The following article is the first of a series of papers delivered at a symposium held in Zurich February 25-27, 1973, to honor Oskar Pfister's contribution to pastoral psychology. Others will be published in later issues of the Journal. The organizations sponsoring the symposium were the Institutes of Religion and Health, Kirchenrat des Kantons Zurich, Baptist Theological Seminary of Ruschlikon, Theologische Fakultat der Universitat Zurich, Schweizerische Gesellschaft fur Psychoanalyse, and Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Pastoralkonsologie.

Personal reminiscences by Pfister's former colleagues and patients presented at the symposium gave new meaning to his roles as a pioneer in psychoanalysis, a good shepherd to his flock, and an inspiring educator to the Zurich community. We hope that through the papers from the symposium Pfister's influence on Freud, the church, child therapy, and pastoral psychology will become better known.

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Pfister as Pastoral Theologian

JOHN W. STETTNER

When Anna Freud was presented with an honorary degree in Vienna recently, the Chancellor of the University noted that at last psychoanalysis was being recognized and accepted in the community where it began. He was calling attention to the fact that at the turn of the century, and for some time thereafter, Sigmund Freud was largely ignored, except for occasional outbursts of vilification, by the medical and academic community. Freud himself remarked on this more than once, and, nonbeliever that he was, he would undoubtedly have agreed with the Scriptural word that "a prophet is not without honor save in his own country."

THE REV. JOHN W. STETTNER, TH.D., was Dean of Students at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago from 1957 to 1969 and has been Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling since 1969. He was a charter member of the Academy of Religion and Mental Health and a member of the Board of Directors of the American Foundation of Religion and Psychiatry from 1956 until the merging of the two into the Institutes of Religion and Health in 1972; he is now a member of the Board of Directors of the Institutes and of the Editorial Advisory Board of the Journal of Religion and Health. He has spent the academic year 1972-73 on sabbatical leave in Zurich engaged in study and research and attending lectures at the C. G. Jung Institute.
To some extent Oskar Pfister, who was an intimate friend and loyal disciple of Freud, suffered the same fate in Switzerland and in Zurich. A loving and devoted pastor, a creative teacher, and a prolific author and lecturer in the Zurich area for over forty years, he was severely criticized early in his career, and nearly forgotten when he died in 1956. In his biography of Freud, Ernest Jones says that Pfister was almost removed from his pastorate twice, in 1912 and in 1917, because of his espousal of psychoanalysis. However, I think Jones places too much onus on psychoanalysis in his zeal to show how Freud and his disciples were persecuted in the early days. There were other aspects to Pfister’s situation. He was an imaginative and innovative pastor. Also he was, in many ways, ahead of his time, and he was not always in agreement with generally prevailing theological ideas. Nevertheless, his work was recognized in his lifetime by a considerable circulation of his writings, in several languages, by the awarding of an honorary degree from the University of Geneva, and in various other ways. His importance was recognized in the United States by Paul Johnson at Boston University, Seward Hiltner at the University of Chicago, and others, and I know of at least three doctoral dissertations about him and his work. Interestingly enough, it fell to Americans to initiate plans for this centennial celebration of Oskar Pfister, and to a German to have a major share in arranging the program.

My interest in Oskar Pfister was first stimulated by Paul Pruysr, who was Director of Education at the famous Menninger Psychiatric Foundation and who has been a frequent lecturer at McCormick Seminary, where I teach. Dr. Pruysr had been quite interested in the volume of letters between Freud and Pfister, and went on to read many of Pfister’s other writings. Then over a year ago, when I was beginning to make plans for my sabbatical leave in Zurich, my colleague in Chicago, Randall C. Mason, urged me to do some research on Pfister while I was in Zurich. Dr. Mason and I, in fact, conducted a graduate seminar on Pfister at McCormick Seminary last spring. In the course of preparing for this seminar I ran across a reference to a paper delivered at the 4th World Congress of Psychiatry in Madrid in 1966 entitled “Oskar Pfister, Neglected Pioneer in