



LIFE IN CHRIST

Receiving God's Gifts — Sharing God's Gifts

The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church, Jackson, MS

+ June 2021 +

Life in Christ
is the monthly publication of
Christ Lutheran Church, LC-MS
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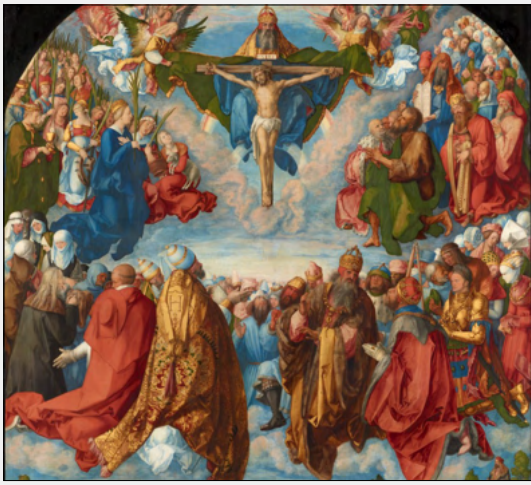
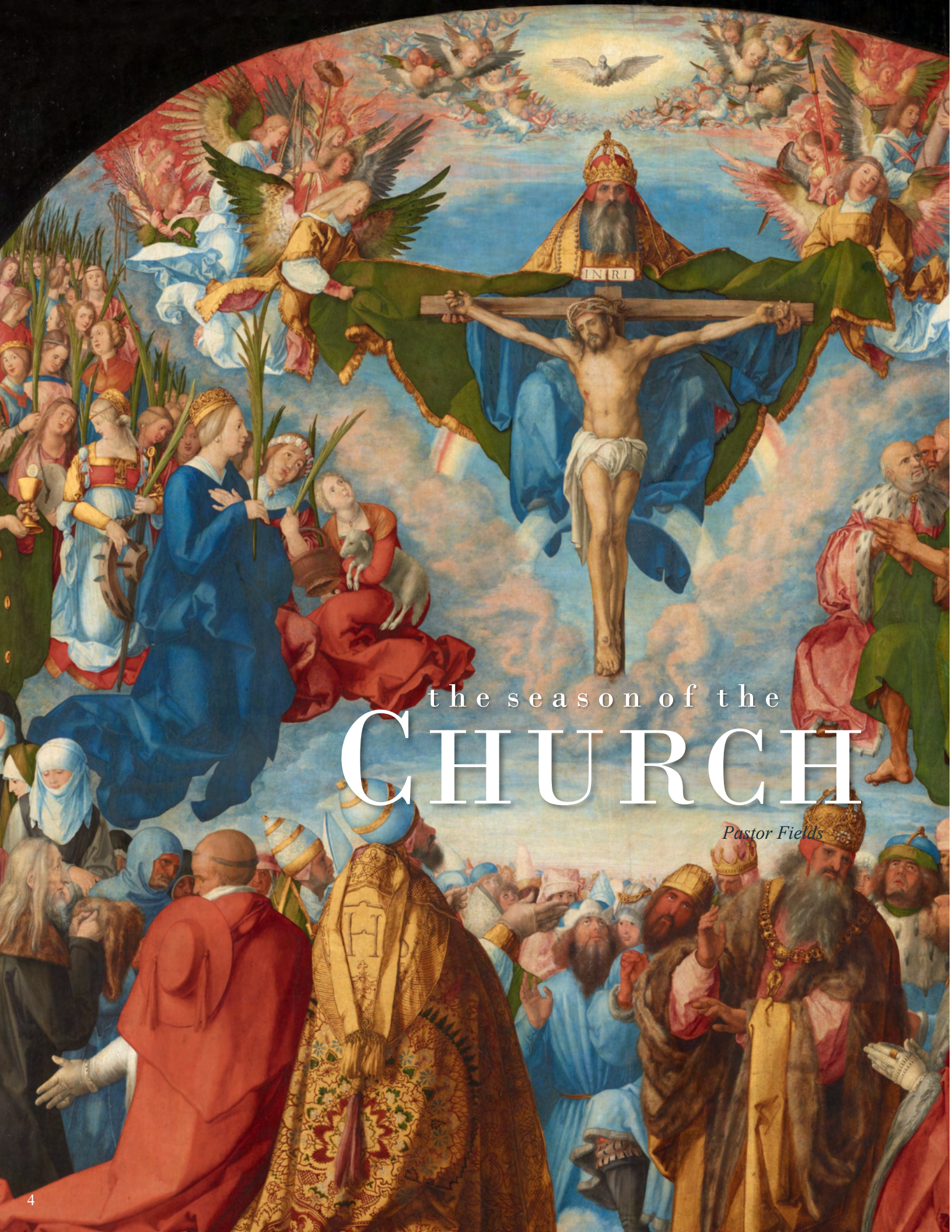


