



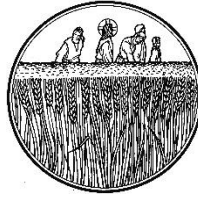
ABOUT THE PROPERS

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Second Sunday after Pentecost

June 2, 2024



A Top-Down Faith

Rest Is a Gift, Not Something to Be Earned

To properly understand spiritual rest requires a top-down faith. God needs to send us the Spirit so that we can grasp this truth. True spiritual rest cannot be earned. In fact, the harder you try, the more restless and the less peaceful you become. Spiritual rest is a gift that God gives. The rest we need most—from guilt, from worry, from shame, from hopelessness—is graciously given to us by the Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus Christ.

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 Reading² Deuteronomy 5:12-15

There is no greater benefit to man in the law than this: God wants us to rest so that we may remember. Remember what? Remember all that he has done for us and for our salvation! Then when the rest is over, we will be refreshed to go again to serve him in serving one another. That was the ultimate purpose of the Old Testament Sabbath day; in the New Testament we are free from the day, but not from the gift of time to rest, remember, and be refreshed for service in the coming week.

Second Reading² Colossians 2:13-17

The Old Testament Sabbath and ceremonial law had become a burden because of the pharisaical perversion of it. The Pharisees focused on the shell and missed its content. Ideally its provisions all point to Christ’s winning the real Sabbath rest for us by his refusal to rest until our salvation had been won. Now the law has been removed as a burden by its fulfillment in the work of Christ. Thus now we are free to receive what the works of the law could never give: we receive Christ; we receive life; we receive forgiveness for all our sins against all of the law! That’s the whole point and purpose of our worship, to receive what God has come to give us in his Word. Therefore, let us not despise preaching and his Word but gladly hear and learn it, and thus receive its saving benefit: Christ!

Gospel of the Day² Mark 2:23 – 3:6

The Pharisees had turned even rest into a work! Jesus declares the true intent of the Sabbath law. It was God’s gift, not for God’s benefit, but for our benefit. It’s true and lasting rest is found in Christ and in his work; thus the worship of the New Testament is chiefly a worship not of *doing* but of *receiving* what God has done for us in his Word and Sacraments. Even the Old Testament ceremonial law had the gift of the Sabbath as its corner stone and connecting thread; thus even details of the ceremonial law could be violated in the interests of the blessings God wanted to give to man through the law. The priest gave and David received what otherwise would have been unlawful so that David and his men could carry out the expressed will of God that David should live and eventually become king. God gives the law for our benefit; our obedience to it benefits us and our neighbor, not God. The chief benefit of the rest day for us is the opportunity it affords the Holy Spirit to work faith in us by the preaching of his Word.

Psalm of the Day⁴

Psalm 62 A

“In God Alone My Soul Can Find Rest and Peace.” The Church sings Psalm 62 in services that emphasize the rest we find in Jesus, not in anything that we ourselves accomplish or endure. The psalm’s theme is the absolute trustworthiness of our God, which moves us to flee to him in faith and to count on him in crisis.

Gospel Acclamation

Psalm 19:8

“The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.”

Prayer of the Day

Eternal God, your Son, Jesus Christ, is our true Sabbath rest. Help us to keep each day holy by receiving his Word of comfort that we may find our rest in him, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn of the Day

703 “I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say” (Horatius Bonar, 1808-1889)

Church Year Season¹

Season 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 cover a great body of doctrine for faith and life.

Colors & Symbolism

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.

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

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

⁴ From *Christian Worship: Psalter* © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Reprinted by permission.

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