell you what is to be judged concerning it. It is clearly—antichristian! May God preserve our poor church against such a dreadful error.”¹⁶
16 *ibid.*, p. 39. [From *Der Lutheraner*, November 27, 1860.]

The second portion of this paper will be an examination of the Lutheran Confessions with regard to their teachings concerning the Office of the Keys and the relationship between the keys and the Office of the Ministry and the Priesthood of all Believers.³

Essentially, it is the presence of believers possessing the Office of the Keys which makes churches part of the “Church” and it is through the presence of such believers that churches possess the power to forgive sins.

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Missouri

The usual Protestant point of view, which considers the ministerial office as the mouth-piece of the universal priesthood

Grabau

Catholicizing doctrine

It bases its stand on especially on the doctrine of ordination and the universal priesthood of the baptized members, which have a very specific priestly office.

(Moving Frontiers, p.184)

26 Ought then the whole multitude (especially where it is very large) indiscriminately and without order handle the matter of election and call?

God is not a God of confusion; He rather wants all things to be done and administered decently and in order in the church. I Co 14:40. Therefore to avoid confusion, at the time of the apostles and also after their time in the ancient and pure church, **the matter of the election and call of ministers of the Word was always handled according to a certain order by the chief members of the church in the name and with the consent of the whole church.** **A.** Thus the apostles first set forth **a directive as to what kind of persons are to be chosen** for the ministries of the church. Acts I: 15 ff.; 6:2 ff. **B.** Then the church, according to that rule of the directive, **chose and set forth some.** **C.** But since the call belongs not only to the multitude or common people in the church, therefore **they submitted those who were chosen and nominated to the judgment of the apostles**, whether they be fit for that ministry according to the rule of the divine Word. And so **the election of the multitude was confirmed** by the approval of the apostles. **D.** And thus finally **the ministries are committed to those nominated, elected, and called, with the solemn prayer of the whole church and public testimony, namely laying on of hands.** Acts 6:5-6. But since the multitude of the church is not always such that it can search out and propose for election those that are fit, the apostles themselves often nominated suitable persons and proposed them to the churches. Tts 1 :5; 1 Ti 1:3,2 Ti 2:2.

Thus Paul sent Titus, Timothy, [and] Silvanus to churches. But the apostles did not thrust those persons on the churches without either invitation or consent, but nominated or presented them to the churches, which then approved and confirmed that nomination or election with their own free election, as Luke describes this custom with the work *cheirotomia*, Acts 14:23.

Finally, after the church had grown into a large multitude, a presbytery was arranged and set up already at the very time of the apostles to handle this matter. 1 Ti 4:14. In this [presbytery], according to the accounts of Tertullian and Ambrose, some were chosen and appointed, from all the orders or members of the church, to take care of and administer these and similar church matters in the name and with the consent of the whole church. **And thus the call remained that of the whole complete church, yet with proper and decent order observed.** The church immediately following diligently followed these apostolic footsteps. And since **the government** also began to embrace the doctrine of the Gospel, **the whole matter of the election and call of ministers was ordinarily best distributed among the three chief orders of the church, namely clergy, the pious ruler, and the faithful people.** Many notable old canons are quoted

regarding this rite, Dist. 23, 24, 62, 65, and 67. And the old church histories testify that at times the bishops and clergy proposed persons to be called, at times a pious ruler nominated [them], at times the people requested [them], but they then presented those proposed, nominated, and requested persons to the other orders or members of the church, that the election might be approved and confirmed by their judgment and consent, Cyprian, Book I, Ep. 4; Augustine, Ep. 100. From this there still remain the words **nomination, request, presentation, consensus, confirmation, and conferring**; from these words, rightly considered, it can be understood how and with what order the call of ministers of the church both was once regulated and ought to be properly administered in our time.