



# ABOUT THE PROPERs

*An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service*



## Ascension of Our Lord

May 29, 2025



“Because He Lives”

He Reigns Over Everything for the Benefit of His Church

When the Church gathers, it regularly remembers Christ’s ascension. The words “He ascended into heaven” are found in the three ecumenical creeds Christians use to confess their faith. In addition, the Church sets aside a day each year to focus on Christ’s ascension. This is for good reason. Jesus’ ascension marked the fact that his work was complete, in one sense. Never again will a sacrifice for sins need to be made. However, Jesus’ ascension also marks that, in another sense, his work is just beginning. Through the Church, Jesus now proclaims forgiveness of sins throughout the world. The Church consists of people like us who are often weak and timid witnesses for Christ. So, Jesus promised to send us his Spirit to give us power from heaven, that we might take the gospel to the ends of the earth. More, he ascended into heaven and sat down on the throne of God. He lives and reigns over everything for the benefit of his Church.

### **First Reading**<sup>3</sup>                      Acts 1:1-11

This account of the Ascension of our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke, complements the Holy Gospel. Jesus visibly departs, leaving his followers with the promise of the Holy Spirit, a call to witness, and the promise that he will come again.

### **Second Reading**<sup>3</sup>                      Revelation 19:11-16

John was blessed to see a spectacular vision of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He rides to battle, the only one with blood, because he went to battle alone. There are no blood-stained armies of heaven...just a blood-stained King. But this King won the victory of victories for he is Kings of Kings and Lord of Lords.

### **Gospel**<sup>3</sup>                                      Luke 24:44-53

The Scriptures had been fulfilled. Humankind had been redeemed. Death had been conquered and the King was going home. Now, begins the work of carrying the message of Christ’s victory to the ends of the earth. We are witnesses, clothed with the Spirit and filled with resurrection joy.

### **Psalm of the Day**<sup>4</sup>                      Psalm 47 A                      “God Has Gone Up with a Shout”

The Church sings Psalm 47 in services that commemorate the ascension of our Lord Jesus in heaven. The psalm emphasizes the totality of the empire of God. Martin Luther said, “Psalm 47 is a prophecy of Christ. It foretold how he would ascend and become king over all the world, not with any blows of the sword, but simply with shouts, songs, and trumpet blasts, that is, with the joyful preaching of the gospel.”

### **Gospel Acclamation**                      Matthew 28:20

“Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Christ’s words of promise to his disciples before he ascended are fulfilled in his gracious presence among believers in the Word and Sacraments.

## Prayer of the Day

Lord Jesus, King of glory, on this day you ascended far above the heavens, and at God's right hand you rule the nations. Leave us not alone, we pray, but grant us the Spirit of truth that, at your command and by your power, we may be your witnesses in all the world; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## Hymn of the Day

472 "A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing" (The Venerable Bede, 673-735)

## Church Year Season <sup>1</sup>

Easter

After forty days of repentance and prayer, the Church bursts forth in jubilant praise at the Resurrection of our Lord. The alleluias and glorias which were muted for Lent ring out again as the Bride of Christ welcomes her Bridegroom back from the dead. Easter is as the pinnacle of the Church Year, the oldest festival and season celebrated by the worshipping Church. For a full week-of-weeks (49 days) the Church celebrates the resurrection of Christ on the Sundays of Easter which culminate on the 50th day, Pentecost.

## Colors & Symbolism

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

The Paschal Candle

Paschal, meaning "having to do with the Passover," is a word associated with Easter. It was at the conclusion of the Jewish Passover Festival (the "Pasch") that Jesus rose from the dead and proved himself to be the true Passover Lamb whose blood removes sin and death (Ex 12; 1 Cor 6:6-8). The candle is lit for services during Easter to symbolize that Christ is alive and lives among us. The candle is also lit for Baptisms and funerals, reminding us of our resurrection to eternal life.

## Nain Paraments

Easter

Superfrontal: *Alleluia* is taken from a Hebrew word which means, "Praise the LORD." It is a word of joy and gladness and most commonly used in the Psalms (e.g. 103). An ancient custom is to refrain from using the term during Lent in order to distinguish the penitential nature of that season from the joy and hope filled nature of the Easter season that follows. The vines and vegetation branching out from the *Alleluia* represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God's children, the branches (John 15:5).

Lectern antependium: The doves flying in front of the cross represent purity, innocence (Matthew 10:16), as well as spiritual and eternal rest (Psalm 55:6). When the dove has an olive branch or leaf in its beak, it is a symbol of hope and peace (Genesis 8:11). Each of these blessings and more come by Jesus' death on the cross and through the gift of faith (Galatians 1:3,4).

Pulpit antependium: The cross is formed by the Greek letters Chi (X) and Rho (P). Chi and Rho 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). The vines and vegetation branching out from the cross represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God's children, the branches (John 15:5).

<sup>1</sup> Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year A". Jonathan E. Schroeder, Author.

<sup>2</sup> Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year B". Daniel M. Deutschlander, Author.

<sup>3</sup> Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year C". Joel J. Gawrisch, Author.

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