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the season of the
CHURCH

Pastor Fields



The Ecclesiastical Year is defined by the life of Christ. It begins with His Incarnation and Nativity. This we call the season of Advent and Christmas. Then we celebrate the time of His anointing as the Holy One of God by John the Baptist. This we call Epiphany. Then we trek through the time of His labor and Passion of our behalf, that we might know salvation. This we call the season of Lent, and then Holy Week.

The Lord's personal ministry in His presence is concluded with three feasts: The Resurrection, Ascension, and finally Pentecost, wherein He grants His Spirit to His Apostles, and all who would follow after Him.

It is very easy to believe that, with Pentecost, the story has somehow come to an end.

Yet, we are treated to one last feast, that of the Holy Trinity. It is an odd thing, to celebrate not an event in Christ's life, but a doctrine. We rarely do it elsewhere. Yet, Trinity Sunday begins what some colloquially call the 'green days.'

The Feast of Holy Trinity is a celebration of the giving of the fullness of Christian doctrine to the Church, fulfilling what is written, that *'the Holy Spirit shall guide you into all truth.'*

With the gift of this truth, of the nature of beauty of God, we Christians enter into a period of meditation and of growth; 'the green days', for green is a color of life, and of flourishing; and with the true doctrines of God revealed to us in Scripture, and leading us day by day, even in our darkest hour, we live, and we flourish, and we *fear no evil*.

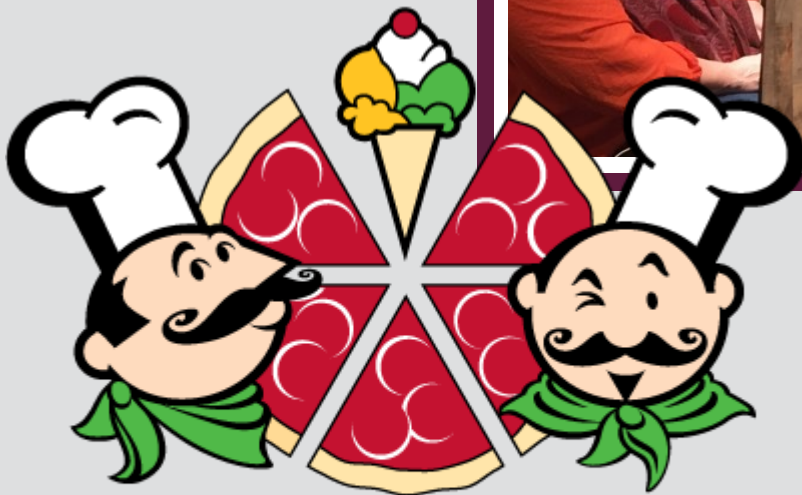
The green days, sometimes called the Season of Pentecost, or the Days after Trinity, are not a pause in the divine narrative, but its completion, for we the Church carry out the story of the Gospel for all time, charged with protecting its purity against all vain philosophies of man and all heresies of mortal imagination, until the coming of Christ, the ever-blessed, when we will be brought into the Beatific Vision to adore the Almighty and enjoy His love forever. ■

Rudsenske Baby Shower!



Oh, the joy of God's miraculous gift of life! On May 22nd, we celebrated with Katie Rudsenske as she awaits the birth of her and Eric's baby boy (John and Jo's grandbaby). Pray for mother and child as the day approaches, as well as the whole family as they welcome this new and precious life! ■

Ladies Night Out



Sal & Mookie's
NEW YORK PIZZA & ICE CREAM JOINT

Ladies' Night Out recommenced after a year-long quarantine from one another's "table fellowship," as it were. We enjoyed a delicious night at Sal & Mookie's at the District in Jackson, with almost twenty ladies in attendance—plus, of course,, a stunningly handsome waiter with impeccable Lutheran theology (thanks for taking care of us, Jake Everly!). God has blessed us richly with His good gifts, edible and intangible alike. We thank Him for this time together! ■



S.ⁿ Juan Evangelis.^{ta}

S.ⁿ Lucas Evangelis.^{ta}

Pater.

