Most honourable bishops, honourable professors, dear friends and brothers in the service of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

It is a day to celebrate and to thank God. He has motivated Lutherans to love the confessions of the Lutheran Church which are for Lutheran pastors and congregations the binding exposition of the Bible, the inerrant and infallible Word of God, to love them so much that they translated them into Setswana, also to open hands and purses of brothers and sisters in faith overseas that the confessions could be published in one volume, in the Book of Concord in Setswana. Three events in 2011 in the life of Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn were the occasions family and friends took as reason to give so generously for this project that the Lutheran Heritage Foundation could give the green light last year to publish the Lutheran Confessions in one volume, after some of the confessions had been reprinted, others published for the first time one after the other from 2003 till 2009 in Setswana with the generous support of LHF.

The time of translating the Lutheran confessions till the publication of the Book of Concord in Setswana covers a time of over fifty years, from 1960 till 2013.

In the beginning the work was supported by the superintendents of the Bleckmar and Hermansburg Missions, Teachers at the Marang Lutheran Theological Seminary made use of the translation of the Augsburg Confession and the Large Catechism as study material. I mention with gratitude the missionaries Hermann Greve and Heinrich Voges, and missionsuperintendent Otto Brümmerhoff. Since the late seventies the translation work was supported then by the Mission Directors of the Bleckmar mission and the bishops of the LCSA, since the middle of the nineties of the previous century financially by the Lutheran Heritage Foundation.

I shall not read passages that I have prepared for this paper that show my personal reasons and the practical and confessional reasons why I was challenged to tackle this wonderful task. I cannot read so quick that I would not take more time than I was allotted for talking about the translation of the Book of Concord into Setswana.

p. 3

[The Lutheran confessions invite all people of all nations never even to imagine or to dream that a human being is able to earn salvation and eternal life by its own efforts, good deeds of love, never also to imagine or to dream to build the church or expand the kingdom of God according to self-made or man-made methods, but that all are confirmed in the true doctrine and faith, that all people of all nations and times believe the salvation and eternal life through the forgiveness of all their sins because of what our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God has done for all through his birth, death, and resurrection. All nations should hear how God wants his church to be build, and his kingdom to be expanded and established among all nations, how he wants missionary work to be done through the preaching and teaching of the pure Gospel and the administration of his sacraments according to the Gospel. Also to live accordingly.

It is known that God said, it is for him too light a thing that his Servant, his only begotten Son
should raise up only the tribes of Jakob, and only restore the survivors of Israel, but that he gave him as a light to the nations that his salvation may reach to the end of the earth, Is 49:6. That is one of the reasons that is too light a thing, or not enough that the Book of the confessions of the Lutheran Church should only be known to those who know the languages in which they were originally prepared. All people should be able to read and learn them in their mother tongue. Also the Tswana.

The Book of Concord in Setswana invites all Christians especially the Lutherans among the Tswana to join in the magno consenso of the Augsburg Confession to teach and confess with one accord the saving faith and doing unanimously the work of spreading the Gospel and building and expanding the church of God by preaching and teaching the Word of God distinguishing law and Gospel bound to the inerrant Word of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament and to the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, trusting that what God tells us in his Word is true and relevant also today whether people believe it or not, and that the sacraments which are administered according to their institution are what they promise to be, whether those who administer or receive them believe it or not.

The Lutheran Confessions were compared with a heap of dirty dusty coals, but if they are used to make a fire, they start to shine and give good heat, and in cold weather people can sit around the fire and get warm. If the Lutheran Confessions are read, learned and studied they also will give light, revive and confirm saving faith, open the hearts, strengthen the willingness and zeal to preach and teach the Gospel, to invite the unbaptized to repent and to be baptized and all baptized to find their way to confession and to the Lord’s Supper. This will happen where the confessions are not only accessible for theologians who know Latin, German or English, but also for every Christian in his mother tongue.

