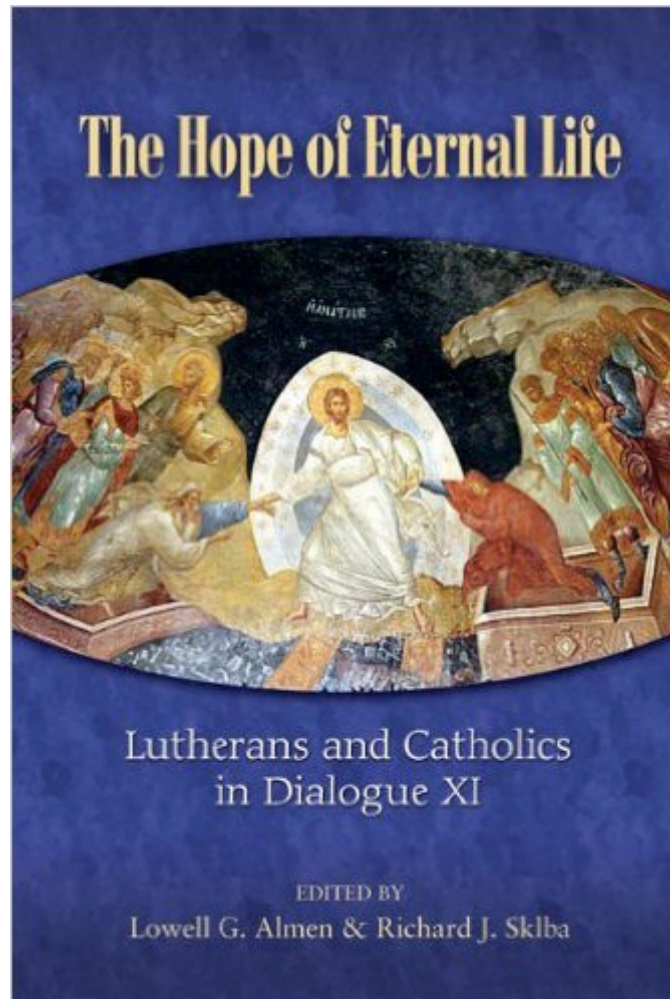


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The Hope Of Eternal Life (Lutherans And Catholics In Dialogue)



Synopsis

Our churches affirm that death cannot destroy the communion with God of those redeemed and justified. The nature of the life that the justified departed share with God cannot be described in great detail and, in this life, it remains a great mystery. Nevertheless, Catholics and Lutherans share the sure and certain hope that the justified departed are in Christ and enjoy the rest that belongs to those who have run the race. The agreements emerging in Round XI of the U.S. Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue contribute to the ongoing ecumenical journey. The foundation for the discussions and findings of Round XI was established by the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. That declaration was received officially by the Catholic Church and member churches of the Lutheran World Federation on October 31, 1999. Further, the statement of Round XI builds on the findings of the previous ten rounds of the U.S. Lutheran Catholic Dialogue. This common statement of Round XI offers fresh insights into some issues that proved contentious in the debates of the sixteenth century. Among the issues explored in this dialogue were continuity in the communion of saints, prayers for or about the dead, the meaning of death, purgation, an interim state between death and the final general judgment, and the promise of resurrection. Agreements are affirmed on the basis of new insights, as readers will discover in this statement of Round XI.

Book Information

Series: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue

Perfect Paperback: 212 pages

Publisher: Lutheran University Press (September 1, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1932688633

ISBN-13: 978-1932688634

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 5.8 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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