Non est.

Non est.

Filius.

est

est

Non est

Non est

Deus

est

est

Non est

Non est

Spiritus Sanctus.

S.ⁿ Marcos Eban-
gelisto.

S.ⁿ Mateo Eban-
gelisto

Trinity Sunday

[a very brief history]

Pastor Fields

Officially known as *The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity*, Trinity Sunday began to be celebrated in the 5th century, in the aftermath of the Arian controversy, where some Christians denied the deity of Christ, and by extension, the doctrine of the Trinity.

Congregations throughout the world began to organize services on the Sunday after Pentecost to affirm their belief in the Trinity and to worship the Triune Godhead as a whole.

Originally, the Latin Church (also known as the Western Church, which includes most European churches) refused to recognize the holy day, declaring that in their churches, the Holy Trinity was celebrated every Sunday through the saying of the Gloria Patri (the verse we add to every Psalm which begins ‘Glory be to the Father and to the Son...’). However, observance of Trinity Sunday was tolerated by the Latin Church, and was never condemned. By the 13th century, it was universally celebrated in both the East and the West, and the Latin Church declared it an official Holy Day by the 14th century.



Since that time, it has been understood that Trinity Sunday does not merely glorify the Holy Trinity, but the grace of God who has kept the Church, through good times and bad, from gross error in doctrine, and has, despite many heresies, kept the truth of the Christian creeds intact for thousands of years: a truth confessed every Sunday in the Nicene Creed, every baptism in the Apostles Creed, and yes, on Trinity Sunday in the seemingly endless but beautifully written Athanasian Creed. In the Athanasian Creed, we confess the new life we have gained through Christ, the life of the Trinitarian God, three persons living forever as one in love for one another, and we Christians brought into that love by the Son in the Spirit to the Father. ■

This month at the Seminary...

Christ Academy!

Each June, high school students from across America converge upon the CTSFW campus for a two-week retreat to explore a future in either the pastoral or diaconal office. Even if they do not elect to pursue such a path, this academy provides these students a golden opportunity to dive deep into theology and forge friendships with fellow Lutherans. Christ Lutheran Church has itself witnessed the impact of Christ Academy through our own young people—most recently, Jake Everly and William Nelson! Keep reading to see what the CTSFW website has to say about what Lutheran high schoolers will be doing at the campus this month:

Christ Academy consists of three important elements: confessional catechesis, liturgical worship, and a fun life together. This tradition of learning, worship, and fun provides an incredible two-week experience for young men and women in high school, especially for those considering a future in church work. Christ Academy is comprised of two schools, Timothy School for men and Phoebe School for women.

