



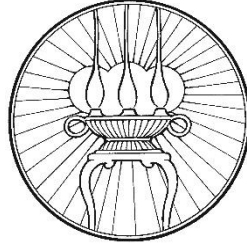
ABOUT THE PROPERS

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

February 5, 2023



The Savior's Sermon: Let Your Light Shine!

Jesus tells us: You are...so be. You are the light of the world, so be light for the earth. You are the salt of the earth, so be salt for it. Our calling as children of God means our lives will reflect our new status, and the world around us will be blessed by us. The Church prays that God would help us believe and then do the things that are pleasing in his sight.

The Propers

The Propers are those portions of the service that change (i.e. 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 Lesson Exodus 19:1-8a

God made Israel, a nation of slaves, his special people. He wanted Israel to be the kingdom of priests he had called them to be.

Second Lesson¹ 1 Peter 2:9-12

The call of God made us part of a new people in order that we might declare his praises. Peter tells us to live lives that are different from the world around us – as different as light is to darkness. Called out of the darkness, we live in this world like foreigners who know that this is not our home. Strangers to the world, we abstain from sin and live such good lives that even the pagans will have to give God glory for his work in our lives. Called into the wonderful light, we let that shine on everyone around us.

Gospel of the Day¹ Matthew 5:13-20

The Christians blessed by Christ are called to be blessings to the world around us. You are salt, Christ says, so be it: act as the preservative that keeps this world from rotting. You are light, so be it: shine into the darkness of the world that people might see and know how different you are. Jesus did not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it—first *for us*, and then *in us*. Our righteousness could never be enough—even if we could keep the 613 laws of the Pharisees—but Jesus' righteousness is. Now he commands our light to shine that our deeds might give evidence of our faith to the praise of God the Father who created us to do them.

Psalm of the Day Psalm 112

"Light Dawns in the Darkness." The Church sings Psalm 112 in services that encourage insightful living based on knowing what God has declared us to be.

Gospel Acclamation Matthew 5:16

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you sent your one and only Son as the Word of life for our eyes to see and our ears to hear. Help us believe what the Scriptures proclaim about him and do the things that are pleasing in your sight; 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 854 “Church of God, Elect and Glorious” (James E. Seddon, 1915-1983)

Church Year Season¹ Epiphany

The twelve days of Christmas culminate at the celebration of the Epiphany of our Lord on January 6th. The season of Epiphany highlights the appearance of the Son of God as the Savior of the whole world— both Jew and Gentile. God revealed the mystery of his person and his mission through the words and works of the Father, through the anointing and empowering of the Spirit, and through the preaching and miracles of Christ. This season of the Savior’s appearance is bracketed by two white Sundays: The Baptism of Our Lord and Transfiguration of Our Lord. Since he had come hidden in flesh, recognizing Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God required revelation. From John’s Baptism to the Father’s booming voice, God revealed the truth about Jesus to the world: this son of Mary is the Son of God, come as the Christ. The Father’s testimony about Jesus bookends the season. From the glory of his baptism at the beginning of his ministry to the glory of his transfiguration at its culmination, the voice of the Father declares what flesh had hidden from the world: This is my Son!

Colors & Symbolism Season of Epiphany: Green

Green is the color of vegetation; therefore it symbolizes life. It represents the new life that Christ gives us in baptism, as well as the spiritual growth we experience during the season as we study the Lord’s ministry.

Nain Paraments Epiphany

Superfrontal: The Greek symbol at the center of the superfrontal is the *Chi-Rho*. Chi (X) and Rho (P) 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)..... Next to the *Chi-Rho* are the letters *Alpha* (A) and *Omega* (Ω), the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. These two letters symbolize Jesus Christ, our eternal Lord and Savior, who is the first and the last, the beginning and the end (Revelation 22:13)..... The vines and vegetation branching out from the *Chi-Rho* represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God’s children, the branches (John 15:5)..... The blue wave at the bottom of the symbol represents both Holy Baptism (1 Peter 3:21) and the living water of the Word of Christ (John 7:37-38). The blue wave is intertwined with a vine of thorns, reminded us of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross to pay the price for our sins (John 19:2;30) and that believers are baptized into Christ’s death and resurrection for their forgiveness and eternal salvation (Romans 6:3-4).

Lectern antependium: The circle surrounding the center of the Latin cross (†) symbolizes the eternal nature of Christ and the gift of eternal life to all who believe in him. The Greek letters ΙΧΘΥC (pronounced: *Ichthus*) form both the word for fish and an acronym for the phrase, “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.” A simple drawing of a fish was used in the ancient Church in days of persecution. It symbolized Jesus Christ and also served as a code by which Christians identified themselves to one another as Christ’s followers. It also recalls Holy Baptism and is thus a symbol of Christian regeneration (John 3:5).

Pulpit antependium: The Anchor Cross symbolizes the sure and steadfast hope Christians have in Jesus (Hebrews 6:19). The two fish remind us that Christians are followers of Jesus (see the description above), those who are brought into the ship of God’s church through the efforts of those who proclaim Gospel (cf. “fishers of men” in Matthew 4:19). During Epiphany the Church celebrates the many ways that Christ made himself known as true God to the world. One of these ways was his miracles. The two fish thus also remind us of Jesus miraculously feeding the 5,000 with five loaves of bread and two small fish (Matthew 14:13-21).

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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