

The Phoenix Follower



"Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita

Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,

Che la diritta via era smarrita"

"In the middle of our life

I found myself in a dark wood

Where the straight path had disappeared"



Dante Alighieri

Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) begins his *Comedia Divina* in a way that causes us to think of several things: human events, the trinity, Christ, and human folly. By choosing 'our' life instead of 'my' life in a poem that is very autobiographical, he universalizes his very particular experience in a way that signifies one man living as and for all men, enmeshed in trouble and grief. Indeed, Dante was exiled from Florence in the middle of his life, being about thirty three years of age as he embarked on this monumental poem of damnation, sanctification, and beatification; or the original sin, the redemption, and the glorification of man. He begins us in the middle of things, just as Christ began his ministry in what should be the mathematical center of a man's years, being in a total of seventy two more or less. Today we are nearly two thousand years and thirty years from the year of Christ's crucifixion, a plan that began unfolding with the promise to Abram almost exactly two thousand and thirty years before Christ's birth, placing Christ squarely in the middle of the Church's ongoing 'poem' of time and times.

King David began to reign in his thirtieth year, and Dante was aware of all of these things (with the exception of my observation of our peculiar place in time). Dante told the tale of his difficulties in faith, his dawning of hope, and the ministrations of Divine Love in his *Comedia* (Divine Comedy). We often find ourselves in the middle of perplexity and difficulties, having lost our way. Dante sees a mountain above the trees, and is inspired that this must become his destination, the upward journey.

This month, the friends of Concordia Academy Wichita gather to consider the mountain climb, our history and proposed legacy at the Concordia Gala benefit. Our land has been wandering in a dark wood and often we, in our life, with it. We see the edifice and legacy of Christ centered and aspiring Lutheran education as the climb we are called to make, and will encourage each other, much as Dante's guide, the ghost of the poet Virgil inspired Dante on his journey. In our school, we are reading Dante and recognizing a companion from the 'middle' ages encouraging us upward toward the priceless goal. Join hands with us in work and prayer.

- Headmaster, Dan Snyder

Join the Concordia Community on Friday, April 19 beginning at 6pm and welcome our Keynote Speaker, Rev. Tim Pauls. Rev. Pauls serves Good Shepherd Lutheran Church located in Boise, ID.

Has modern/secular education reduced us to less-than-human?

PHOENIX
APRIL 19

GALA
6PM

Building a Lasting Legacy

Tickets -

- \$25 each
- \$50 per couple
- \$125 table for 6

- Stellar Guest List
- Cash Donation Bar
- Wine & Whiskey Pull
- Rifle Auction



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Our mailing address is:
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