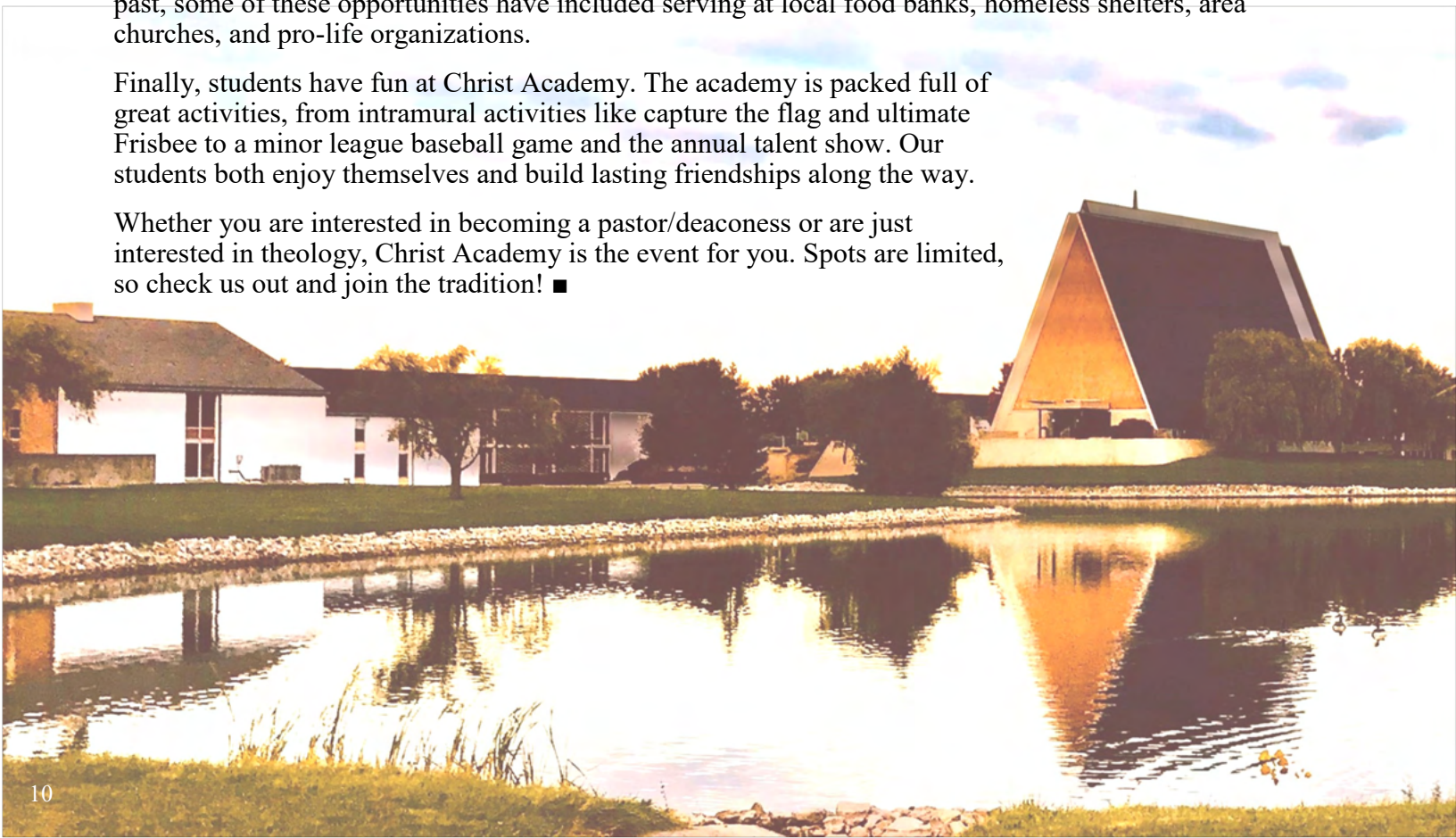
During both Timothy School and Phoebe School, young men and women have the opportunity to take eight different classes in theology over the course of the two weeks, taught by the faculty at CTSFW. Learning also takes place informally in the invaluable discussions over the dinner table and in dorm groups every day.

Students also experience the joy of living a life of worship as we gather together around God's Word four times a day. All of our worship is drawn from the Lutheran Service Book and is focused on the person and work of Jesus Christ.

