



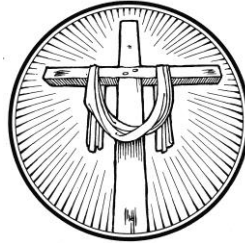
# ABOUT THE PROPERs

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



## Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost

November 15, 2020



Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's

The Lord of History has not only established the spiritual kingdom, but he also has established earthly governments to carry out his will. As people in God's spiritual kingdom and in an earthly kingdom, Christians show honor and respect to the Lord when they show honor and respect to their government. We recognize that we owe much more than taxes to God. But that debt has been paid by Jesus, who shed his blood to pay for our sins. In God's grace, he has chosen us to be his own. In response, we are moved by faith to thank, praise, serve, and obey him.

### The Propers

*The Proper*s are those portions of the service that change (or, 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 Lesson**

Isaiah 45:1-7

How inscrutable is the Lord's deliverance! His people were hopelessly exiled in Babylon because of their sins. But the Lord fashioned a deliverance they neither deserved nor dreamed possible! He anointed a pagan ruler, Cyrus of Persia, to conquer their oppressors and set them free. Our God is the Lord of history. He controls all things for the good of his Church.

#### **Second Lesson**

1 Thessalonians 1:1-5a

The opening of the epistle conveys the blessing of God's grace and its resultant peace. The apostle assures them of the specific prayers of thanksgiving that the Church at large prays on their behalf. He also reminds them that God loved them and chose them to be his people.

#### **Gospel of the Day**

Matthew 22:15-21

In an attempt to trap Jesus, the Pharisees asked whether it was right to pay taxes to a pagan government. Our Lord demonstrated that there was no conflict between our debt to the government and our debt to God. However, we owe God much more than taxes. We owe him thankful and believing hearts, which accept Jesus as the Messiah who paid our debt of sin. The Pharisees were unwilling to grant this to God.

#### **Psalm of the Day**

Psalm 96

Our Lord's song of praise is shared by all creation-animate and inanimate. Of all God's praiseworthy acts, the greatest is the salvation of his people.

#### **Verse of the Day**

Isaiah 25:9b

"Alleluia. 'For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works.' Alleluia."

## Prayer of the Day

Lord, keep your household, the Church, in continual godliness and set us free from all adversities, that under your protection, we may serve you with true devotion and holy deeds; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## Hymn of the Day

421 “All Depends on Our Possessing” (Andachtige Haus-Kirche, Nurnberg, 1676)

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

Sundays 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 teach us the characteristics of the Holy Ministry, the Christian, the Church, our God, and the Christian life.

## Colors & Symbolism

Sundays after Pentecost: 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 and Editor.  
Clipart courtesy of “Ecclesiastical Art by Ed Riojas”