My wish that the Lutheran Confessions be translated and published also into Setswana started when in 1955 during semester holidays I was invited by Superintendent Christoph Johannes to be a guest at a meeting of the General Lutheran Conference which met at Vryheid. At that meeting missionaries met of the different Lutheran Missions working among the Zulu: Berlin, Hermannsburg, Sweden, Norwegian (American) and Bleckmar missionaries. At this meeting it was decided that with money which was sponsored by the Mission of the Church of Sweden the Zulu translation of the Lutheran Confessions should be printed. The translation was prepared by missionary Johannes Schroeder and his nephew Dr. Johannes Schroeder. The book of Concord in Zulu was published then in 1967 at the Emanuel Press at Nelspruit. But I have to talk about the Tswana translation and the result that the book of Concord is also published in Tswana. I say it started during the mid fifties, because I heard one of our professors at Oberursel telling us that a cobbler, a member of the congregation at Oberursel liked the Lutheran Confessions so much that he read them regularly with his family and knew them better than some of the students. Therefore I said our Batswana need them also in their language when I was dedicated to be a missionary to work among the Tswana 1958, November 16.

Another practical reason which motivated me to start the translation of the confessions was that according to the constitution of the LCSA all pastors have to bind themselves to the teachings of the Lutheran Confessions at their ordination, and all evangelists have to bind themselves to the Augsburg Confession on the day of being inducted as evangelists. When we prepared the constitution of the church I asked how can they bind themselves in such a way if
they do not have the confessions in their mother tongue? Ergo they had to be translated.

Rev. Dr. Anssi Simojoki was the representative of the Lutheran Heritage Foundation in Africa and was stationed in Nairobi, Kenya. He proposed to me during a meeting in 2010 that the Lutheran Confessions should also be published in one volume, after all the confessions had been published in separate volumes from 2003 till 2009 sponsored by LHF. He then still was busy preparing the publication of the Book of Concord in Swahili. They could celebrate in 2011 the Book of Concord in Swahili in a fine edition. Dr. Simojoki then supported the Tswana translation to be published in one volume. From the side of the staff of the LHF the idea found full support. I mention by name: Rev. Jim Fandrey the successor of Rev. Dr. Robert Rahn as head of LHF, and Mr. Jeff Rahn, the director of operations. A great thank you to them. The appreciation for the support of LHF is expressed on page 2 of the Book of Concord as follows:

The translation of the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the publishing of the confessions separately had been made possible by the Lutheran Heritage Foundation during 1997-2009.

The publishing of the Book of Concord in one volume was made possible through the thoughtful gifts made by friends and relatives in honour of three 2011 events - the 50th year in the ministry of Rev. Dr. Robert L. Rahn, the 50th year of marriage of Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Robert L. Rahn, and the beginning of the 20th year for the Lutheran Heritage Foundation.

Not to be read, not being relevant for the occasion: [ ] See next page

[In addition I refer to published essays where I have indicated why I am convinced of the necessity that the work of the Lutheran Church and Mission should be pursued on the sound foundation of the doctrine and confession laid down in the Lutheran Confession preserved in the Book of Concord of 1580 also in Africa and as missionary who was dedicated for the missionary work among the Batswana I am convinced that good theology and teaching can and should also be done in Setswana.

2. The essay: “Die Lutherische Tradition in Gottesdienst und Unterweisung als Faktor der missionarischen Entwicklung.” (The Lutheran Tradition in Church services and Catechesis as a factor of missionary development - determining missionary development) in the publication: Kirchenmission nach lutherischem Verständnis in 1992.2
3. The essay: “Das heilige Abendmahl schrift- und einsetzungsgemäß auch in Afrika.” (The holy communion also in Africa according to Scripture and its institution.) in the Festschrift for Bischof Dr. Jobst Schöne, in 1997.3
4. The essay: “Mit Luther Schüler der Schrift.” (With Luther a pupil of Scripture (also in Africa). In the “Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag” von Hans-Heinrich Salzmann, in 2003.4]