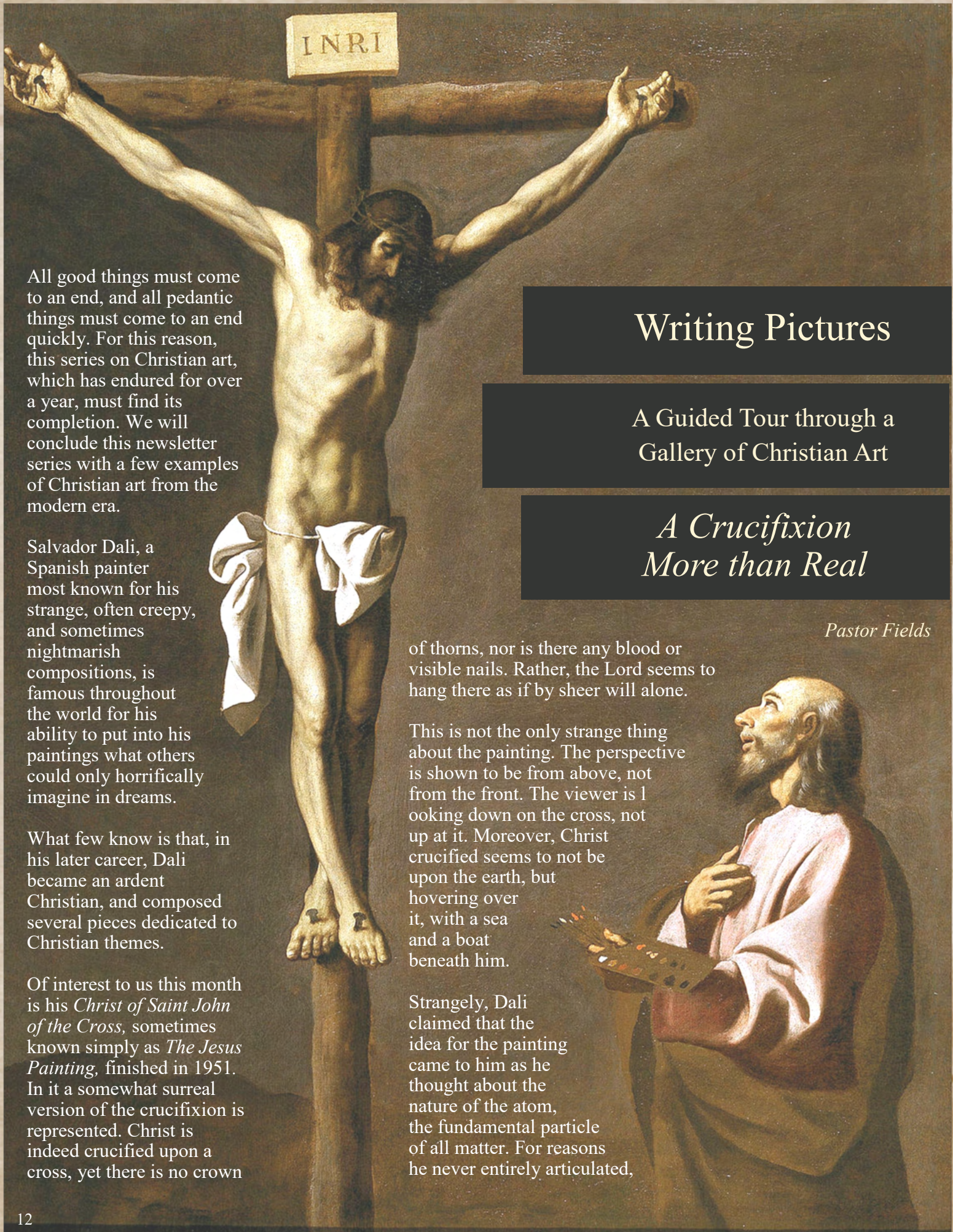
Students will have the opportunity to witness to their faith while serving the greater community. In the past, some of these opportunities have included serving at local food banks, homeless shelters, area churches, and pro-life organizations.

Finally, students have fun at Christ Academy. The academy is packed full of great activities, from intramural activities like capture the flag and ultimate Frisbee to a minor league baseball game and the annual talent show. Our students both enjoy themselves and build lasting friendships along the way.

Whether you are interested in becoming a pastor/deaconess or are just interested in theology, Christ Academy is the event for you. Spots are limited, so check us out and join the tradition! ■







All good things must come to an end, and all pedantic things must come to an end quickly. For this reason, this series on Christian art, which has endured for over a year, must find its completion. We will conclude this newsletter series with a few examples of Christian art from the modern era.

Salvador Dalí, a Spanish painter most known for his strange, often creepy, and sometimes nightmarish compositions, is famous throughout the world for his ability to put into his paintings what others could only horrifically imagine in dreams.

What few know is that, in his later career, Dalí became an ardent Christian, and composed several pieces dedicated to Christian themes.

Of interest to us this month is his *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, sometimes known simply as *The Jesus Painting*, finished in 1951. In it a somewhat surreal version of the crucifixion is represented. Christ is indeed crucified upon a cross, yet there is no crown

Writing Pictures

A Guided Tour through a Gallery of Christian Art

A Crucifixion More than Real

Pastor Fields

of thorns, nor is there any blood or visible nails. Rather, the Lord seems to hang there as if by sheer will alone.

