



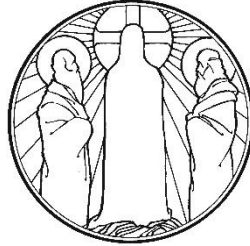
ABOUT THE PROPERS

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Last Sunday after Epiphany Transfiguration of Our Lord

February 19, 2023



Jesus Appears in Glory as the Son of God

The season of Epiphany is bookended by the voice of the Father proclaiming Jesus his Son. Before he suffered as man's substitute, Jesus gave his Church a glimpse of the glory that he set aside to be our Savior. See how much he loves us! The God of Mt. Sinai, the Majestic Glory, became a man to suffer and die for us, just as Moses and the Prophets had foretold. It's good that we are here.

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 Lesson¹ Exodus 24:9-18

How different Mt. Sinai was from the Mount of Glory! Moses entered into thick darkness (Exodus 20:21) to receive the Law of God and the two-sided covenant for Israel. When he came down from the mountain and found Israel dancing before a golden calf, he could see how man would never be able to keep this Law. Yet on the Mount of Glory in the midst of a bright cloud, Moses saw God's new covenant in the person of Jesus Christ. Here was the Man who would not just keep the covenant, but who would be the covenant for all mankind. On Mt. Sinai, the people cowered in fear at the glory of God which looked like a consuming fire. But on the Mount of Glory, that same glory looked like a man—a man who touched his disciples and gave them the message of the covenant fulfilled, "Don't be afraid!"

Second Lesson¹ 2 Peter 1:16-21

"We were eyewitnesses of his majesty." Only two remained, since Herod had killed James years earlier. But for Peter and John, that day on the sacred mountain continued to shape their lives. From John 1 to 2 Peter, these men who had seen Christ's glory testified that the man Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God. Peter promised that the Lord Jesus Christ would come again in power, and he offers us a three-fold assurance of his reliability: Peter was an eyewitness of the glory of Christ; Peter heard the Majestic Glory call Jesus the Son of God; Peter had the word of the prophets which were inspired by the Spirit and fulfilled in Christ.

Gospel of the Day¹ Matthew 17:1-9

Six days earlier, Peter had his moment of great triumph and great failure. After witnessing the ministry and miracles of Jesus, his mouth confessed what his heart believed: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. But his great failure of faith came immediately thereafter when he wanted no part with a crucified Christ. Six days later, God gave him proof for what his faith confessed, and hope in the face of what his heart feared. God showed Peter, James, and John all the glory that belonged to the Son of God shining out in the person of Jesus. They heard God the Father testify that this was his own Son. They understood that Jesus' death and departure were a fulfillment of the Old Testament promises of God. As Peter said, it is good for us to be on this mountain and see this Jesus, because it prepares us for Lent, and it prepares us for life. We have seen his glory, so we know he goes to his suffering and death willingly, lovingly, to be our Savior. We have seen his glory, so we know that no matter the sorrow or darkness we face in this life, we are going to heaven.

Psalm of the Day Psalm 2 D

"Great Are the Works of the LORD." The Church praises him who rules over all things in heaven and earth as her gracious King.

Gospel Acclamation

Mark 9:7b

“A cloud covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: ‘This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!’” The voice of God the Father from the cloud (a symbol of God’s presence) declares Jesus to be his beloved Son, repeating his announcement from Jesus’ baptism. The Father’s command to listen to Jesus reminds us that we are saved through the Word of Christ.

Prayer of the Day

O God, in the glorious transfiguration of your only-begotten Son, you confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of Moses and Elijah, and in the voice that came from the bright cloud, you foreshadowed our adoption as your sons. In your mercy, make us co-heirs of glory with Jesus our King, and bring us at last to heaven; 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

388 “Down from the Mount of Glory” (Werner Franzmann, 1905-1996)

The hymnist tells the story of Jesus at his transfiguration (vv1-2), and his subsequent journey to the cross on the Mount of Calvary, to suffer in our place (vv3-4). Two different mountains: one showing our Lord’s majesty, the other his humility – both needed to save us.

Church Year Season ¹

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, though 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

Transfiguration of Our Lord: 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

Transfiguration of Our Lord

Transfiguration is a distinctly Lutheran addition to the Christian calendar. In the 16th century, Johannes Bugenhagen and Veit Dietrich placed the celebration at the end of Epiphany before Lent, remembering that Jesus descended the Mount of Glory and set his face toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51). On Transfiguration, the Church says “farewell” to alleluias. The Church refrains from using her most jubilant words of praise during the muted celebration of Lent. The alleluias will return with the risen Lord at the celebration of Easter.

Minor Festivals

St. Matthias, Apostle (February 24)

Matthias was the one chosen by lot to take the place among the apostles of Judas Iscariot, Christ’s betrayer. The Apostles proposed two men to join them: Joseph called Barsabbas and Matthias. The eleven prayed and cast lots, entrusting the decision to the Lord, and Matthias became one of the Twelve (Acts 1:12-26). Nothing is known from Scripture about his later life, although he is thought to have preached in Cappadocia. We thank God for his service as apostle to the Church.

Nain Paraments

Christmas

Superfrontal: “Immanuel” is Hebrew for “God with us.” This name for Jesus Christ was revealed to God’s people through Isaiah in a prophecy of the Savior’s birth (7:14). The angel Gabriel announced to Joseph in a dream that the child in the Virgin Mary’s womb would be that promised Immanuel – God who had come to be with us (Matthew 1:23) in order to save us. Sometimes the name is spelled *Emmanuel*, which is the Latin alphabet transliteration of the Hebrew pronunciation of the same name.

The vines next to Immanuel represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God’s children, the branches (John 15:5).

Lectern antependium: *The Greek Cross*: distinguished by four arms of equal length.

Pulpit antependium: *The Celtic Cross*: similar to the Latin cross (†), but with a circle surrounding the center, which symbolizes the eternal nature of Christ and the gift of eternal life to all who believe in him.

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.

· Clipart courtesy of “Ecclesiastical Art by Ed Riojas”