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Some of the confessions of the Lutheran Church had already been published long ago in Setswana. The Apostolic and the Nicene Creeds were published in Hymnbooks and in the editions of the Catechism. I had used a few Articles of the Athanasian creed in my first sermon on the Sunday of Trinity in the Roodepoort congregation in 1960. On that day the church elder Hendrik Metshwamere came, thanked and told me that missionary Wilhelm Wrogemann had taught them more than forty years ago the secret of the Trinity and the secret of the incarnation of the Son of God with those words. His words supported the idea to publish all Lutheran confessions into Setswana, and my conviction that it is a great help in confirmation classes and in all Church work to teach the Christian faith with the words of the Lutheran confessions and to know how the Fathers of the Lutheran Church confessed their faith. At our weekly meetings for the preparation of the Sunday services with the evangelists Titus Lenkwe and Hendrik Molefe we started to talk about the Articles of the Augsburg Confession. I prepared a translation and put them before the two evangelists one article after the other. They helped me to prepare the Setswana. It took a few years. In 1964 I heard that missionary Hermann Greve, teacher at the Marang Seminary, made use of his translation of the Augsburg Confession in his classes at Marang. He gave me a type writer written copy. I compared his translation with what we had prepared in our weekly meetings, and re-wrote, you could say, the two translations into one. Copies of this translation could be duplicated and were revised by a commission during two meetings, November 23-27 and December 14-18 in 1964 at Roodepoort. Superintendent Otto Brümmerhoff brought missionary Martin Schweitzer and a Tswana speaking pastor, who worked at Wolmaransstad, and from our Mission it was Missionary Friedrich Dierks, Pastor Paul Mogale and myself. The result of those meetings was that the revised text was printed in 1965 at Umhlangeni Literature Centre. Costs 50c a copy.

Even before the revision of the Translation of the Augsburg Confession took place we carried on translating the Large Catechism, then already in addition to the two mentioned Evangelists the Evangelists Krispus Mogale and Titus Phogojane, jnr., took part in our weekly meetings, and after I was called to the seminary in 1965 the two teachers at the seminary Thatus Ratshefola and then Thomas Mogorosi helped preparing the translation. Mission superintendent Otto Brümmerhoff supported the work of translating the confessions whole heartily. With him he brought along missionary Siegfried Lehmke and another Tswana speaking pastor5 when we together with them and Dean Franz Segoet met at Homestead Park in the house of missionary Friedrich Dierks to revise the translation of the preface and the three first commandments of the Large Catecism in 1970. At church elder retreats I presented regularly parts of the translation of the Large Catechism. This translation was revised at two meetings at Roodepoort in 1979, July 24-27, and 1980, July 28-31, by a commission of the LCSA with the appreciated support of bishop Dr. Georg Schulz and the church council of the LCSA: The pastors Titus Lenkwe, Hendrik Molefe, Thatus Ratshefola, Jafita Lenkwe, the missionaries Siegfried Damaske, Manfred Nietzke and myself. The revised translation was then printed in 1982 at the Umhlangeni Literature Centre together with the Athanasian Creed.

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5 Please, accept this explanation. It is difficult for me to hear and understand the name of somebody who is introduced to me. In addition it may explain that I did not remember the names of the Tswana speaking Hermannsburg pastors. I remind you that when we addressed each other we said: Ntate moruti, without mentioning the name again. From Sup. Brümmerhoff, the missionaries Martin Schweitzer and Siegfried Lehmke I could not ask the names anymore. They were already called home by the Lord, and rev. Dr. Friedrich Dierks does also not remember the names.
Still during the seventies of the previous century Pastor Dr. Friedrich Wilhelm Hopf, the director of the Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Churches, (today the Mission of the Lutheran Churches) kept on motivating me to carry on with the translation of the confessions of the Lutheran Church in Setswana. For that reason he even sent me the literal translation of the Apology from the Latin original into German by Prof. Dr. Horst Georg Pöhlmann (1967) to be of great help with translating the Apology.

