

from the TEACHERS' LOUNGE

Jeffrey Lenting is the son of Adrian and Trudy Lenting, members of South Holland, Illinois Protestant Reformed Church. Mary Beth Lubbers is part of the teaching staff of the school which is within an easy stone's throw of that church. Her article about Jeffrey, which appeared in the April, 1985 issue of the school's Reflector, must have touched the hearts of its readers. We are happy to be able to share it with you in "from the Teachers' Lounge."

A Special Commencement Address

Mary Beth Lubbers

Jeffrey Lenting will not graduate from our school this year. Under ordinary circumstances, however, he would have, for Jeffrey will be 15 years old on May 17. But the circumstances surrounding Jeffrey are not ordinary. Jeffrey is a very special little boy-teenager.

Jeffrey has eyes, but they have never beheld the breathtaking beauty of springtime nor the look of love on his parents' face as they care for him. Jeffrey has legs, but they have never walked or skipped or kicked a soccer ball. Jeffrey has arms, but they have never been used to steer a bicycle or to hug his brothers and sister. Jeffrey has a mouth, but he has yet to speak his first word

or delight his family with a note of song.

Jeffrey is severely handicapped in mind and body. He has never comprehended the simplest instruction. This is not to say that Jeffrey has no understanding. I have seen him respond to his father's gentle touch and to his mother's loving voice. And certainly his parents and relatives could give you other examples of his responses. Without a doubt, too, God speaks to Jeffrey in ways that are too deep, too mysterious for us mere mortals to understand. Nevertheless, Jeffrey has little or no awareness of life as we so richly enjoy and imbibe it.

Jeffrey even has difficulty

breathing on his own. Often he is hooked up to an oxygen machine. Nor has Jeffrey ever eaten any ordinary food. He has never sat down to a meal of pot roast, mashed potatoes, and green beans — nor has he ever complained about any of his meals. His mother says that he is a very grateful little boy — grateful for the smallest service rendered, the slightest recognition of his needs. Jeffrey eats a thin gruel heavily dosed with medicine to prevent the convulsions which would otherwise rack his already frail and crippled body. And even this he has great difficulty swallowing, only achieved by the second spoonful forcing the first spoonful down his throat.

I stood by Jeffrey's bed last Sunday evening; for that, after all, is where Jeffrey spends every day, every hour of his life curled up in a near-fetal position. It was a totally humbling experience, and it always affects me profoundly for many days afterward. "My life in all its PERFECT plan was ordered ere my days began?" Sometimes the Lord makes this a very difficult confession.

Did Jeffrey sin? Did his parents sin? Has the church sinned some great corporate sin? Why has God dealt with us in such a heavy way? To ask these questions is to turn quickly to the Gospel of John where Jesus Himself answered this question for His

people clearly and for all times: "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

God's ways are too wonderful for us. God's works are too "awe-full" for us. God's ways are past finding out. So we will not attempt to find out either. Rather we *can* and *will* acknowledge His supremacy in all our lives. We will bow before His awesome sovereignty in His dealings with us, weak vessels of clay fitted for destruction. "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it" (Psalm 39:9).

With Jeffrey, we all look forward to the day when the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped, the tongue of the dumb unloosed; when broken hearts shall be bound up; when we shall run and not be weary, walk and never faint. Sometimes I try to envision the very special, altogether lovely places that God is preparing for all His little Jeffreys ("I go to prepare a place for you..."). What a love and tenderness must go into their preparation, every detail for their heavenly comfort and bliss attended to by Father's hand.

Our son, the Lord willing and by God's grace, will graduate on Friday evening, May 31. We will celebrate this occasion. It is

of heaven into the loving arms of Father. What a day of pomp and celebration and rejoicing that will be! Then we will all sing one great "class song." It is the song of Moses and the Lamb. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints" (Revelation 15:3).



For whatever we do include in this space we are dependent on information provided by the schools. So, all you school principals, please consider this an official request that you regularly send a copy of your school paper to the Editorial Office of Perspectives.

Fall, 1985

Although I am the only senior, I take only one class by myself. The rest of my classes I take with the juniors, Tammie and Mary. Having others in a class with you is very helpful, because in most classes, one of the easiest and best ways to learn is through class discussion. This fact becomes apparent in History. Some of the things you remember the longest are the things discussed in class.

Physics is the one class that I am taking by myself. This is a science course in which you really put to work all your math, algebra, and geometry. It deals with the laws of nature, explaining more fully the actions and reactions of the things in creation around us. It also applies mathematical laws and equations to these things, so that we are able to predict the results of our actions, and the actions of many others around us. It takes careful analysis as well as the right equations to work them out.

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We have recently been studying genetics and heredity and also various genetic mutations in Biology. On a test over this material, one of the questions was: Do heredity or environment cause a man to be saved? Here are some excerpts of answers: . . .

We are now examining the false theory of evolution, and how men falsely interpret things such as fossils to say that the earth was founded apart from God, but also looking at what we believe to be true based on Scripture. . . .