This is not the only strange thing about the painting. The perspective is shown to be from above, not from the front. The viewer is looking down on the cross, not up at it. Moreover, Christ crucified seems to not be upon the earth, but hovering over it, with a sea and a boat beneath him.

Strangely, Dalí claimed that the idea for the painting came to him as he thought about the nature of the atom, the fundamental particle of all matter. For reasons he never entirely articulated,

he made the equation of the atom with Christ Himself, viewing Christ, and His Crucifixion, rightly as the fundamental 'base' of all reality.

His painting seeks to portray this. Christ hovers over the world, not planted within it, showing that He is both creations governing principle, and the Spirit which guides it. The lake beneath Him represents Him as being one with the '*Spirit that hovered over the waters*' in the beginning of Genesis, showing Him to be the creator and preserver of all the universe.

A boat sits in the waters, representing the Church, the vessel that carries His people through this earthly life as He watches over them from above.

Christ lacks any wounds or nails to show that He is crucified not by any external force, but solely by His own desire to die for the salvation of the world. He does not need nails to hold Him to the cross, His love is enough to do so, as it is written: '*No one takes my life from me.*'

Finally, the perspective is from above. We see the cross as from heaven, which is to say, we see the cross and all creation from the perspective of the Father, who forever sees His Son, and His Son's sacrifice on behalf of the world, and therefore will forever have mercy on that world for all who will receive it, for there is no world from the Father's point of view that does not have Christ crucified *hovering over* it.

Dali is known as being a 'surrealist' painter; the term coming from a combination of two French words: '*sur*' and '*real*', the first meaning 'above' or 'more than', and the second meaning 'concerning the fact.' In his depiction of the Crucifixion, Dali shows us not the event as it likely seemed in AD 33 when the Lord was likely crucified, but shows us the eternal truth of that event, the reality that is 'more than the fact.' The reality of the Father who always and ever looks upon a world covered by His Son who by His own volition gave up His life to save the creation which in the beginning He made.■



Reading the Old Testament with the Early Church Fathers

Rev. Dr. Geoff Boyle

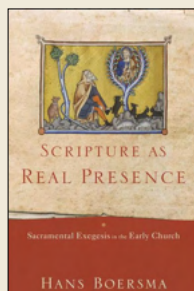
Rev. Dr. Geoff Boyle is the pastor of Grace and Trinity Lutheran churches in Wichita, KS. His doctorate in Hebrew and the Old Testament has lent him the edifying insights that he shares with us below in a November 2020 article from the online edition of *The Lutheran Witness*.

In his introduction to Athanasius' *On the Incarnation*, C.S. Lewis begins by saying, "There is a strange idea abroad that in every subject the ancient books should be read only by the professionals, and that the amateur should content himself with the modern books." What Lewis wrote 75 years ago holds just as true today, if not more. We're much more likely to read *about* someone or something than we are to read his writings. Lewis argues that it springs from humility. We're afraid to meet the ancients head on, thinking that they're so far superior to us that there's no way we'd ever understand them. But these great men of old are great because they're more accessible than the modern books *about* them.

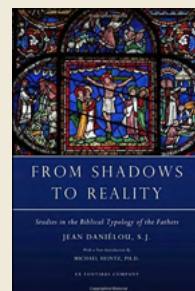
Old books help us see things differently. It's not to say that old books are inherently better, but they are different. They assume different things, say things differently and come to conclusions that we might never come to. And while they might be terribly wrong, how they got there is often interesting. They see things we don't, and that's a good thing. It may even help us to avoid a few mistakes of our own.

For the last 15 years, I've been enamored by the early Christian reading of Scripture. There's a vibrancy, an excitement — it was like they saw everything differently, and oftentimes more brilliantly. Yes, I have, at times, rolled my eyes at some of the things the Early Church fathers said. But more often than not, I'm impressed by their devotion and find myself drawn into a deeply scriptural imaginary.

Check out this suggested reading list from Rev. Boyle!

