



ABOUT THE PROPERS

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

August 16, 2020



The Christian trusts God to provide

The Prayer of the Day summarizes the Sunday: God reveals his mighty power chiefly in showing mercy and kindness. God feeds hungry mouths and hungry souls with his gifts of grace. When we bring our problems to Jesus, he will richly supply all we need. ¹

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 Lesson ¹ Isaiah 55:1-5

God’s care for our physical needs is coupled with his care for our spiritual needs. He wants to fill not only empty bellies but also hungry hearts and thirsty souls. “Come” is his invitation; “all” is the guest list; “free” is the cost. What hungry or thirsty soul would turn down his call? Those who come he fills with spiritual food. As richly as he fed the 5000, so richly he feeds his people with the Gospel, pure and free.

Second Lesson ¹ Romans 8:35-39

Though we suffer much in this world, the Christian trusts that nothing can separate him from the love of God. In his providence, God provides for us; in his love, God protects us. Though we are considered sheep for the slaughter by the world, we know that in the hand of our God we are more than conquerors, inseparable from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. No earthly powers, no spiritual forces, nothing in our past or in our future has the power to remove us from the care of our God.

Gospel of the Day ¹ Matthew 14:13-21

Though saddened by the Baptist’s death and seeking solitude, Jesus had compassion on the crowds that followed him and healed their sick. Then he turned to the training of his disciples. “Give them something to eat,” he told them (Mark 6:37). The disciples, however, saw all of the problems and none of the possibilities. They could estimate how many months’ wages it would cost; they could tally the measly resources on hand. Their math didn’t fail them, but their faith did. They did not begin to understand what kind of Lord they had in Jesus. Jesus taught them that a Christian trusts in God to provide when he said, “Bring them here to me!” They should have done immediately; it should be our first response to want or crisis. Bring it to Jesus. And look how he answered! So much food that thousands were fed and there were bushels left over. Here, the Son of God showed that he even cares for the physical needs of his people. Trust in God to provide!

Psalm of the Day Psalm 42-43

Since God is our only source of salvation, we are eager to hear his word and we put our trust in him.

Verse of the Day

John 14:23

“Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” Through faith we receive the love of God in the forgiveness of our sins. The Holy Spirit also equips us to do what is pleasing in God’s sight, and assures us of the promise that we will be taken to our Father’s heavenly home.

Prayer of the Day

O God, you reveal your mighty power chiefly in showing mercy and kindness. Grant us the full measure of your grace that we may obtain your promises and become partakers of your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Hymn of the Day

349 “Jesus, Priceless Treasure” (Johann Franck, 1618-77)

Church Year Season¹

Sundays after Pentecost

After reliving the great events of the life of Christ, the worshipping Church spends half a year focusing on the teachings of Christ. The Church wears green during the season of Pentecost as the Spirit uses those teachings of Jesus to grow the faith of believers. The appointed lessons teach us the characteristics of the Holy Ministry, the Christian, the Church, our God, and the Christian life.

Colors & Symbolism

Sundays after Pentecost: Green

Green is the color of life, refreshment, growth, and regeneration. Whereas the first half of the Church Year (the “Festival Half” or the “Half Year of Our Lord”) focused on the life of Christ during his earthly ministry, the emphasis for the second half (the “Non-Festival half” or the “Half Year of the Church”) shifts to the result of Christ’s work through the Word: the work of defining and creating faith, and inspiring its fruits. The theme of the Christian’s growth in faith (like healthy green plants) fills the season.

Nain Paraments

Sundays after Pentecost

Superfrontal: When Isaiah was called to be a prophet of the LORD, two seraphs (a class of angels) appeared and called out to one another, “Holy, Holy, Holy” (Isaiah 6:3). The threefold repetition of the divine adjective emphasizes the infinite holiness of the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Some congregations count the Sundays in this season of the Church Year as the Sundays after the festival of the Holy Trinity, calling it the “Trinity season,” or the “Sundays after Trinity.” That is why most paraments for this season feature symbols of the Holy Trinity.

Lectern antependium: The equilateral triangle is one of the oldest emblems of the Holy Trinity. The three equal sides and angles represent the equality, unity, and co-eternal nature of the three persons of the Trinity. Though they are three distinct persons, they are of one essence as one God (Deuteronomy 6:4). The three interwoven circles represent the three members of the Trinity and emphasize their unity and eternal nature; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are without beginning or end.

Pulpit antependium: At each point of the triangle (the significance of the triangle is explained above) is a nimbus, Latin for *cloud*. The nimbus appears as a circle, or a halo. In Christian artwork, nimbi surround the head of the Father (when he is depicted as a human), Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit (when he is depicted as a dove) to signify their glory and holiness. In artistic depictions of believers (saints), nimbi are placed around their heads to show that they have been made holy by God’s grace in Christ and through faith. The three fish in between the nimbi and that meet in the middle of the triangle signify Christians who are united to the Triune God by faith. Fish have come to represent the followers of Jesus because believers have been brought into the ship of God’s church through the efforts of those who proclaim Gospel (cf. “fishers of men” in Matthew 4:19).

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