The translation work was attacked with greater zeal, when Bishop em. Dr. David P. Tswaedi once came back from a meeting in Kenya in 1995 or 1996 bringing the message that Prof. Dr. Robert Preuß from the Concordia Seminary Fort Wayne had promised that the Lutheran Heritage Foundation will support financially the translation of the confessions of the Lutheran Church into Setswana and their publication. Bishop em. Tswaedi called pastor Josef Sephai in order that we three carry on with that work. We agreed that I should finish the translation of the Apology, pastor Josef Sephai the Smalcald Articles, and bishop Tswaedi the Formula of Concord. Pastor Sephai finished the translation of the Smalcald Articles, bishop Tswaedi the translation of the Epitome and after he finished a part of article two of the Solid declaration I finished the translation of the rest of the articles, also the translation of the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, also the preface to the Book of Concord of 1580, the Marriage Booklet, Baptismal Booklet, the Catalogue of Testimonies, both of Scripture and Orthodox Antiquity.

We three could meet over the years twice a year to revise the translations with the financial support of LHF for travelling and a daily allowance during meetings for pastor Sephai and bishop Tswaedi. I have listed the dates of our meetings according to the receipt book in which Bishop Tswaedi and Pastor Sephai signed for the money they received. We met: 1996, July 22-26; 1997, July 13-17; 1998, January 12-16; July 14-18; 2000, January 2-6; July 25-28; 2001, May 2-6; 2002, January 21-25; May 13-17; 2003, January 27-31; May 19-23; 2004, January 26-30; 2005, January, 4-8; July, 4-8; 2006, January 23-27; July, 24-28; 2007, June 25-29; 2008, January 21-25; July 7-11; 2009, January 18-23. With gratitude I mention that the revising commissions were cared for with food and sleeping place where they met at Roodepoort/Tšhing, Homestead Park, Enlanhleni and since 2001 at Welbedacht, once even in Botswana. For me it was always a highlight in my work working together in good harmony and cooperation with bishop Tswaedi and pastor Sephai since 1996, also with Mr. and Mrs. Henk Streicher from Mandi Repro who did the final preparation of the manuscripts over the years, Mr. Streicher organized the printing and binding of the different publications, and Mrs. Streicher entered the corrections according to my requests after proofreading of the manuscripts in a very competent way, also now for the publication of the Book of Concord. Please, credit me for all mistakes overlooked and therefore not corrected. A special thanks also to vicar Thomas Beneke for the help preparing the “Lenaneo la mafoko a Beibele” (Index of Biblical References), and to missionary Heinrich Voges for his help preparing the “Tshupane ya ditemakgang” (The subject Index).

The translation of the confessions of the Lutheran Church could be published separately over the years. This ruling made it possible that the confessions could be in the hands of the

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7 I asked Tswana speaking students at the seminary in Tshwane to translate some of the articles. Only the student Mothathlosi Sebeelo delivered the translation of Sol. decl. 4.
Tswana already for several years before all could be published in one volume. The 2nd edition of the Augsburg Confession appeared in 2003, the 1st edition of the Apology in 2004, the 1st edition of the Smalacald Articles together with the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope in 2007, the Creeds of the Ancient Church together with Dr. Martin Luther's two Catechisms in 2007 together with the Table of Duties, the Baptismal and Marriage Booklets, the 1st edition of the Epitome in 2003, and the 1st edition of the Solid Declaration in 2009.

Allow me to mention a few difficulties concerning the work to translate from Latin, German and English into Setswana. It is known that Botswana Batswana very easily say: The Motswana from South Africa does not speak Setswana. A Mokwena talks Sekwena, a Mokgatla speaks Sekgatla. Another problem is that the Setswana of the mid twenties century has undergone many changes, for example the way to write and pronounce foreign words that were accepted into Setswana, like the words person, or bishop. We used the Setswana persona for person, but then we talked of pereson. We put bishop into the noun class 1a called him bišopo and when we used the plural, we talked about bobišopo. Dictionaries put bishop into the noun class 1 and call him mobišopo, and in the plural babišopo. Both versions of these words you find in the Book of Concord in Setswana. In South Africa we talked of bophelo and go phela, to express life and to live, also when alterations of this word stem are used, but in Botswana they use botshelo and go tshela. Both usages you find in the Book of Concord in Setswana because no difference in meaning is involved.