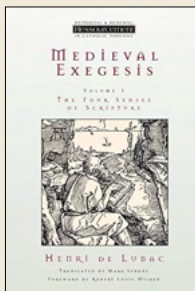


Hans Boersma, *Scripture as Real Presence: Sacramental Exegesis in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017)

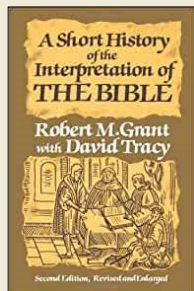


Jean Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality: Studies in the Biblical Typology of the Fathers*, trans. Dom Wulstan Hibberd (London: Continuum, 1960)

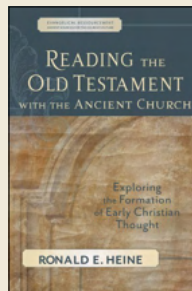
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Henri De Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 4 vols., trans. Mark Sebanc (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998)



Robert M. Grant and David Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984)



Ronald E. Heine, *Reading the Old Testament with the Ancient Church: Exploring the Formation of Early Christian Thought* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007)

Who Are the Fathers and Why Read the Old Testament with Them?

The Early Church fathers can help us read the Old Testament. We're used to seeing the Old Testament as a witness *to* Christ in two ways. Either we find various prophecies that directly foretell who He is and what He will do, or we read the Old Testament not on its own terms, but projecting the New Testament's way of words onto a much older account, keeping from the Old Testament from having its own voice. The first way of reading limits where we find Christ to select passages. The second seems to make the Old Testament of little value on its own terms. Reading the fathers helps us to break free from this either/or scenario and allows us to see Christ as not only the object of all the Scriptures, but also as the voice that speaks them into existence. For many of the fathers, the Bible ceases to be a left-to-right sort of book — where you move *from* the Old *to* the New; *from* Abraham and Moses and David, *to* Jesus and the apostles who followed. Instead, it's more like a deeply soaked sponge, saturated with the grace of Christ crucified. And that's not just the New Testament; for some of the earliest Christians, there *wasn't* a "New Testament" *per se*. The Old Testament's pages were so porous that Christ appeared everywhere.

And perhaps He was... and is.

The church fathers come from a world that's not bound by our overly linear assumptions. They're not forced to think that history has to move one foot in front of the next. Many of them see the world as charged with the grandeur of God. Not only do they assume a different metaphysical framework when it comes to time and history, but they also take seriously the claims of Jesus to be the eternal Word of the Father. Through the fathers, I gained a deep appreciation for the real presence of Christ in the Old Testament.

Now, it's true that most Early Church discussions focus on the theological formulations that have shaped the church through the centuries. If we're familiar with the church fathers at all, it's because of the brilliant Trinitarian defense of the Cappadocians, or the way St. Athanasius put Arius in his place, defending the divinity of the Son. We'll dabble in Irenaeus to understand some of the Early Church polity, and everyone loves Augustine's opening lines in his *Confessions*, "For Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee." St. Cyril of Alexandria set Nestorius straight and prompted our own Lutheran Confessions to insist on calling the Virgin Mary "the mother of God" (FC SD VIII 24), not to say so much of Mary, but of Jesus who was born from her.

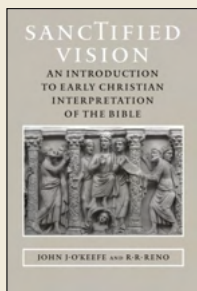


Interestingly, noticing all the references to Cyril in our Confessions — particularly the Catalog of Testimonies — shuffled me along his way. He wrote a definitive response to Nestorius through a series of *anathemas*, as well as beautiful testimony *On the Unity of Christ*. But as I dug deeper into St. Cyril, I discovered that of the 10 volumes of his writings still preserved in the original Greek, seven of them are devoted to purely scriptural commentary and preaching. And from Cyril, I quickly realized how expansive the early Christian commentary on Scripture is. And the majority isn't commentary on the *New Testament*, but on the *Old*.

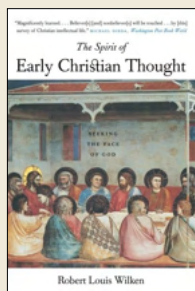
So, if you're willing to dive into the Old Testament with these *old books*, reading familiar stories from a different vantage point, then you're in for a treat. Our goal here isn't merely to introduce you to some old friends that you never knew you had. Nor is it to simply broaden your academic pursuit or expand your biblical commentaries. Ultimately, what I love most about the fathers I said above: They believe that Christ is in Scripture, throughout Scripture and the very voice of Scripture itself. With this sort of *real presence* of Christ in the Old Testament, you'll find these texts far richer than a series of morals or even a mere historical prelude to something bigger and better. You'll find that Christ Jesus who spoke to the prophets of old, *through* the prophets of old, will also speak to you. And the Old Testament will seem to come alive; but of course, it already is (Heb. 4:12).



