



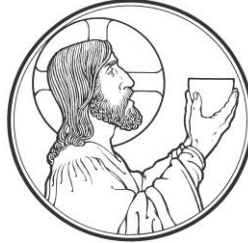
ABOUT THE PROPERS

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Maundy Thursday

April 9, 2020



Let us love one another, as Christ Jesus has loved us

“The LORD’s Passover” and “the blood of the covenant” at Mount Sinai were preeminent types of the Lord’s Supper. The blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, now covers us, and we keep his Supper as a feast to the LORD. In him, we see the God of Israel, and yet he does not lay his hand on us to punish us. As disciples of Jesus, we recline at the table with him to eat and drink in peace. The apostles, who received the New Testament in his body blood on the night when he was betrayed, delivered the same to his Church, which we also now receive in remembrance of him and for the forgiveness of our sins. In the Lord’s Supper, the Lord remembers us in mercy and remembers our sin no more. As he thus feeds us in love, let us love one another, just as he has loved us.

The Propers

The Propers are those portions of the service that change (or, are “proper” to) each Sunday or season of the church year. The Propers differ from the Ordinary (from the Latin ordo, which means “regular order”) portions of the liturgy, which do not change (e.g. the Lord’s Prayer). The Propers offer the variety to the worship service and emphasize particular worship themes throughout the liturgical calendar.

First Lesson¹

Exodus 12:1-14

During twilight on the 14th day of Nisan, 1500 years before Christ, lambs were slaughtered, doorposts were painted, and God’s people waited to see the full extent of God’s love. God had promised a plague of death on the firstborn sons of unbelievers, but deliverance for all who were covered by the blood of the Passover lamb. The first Passover, however, was just the beginning. God’s people saw the full extent of his love 1500 years later, in the twilight hours of the 14th day of Nisan, when God’s Son showed himself as the Lamb of God sacrificed for us. The firstborn sons of Israel were saved because God’s only begotten Son was sacrificed.

Second Lesson¹

1 Corinthians 11:23-28

Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper on the night he was betrayed—not afterward. He gave his disciples a sacrament that proclaimed his death—before it even happened. See the extent of the love of Christ: He gave them his body and blood sacrificed for sin, before it had been done! He had come to be the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world, and nothing would stop his mission. Indeed, he was the Lamb slain from the creation of the world (Revelation 13:8). In order to save mankind, God needed to provide a Savior who could live under the law for us and die in our place. That meant God had to become one of us—he had to become human. So God took on flesh and blood that he might be our Savior. From the Garden of Eden onward, the solution for sin was to be the flesh and blood of God. Now, in this sacrament, he shows us the full extent of his love for us. He gives us the flesh and blood of God, the solution for sin. He gives it to us to eat and drink, to be part and parcel of our being, to feed and nourish us until he takes us out of this house of bondage to the Promised Land.

Gospel of the Day¹

John 13:1-15,34

The washing should have been done before the meal, but the disciples had been arguing about greatness, so no one was willing to condescend to fill this servant’s role—except for Jesus. Jesus had come to love them to the end. Thirty-one times during the course of the night, Jesus mentioned “love.” Nothing spoke more clearly, though, than his acts of service and sacrifice. Peter, for his part, didn’t want a Messiah who washed people’s feet. However, he hadn’t even begun to see the extent of Jesus’ love! Jesus had not come to merely wash dirt from feet, but sin from hearts! He had come to cleanse by carrying not only a servant’s bowl, but the curse of the cross! There, on Golgotha—there, on the altar of the Sacrament—we see the fullness of his service. There we see the fullness of his sacrifice. There we

see the full extent of his love for us. Then we hear his new, his distinctly different command: Just as Christ loved us with service and sacrifice, so he commands us to love one another.

Psalm of the Day Psalm 116

"The Lord is gracious and righteous," and he demonstrated that in his saving activity. There may be an echo of Passover and a foreshadowing of the Supper in verse 13: "I will lift up the cup of salvation."

Verse of the Day 1 Corinthians 11:26

"As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." When we receive the Lord's Supper we are proclaiming to ourselves and every generation that we are receiving the blessings of the New Covenant God made with man – the forgiveness of sins won through Jesus sacrifice on the cross. The Lord's Supper looks forward to Christ's return on the Last Day, when he will bring all believers to eternity in heaven, where we will join in the heavenly celebration in the presence of our God.

Prayer of the Day

Lord Jesus Christ, in the Sacrament of Holy Communion you give us your true body and blood as a remembrance of your suffering and death on the cross. Grant us so firmly to believe your words and promise that we may always partake of this Sacrament to our eternal good, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Hymn of the Day 313 "Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior" (John Hus, c. 1369-1415; Martin Luther, 1483 – 1546)

Church Year Season ¹ Lent

The season of Lent leads the Church on a forty-day journey of repentance and prayer, of remembrance and renewal of our baptism. God calls to mankind: Return to the Lord! The journey begins with Ash Wednesday's warning of mortality and culminates at the Service of Holy Baptism in the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday.

The Church's Lenten worship is muted and quiet. For centuries, the Church has omitted her most jubilant songs of praise during this season of repentance (e.g. the "Gloria in Excelsis," and the use of the word "Alleluia") to reflect the somber nature of the season. Note, however, that the Sundays are designated as Sunday in Lent, not Sundays of Lent. The Sundays themselves are not considered part of the forty days, but are islands of refreshment in our Lenten walk.

Colors & Symbolism Purple / Violet or White

These colors are a sign of royalty, self-discipline, sorrow and repentance. Purple also reminds us of sacrifice, not only because that colored clothing was very expensive (sacrifice of money), but also because in order to make purple clothing in ancient times, one had to dye the cloth in the blood of snails (sacrifice of life). Thus purple is a fitting color for the penitential season of Lent, during which we focus more intentionally on our sinfulness, and how our King and Savior, Jesus Christ suffered in our place and sacrificed himself on the cross to take away our sins.

Nain Paraments Lent

Superfrontal: The lamb at the center of the parament represents Jesus, the Lamb of God who was sacrificed to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29; 3:16-17). The nimbus (halo) around its head reminds us that Jesus was a perfect sacrifice, even greater than the unblemished lambs required of the Passover meal (Exodus 12:5).

The palm branches remind us of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem on the Sunday before he died (John 12:13). Palm branches were used in celebration of victory. Jesus entered Jerusalem to conquer sin, death, and the devil. Our crucified and risen Lord assures us in his Word that his victory is ours by faith (1 Corinthians 15:57).

[The significance of the crosses on the far left and right of the superfrontal are explained below]

Lectern & Pulpit antependia: The cross formed by four nails represents Jesus' death by which he was nailed to the cross (Luke 23:33; John 20:25,27). The white sash around the arms of the cross symbolizes Jesus' righteousness and his perfect victory over our enemies through his resurrection (Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23;54-57).

The Cross is the most recognizable symbol for Jesus, his Church, his sacrificial death, and his victory over sin and death. The apostle St. Paul used the image of the cross as a way to sum up the Gospel of God's saving work through Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:18; Galatians 6:14). On the cross, God's Son suffered and died to pay for the sins of the world. By God's grace and through faith, we are cleansed by Christ's blood (Hebrews 10:10).

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