This is different when we used go emelana le to express the idea of opposing e.g. false doctrine or a heretic church, not to go accord with heresies or heretics according to the translation of the Bible in Tswana Central. Go emelana le is rendered with to support each other by Z. I. Matumo in his Tswana English Tswana dictionary. Therefore go emelana le as we used it in the publictions of the Lutheran Confessions till 2009 was changed to go emalalana le where it was necessary to express that the Lutheran Confessions appose and do not support where severe differences in doctrine are involved. An Adverb could be used: to be kgatlanong le timetso eo, gongwe motimetsi yoo. But using an adverbial expression in this way is not good Setswana. Batswana prefer the use of verbs. In the new Testament in Central Tswana the word emelana le is used and all Tswana speakers helping with the revision of the translations into Setswana found nothing wrong using the word “go emelana le” to express to be kgatlanong le e.g. the pope. But the Setswana English Setswana Dictionary of Z. I. Matumo translates emelana le with wait for each other; or still worse for our purpose: to support each other in a matter. We Lutherans really do not want and may not support each other with the pope, the Roman Catholic Church and all the varieties of Reformed Charismatics because of many severe differences in doctrine. That means that even the translation in Central Tswana of Romans 13:2 according to Matumo’s dictionary expresses precisely the opposite of what the Greek, Afrikaans, German, English, Zulu say: According to Matumos translation it does not say that who resists the existing authority resists what God has appointed, but says who resists the authorities supports what God has appointed. I accept that those who translated this verse did not want to say that those who resisted the authorities in South Africa really supported what God had in mind. They wanted to say what the Greek text says, but that does not take away that emelana le is understood by those who understand it like Matumo, for those it would mean the opposite of what is envisaged. Therefore the emelana le was replaced in the Book of Concord with the “emalalana le” which is said to have the meaning: oppose each other; be at variance with each other. In the Subject index I have listed the instances where emalalana le is used in the Book of Concord.
In the Tswana translation of the Bible of 1890 Romans 13:2 reads: “Yalo eo o ganelañ le thata, o ganetsa taolo ea Morimo; mi ba ba ganetsa ba tla itetetsa tsekišho. Compare it with the version of the 1987 edition of the Tswana Central translation: Ka moo, yo o ganang mmuso o emelana le puso ya Modimo; mme ba ba o ganang ba tla itsisetsa katholo.” My aim in replacing emelana le in the Tswana translation of the Lutheran Confessions is that all who read it will clearly understand with emalalana le that the Lutheran Church does not support those heresies and heretics that are rejected, but oppose them.

Pastors and missionaries were used to the Setswana of religious books even other publications which were published at the Lutheran Book Depot at Rustenberg. They used the translation of the Bible,8 the Hymnbooks, Catechism,9 even devotional books.10 With revising the translation it was necessary to avoid Seruti and try to find a good translation in Setswana that the Setswana should be properly understood by the Batswana. Bishop Tswanaed wrote in his preface to the 2nd edition of the Augsburg Confession that we hope that the 2nd edition in Setswana together with the corrections of the language here and there will do its work to be a great blessing among all members of Lutheran congregations. Although we tried to say in Setswana what is said by the fathers of the Lutheran Church in German and in Latin we never may forget what the wise man Sirach has written concerning their Greek translation of the Old Testament: “You are invited therefore to read it with goodwill and attention, and to be indulgent in cases where, despite our diligent labour in translating, we may seem to have rendered some phrases imperfectly. For what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language.”11 Let this be an invitation to the Batswana to learn German and Latin to be able to compare the translation in the Tswana edition with the original, and not depending on the English translations. We made use of the different translations, for example the Zulu translation, and the translation of Tappert, the Triglot Concordia, the newer edition of the Book of Concord12 edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert. The Concordia published by CPH in St. Louis. It was a great help that we could translate these translations with our own. I mention also what great help it is that we had the translation of the Bible into Setswana, there also the translation of the Old Testament: “You are invited therefore to read it with goodwill and attention, and to be indulgent in cases where, despite our diligent labour in translating, we may seem to have rendered some phrases imperfectly. For what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language.”11 Let this be an invitation to the Batswana to learn German and Latin to be able to compare the translation in the Tswana edition with the original, and not depending on the English translations. We made use of the different translations, for example the Zulu translation, and the translation of Tappert, the Triglot Concordia, the newer edition of the Book of Concord12 edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. 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Wengert. The Concordia published by CPH in St. Louis. It was a great help that we could translate these translations with our own. I mention also what great help it is that we had the translation of the Bible into Setswana, there also the
different translations of several editions. As the Lutheran Confessions claim to be the binding exposition of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament much of the terminology of the Lutheran Confessions could be expressed in words used in the translation of the Bible. I always found it easier to translate good sound doctrine which is dealt with in the confessions than to translate heresies. This observation proofs to me that the biblical truth can be expressed much easier in languages which are not corrupted by philosophical heresies than heresies. What Christ has said concerning the Lord’s Supper can be expressed plainly in Setswana. To talk about the Roman Catholic transubstantiation or the symbolical meaning of the sacraments of the various Reformed denominations was not easy for me. This observation proofs even true when we think of the different teachings concerning the person of Christ.