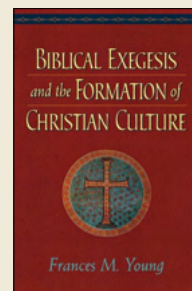
If you really insist on reading some books *about* the Early Church fathers, then I'll offer a few of my favorites. But, like C.S. Lewis says, “first-hand knowledge is not only more worth acquiring than second-hand knowledge, but is usually much easier and more delightful to acquire.” And a bit later on he says, “It is a good rule, after reading a new book, never to allow yourself another new one till you have read an old one in between” — that's a rule I try to follow. ■



John J. O'Keefe and R.R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005)



Robert L. Wilken, *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought: Seeking the Face of God* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003)



Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).



THIS MONTH

At Christ Lutheran

Find Christ Lutheran on
Facebook and MeWe!

- Divine Services
- Bulletins
- Church Updates
- Blog Posts
- Devotions
- And More!



The Screenshot Letters

by: C.S. Lewis

κοινωνία KOINONIA

How to destroy one's faith and damn him to hell, from the pen of a servant of the Infernal Tempter himself. Join us to discuss chapters 31-end!

June 27
5:00 p.m.



Christ Lutheran's VBS is finally here!

According to the Scriptures

Join us for an adventure through the Old Testament as we discover how Jesus is in the *whole* Bible—from beginning to end!

June 22-24
4:30-6:30 p.m.



Contact Lesley Dickens for more details!

JOIN US FOR
BIBLE STUDY

bible & breaky | fridays @ 6:30 a.m.



CLC Kids'
POOL PARTY

Hansford Home
June 19
4 p.m.

RSVP to Krista at hansfords01@aol.com



Saints' Days in June

- 1 St. Justin Martyr, Martyr
- 2 St. Blandina of Lyons, Martyr
- 5 St. Boniface of Mainz, Missionary to the Germans
- 11 St. Barnabas, Apostle
- 12 The Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, AD 325
- 14 St. Elisha, Prophet
- 24 The Nativity of St. John the Baptist
- 25 Presentation of the Augsburg Confession
- 26 St. Jeremiah, Prophet
- 27 St. Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop & Confessor
- 28 St. Irenaeus of Lyons, Bishop and Martyr
- 29 Sts. Peter & Paul, Apostles



Artwork in This Issue:

Cover: *Pentecost*, Illuminated Manuscript.

Page 4-5: *Adoration of the Trinity (Landauer Altar)*, Albrecht Durer, 1511.

Page 8: *Trifacial Trinity*, Anonymous, c. 1750-1770.

Page 12: *St. Luke Painting the Crucifixion*, Francisco de Zurbaran, c. 1650.

Page 13: *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, Salvador Dali, 1951.

Page 17: *The Four Fathers of the Latin Church*, Abraham Bloemaert, 1632.

June 2021

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
PRAYER FAMILIES and BIRTHDAYS Micah Everson 1—Celia Weidner 2—Parker Haines 4—Jake Everly 5—Beulah Nunery Reagan Dodge	6 PENTECOST II 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service	7	8 6:15 p.m. Council Mtg.	9	10	11 6:30 a.m. Bible Study St. Barnabas	12 Ecumenical Council of Nicea
	13 PENTECOST III 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service	14 St. Elisha	15	16	17	18 6:30 a.m. Bible Study	19 4:00 p.m. CLC Kids Pool Party
	20 PENTECOST IV 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service	21	22	23	24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist	25 6:30 a.m. Bible Study Presentation of the Augsburg Confession	26 St. Jeremiah
	27 PENTECOST V 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service 5:00 p.m. Koinonia St. Cyril of Alexandria	28 St. Ireneus	29 Sts. Peter & Paul	Vacation Bible School 4:30-6:30 p.m.			
	30 Barbara Glenn 30—Becky Hunt						

Roger & Marilyn Fuhrer

- 22—Brian Atchley
- 22—Joan Cowards
- 24—Joshua Landrum
- 26—Parker Ramsey