



ABOUT THE PROPERs

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Proper 14

August 10, 2025



“Undivided Attention”

On Heavenly Treasure

Last week we heard Jesus warn against overvaluing earthly wealth. This week Jesus warns against undervaluing heavenly treasure. Last week, Jesus exposed the folly of greed. This week, Jesus exposes the folly of worry, even when faced with the prospect of having a seeming shortage of resources. This week might be the bigger challenge! When it seems we lack providence or protection for our daily lives, it can be hard to avoid worry. So, Jesus asks us to give our undivided attention to him, that he might take our worries away. Jesus points to creatures that do not labor or toil yet eat every day. Even more, Jesus points to our Father who promises to give us the heavenly treasures of his kingdom. Jesus assures us that our Father will throw in any needed earthly possessions as well. We can rest from our worries, confident that our loving Father knows all we need!

First Reading³

Genesis 15:1-16

Earthly wealth wasn't the treasure that Abraham sought. No, he longed for the son long promised who would carry forward the promised Seed of Woman. God came and reminded Abraham that God was not only Abraham's shield, but his treasure, too. Certain again of what he could only see by faith, Abraham looked forward to the fulfillment of the Lord's promise to bless him with the seeming impossibility of a son. To us the Son of promise has come. Like Isaac to his aged parents, Jesus has come to bring joy and connection to the Lord's imminent and eternal reward.

Second Reading³

Hebrews 11:1-3,8-16

How long seems this road from grace to glory! How difficult this earthly path we walk laden with burdens of body and soul! We cry with saints across the centuries, “How long, O Lord?” Using the life of Abraham as an example, the writer to the Hebrews encourages faithful living that looks forward to the fulfilled promises of the Lord. Written in his blood and guaranteed with his life, the great High Priest promises to us the same heavenly country, the same eternal city prepared for the faithful.

Gospel

Luke 12:22-34

Jesus assures us that our Heavenly Father knows what we need better than we do. His little flock has nothing to fear, for God has promised that he has already given us the kingdom. Trusting God's promise brings real treasure and a deep longing for Christ to come.

Psalm of the Day⁴

Psalm 121 A

“I Lift Up My Eyes to the Mountains”

The Church sings Psalm 121 in services that celebrate the value of faith in God regardless of circumstances. The psalmist confidently asserts that the Lord protects us from both physical and spiritual harm. Martin Luther said, “Psalm 121 is a comfort psalm. We see how the Lord treats both the psalmist and us as we remain strong in faith, waiting for his help and protection. Even when it appears that God is sleeping, it is not so. He watches and keeps us secure even to the end.”

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 12:32

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.”

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray and willing to give far more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask except through the merits and mediation of 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 800 “How Firm a Foundation” (*A Selection of Hymns*, London, 1787)

Church Year Season ¹ 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.

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