



# ABOUT THE PROPERs

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



## Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Proper 17

August 31, 2025



“Wounds That Heal”

Those Who Exalt Themselves Will Be Humbled

Everyone knows that humility is a positive trait, and pride is a negative one. So, why bother talking about what we already know? Because in spite of that knowledge, we still helplessly fall into the trap of pride. We all desire acclaim, recognition, and praise. Jesus’ sharp words this week teach us that seeking exaltation in futile and fleeing ways will only result in receiving the opposite. Those who attempt to exalt themselves will eventually be humbled by God. In contrast, Jesus promises that those who leave their exaltation to God will receive honor and glory far greater than any that can be awarded in this life. Our exaltation does not need to be our responsibility, because Jesus has already made it his.

### First Reading<sup>3</sup>

Proverbs 25:6,7a

Sinful pride can be one’s undoing. Better is humility in the presence of the king than humiliation in his court. These words of Solomon are nearly identical to the words of Jesus in the Gospel today. It would be easy to dismiss these words as simply dining etiquette for the royal court. But these words touch nearly every aspect of life for the believer. Humble service before the King of heaven and humble service in his kingdom mark those who will dine at the King’s table for eternity.

### Second Reading<sup>3</sup>

James 2:1-13

These words from James reiterate the lesson from Jesus in the closing verses of the Gospel. Self-exalting pride can also be found in the display of favoritism towards those who can elevate our societal position or somehow benefit us. James warns that those who show such favoritism are self-exalting lawbreakers headed for judgment. Rather, as humble servants who have known the mercy of the King, show mercy to all those in need. For it is by the King’s mercy that we will spend eternity beyond the reach of his exacting judgment.

### Gospel<sup>3</sup>

Luke 14:1,7-14

It is difficult, perhaps, for most of us to imagine ourselves in this specific situation. We are so far removed from royalty and subjects, masters and slaves. First, Jesus speaks to the immediate situation of the banquet he was attending and the actions he saw there. But then he also drives home his point on humility with a parable. As Jesus warns against sinful pride, he warns those who would promote themselves and seek places of honor in the presence of the Host of the Heavenly banquet. Only those who humbly wait on the King’s merciful acknowledgment will find eternal reward at his table. For now, the King calls on us to humbly serve those in need. This is not for personal gain. Rather, humble service to the citizens of his kingdom is a display of humble service to the King.

### Psalm of the Day<sup>4</sup>

Psalm 112 A

“Light Dawns in the Darkness”

The Church sings Psalm 112 in services that encourage insightful living based on knowing what God has declared us to be.

### Gospel Acclamation

Luke 14:11

“For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

## Prayer of the Day

O Lord of grace and mercy, teach us by your Holy Spirit to follow the example of your Son in true humility, that we may withstand the temptations of the devil and with pure hearts and minds avoid ungodly pride; 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

729 “Son of God, Eternal Savior” (Somerset T. C. Lowry, 1855-1932)

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

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.

## Minor Festivals

Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist (August 29)

## 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).

<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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