I want to mention also another problem concerning translating into Setswana. Coming back to the sore issue why we have to oppose those who do not agree with our church in doctrine and confession, why we have to oppose them, and why we not support them? We have to keep clear, how Christ wants his Church to be build, mission work to be done, and the saving faith of Jesus Christ be kept pure and the administration of the sacraments intact in teaching and confessing “for Christians who are of weak faith, diffident, troubled, and heartily terrified because of the greatness and number of their sins, and are not worthy of the precious treasure and the benefits of Christ, and who feel and lament their weakness of faith, and from their hearts desire that they may serve God with stronger, more joyful faith and pure obedience.” Bishop Dr. Jobst Schöne referred to this passage of the solid declaration in one of his published sermons to show why it is necessary to reject false doctrine and to be faithful to our conviction to be bound to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament and to the Confessions of the Lutheran Church.

Before I close let me repeat what the wise man Sirach has written concerning their Greek translation of the Old Testament: “You are invited therefore to read it with goodwill and attention, and to be indulgent in cases,” where the translation is not clear enough, or where spelling mistakes where not eliminated. Proofreading and repeated proofreading with only one eye intact I must confess also concerning the Book of Concord in Setswana of which we celebrate the presentation today is far from perfect and leaves much to be desired. I am very thankful that I discovered one mistake when the Nicene Creed appeared 2007 together with the other Creeds of the Ancient Church and Dr. Martin Luther’s two Catechisms. A missing r changed morwa to be mowa, the Son to be spirit. A mistake really not being intended. I hope that such a misleading mistake which changed the meaning altogether was not overlooked again. The headings that appear on pages 3-7 should have been deleted, as the different indicated keteletso-pele are found on pages i-xv. I repeat the invitation to read the Book of Concord in Setswana with goodwill, and to be indulgent in cases, where you find overlooked spelling mistakes.

Let me thank all of you for the interest shown through your presence, thanking the university of Pretoria that the presentation of the Book of Concord in Setswana could take place at these beautiful premises, and thanking the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane together

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13 For the translation of Roman Catholic terminology we used their catechism: Ke yona Tunelo ya rona e Tswana: Thuto ya Sekatolike ka Kakaretos. 5th and improved edition. Groblersdal. Lent 1995. Also in Zulu Roman Catholic Catechisms are available. We did not have access to a Reformed Catechism in Setswana.

14 Sol. decl. 7:69.
with its rector and staff for planning the presentation, let me close with a praise to God that he made it possible that the Book of Concord could be published in Setswana and with the prayer that it will serve many to be confirmed in the saving faith and the scriptural and evangelical administration of the sacraments and be motivated to act accordingly - to build the Church and to expand the kingdom of God as Christ wants the Church to be established, the Word of God to be preached and taught distinguishing law and Gospel according to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, all decisions in the Lutheran churches and missions among the Tswana to be taken and pastoral and missionary work to be done accordingly.

I thank you for your attention.