



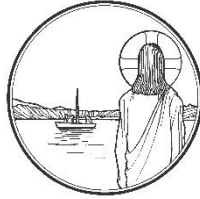
ABOUT THE PROPER

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Third Sunday of Easter

May 4, 2025



“Because He Lives”

We Can See Things Clearly

Scripture often uses the concept of blindness as a metaphor for how hard it is to navigate life without a correct understanding of Christ. Spiritual blindness can take many different forms. In some cases, it is hostile opposition to the message of Jesus. In others, spiritual blindness might be demonstrated in confusion about Jesus’ true identity. In still others, spiritual blindness might be the inability to understand our spiritual condition. No matter the form spiritual blindness takes, Easter has the power to replace it with sight. Jesus Christ’s resurrection from the dead allows us to see where we sinners stand with a holy God. It gives us the ability to see who holds our future in his hands and who is worth our eternal worship. Because he lives, we can see things clearly.

First Reading³ Acts 9:1-22

The risen Lord appears in power to Saul on the road to Damascus. The Light of the World shines and the blind receive sight. In the same way his light has shined in the darkness of our sin-filled hearts. In Word and sacrament the risen Lord has appeared in power to create and strengthen, to fill and overflow.

Second Reading³ Revelation 5:11-14

The power and majesty of the hosts of heaven joined in songs of praise is surpassed by the power and majesty of him who sits on the throne. Worthy is the Lamb to receive such praise. Our resurrected Lord guarantees that we will one day join their “Amen” for eternity.

Gospel³ John 21:1-14

Another miraculous catch of fish brings the disciples scrambling to worship at the feet of their Savior. He appeared in power, to assure them of his presence and providence for what lay ahead. The risen Lord still comes with power through Word and sacrament, assuring us of his forgiveness, promising his Spirit for lives of faithful service, and guaranteeing our resurrection to eternal life.

Psalm of the Day⁴ Psalm 30 C “I Will Praise”

The Church sings Psalm 30 in services that celebrate God rescuing us, whether that is from unbelief, sickness, suffering, hardship, or death. The heading connects the psalm to the dedication of the temple, and Jesus connects the temple to his resurrection from the dead (John 2:19-32). Martin Luther said, “Psalm 30 is a psalm of thanksgiving. The psalmist thanks God for saving him from the poisonous, fiery spiritual afflictions of the devil, which are sadness, depression, terror, despair, doubt, and the agony of death. It is clear from the psalm that in these circumstances God comes to us with his comfort, since he prefers to see us lively and joyful. The psalmist points ahead to the joy of Christ when he rises from death and hell.”

Gospel Acclamation 2 Timothy 1:10

“Christ Jesus has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

Prayer of the Day

O God, by the humiliation of your Son, you lifted up this fallen world from the despair of death. By his resurrection to life, grant your faithful people gladness of heart and the hope of eternal joys; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn of the Day

449 "This Joyful Eastertide" (George R. Woodward, 1848-1934)

The text expresses the joy Christ's resurrection brings to believers (v1); that joy provides a sense of security throughout our lives (v2) and gives confidence even in the face of death (v 3). The refrain echoes the truths expressed by St. Paul to the Corinthians (15:14,20): "And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith...But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead..."

Church Year Season ¹

Easter

After forty days of repentance and prayer, the Church bursts forth in jubilant praise at the Resurrection of our Lord. The alleluias and glorias which were muted for Lent ring out again as the Bride of Christ welcomes her Bridegroom back from the dead. Easter is as the pinnacle of the Church Year, the oldest festival and season celebrated by the worshipping Church. For a full week-of-weeks (49 days) the Church celebrates the resurrection of Christ on the Sundays of Easter which culminate on the 50th day, Pentecost.

Colors & Symbolism

White

White is the color of our Triune God and heaven. It also symbolizes joy, celebration, gladness, light, purity and innocence. We receive these blessings through faith because Christ, our righteousness Savior, has forgiven all our sins.

Traditions & Customs

The Paschal Candle

Paschal, meaning "having to do with the Passover," is a word associated with Easter. It was at the conclusion of the Jewish Passover Festival (the "Pasch") that Jesus rose from the dead and proved himself to be the true Passover Lamb whose blood removes sin and death (Ex 12; 1 Cor 6:6-8). The candle is lit for services during Easter to symbolize that Christ is alive and lives among us. The candle is also lit for Baptisms and funerals, reminding us of our resurrection to eternal life.

Minor Festivals

St. Philip and St. James, Apostles (May 1)

Philip was from Bethsaida in Galilee. Through him some Greeks were led to Jesus (John 12:21). James is traditionally known as "James the Less" (Mark 15:40), nicknamed as such to distinguish him from the others "James" in the Bible.

Nain Paraments

Easter

Superfrontal: *Alleluia* is taken from a Hebrew word which means, "Praise the LORD." It is a word of joy and gladness and most commonly used in the Psalms (e.g. 103). An ancient custom is to refrain from using the term during Lent in order to distinguish the penitential nature of that season from the joy and hope filled nature of the Easter season that follows. The vines and vegetation branching out from the *Alleluia* represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God's children, the branches (John 15:5).

Lectern antependium: The doves flying in front of the cross represent purity, innocence (Matthew 10:16), as well as spiritual and eternal rest (Psalm 55:6). When the dove has an olive branch or leaf in its beak, it is a symbol of hope and peace (Genesis 8:11). Each of these blessings and more come by Jesus' death on the cross and through the gift of faith (Galatians 1:3,4).

Pulpit antependium: The cross is formed by the Greek letters Chi (X) and Rho (P). Chi and Rho are the first two letters in the Greek word for Christ (Χριστός). This ancient symbol represents Jesus and his office as the Messiah, the anointed King of kings and Savior of the world (Matthew 16:16). The vines and vegetation branching out from the cross represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God's children, the branches (John 15:5).

¹ Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year A". Jonathan E. Schroeder, Author.

² Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year B". Daniel M. Deutschlander, Author.

³ Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year C". Joel J. Gawrisch, Author.

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