



# ABOUT THE PROPERs

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



## Christ the King Sunday

November 22, 2020



Lord, keep us joyful in Christ our King!

On this last Sunday of the Church Year, we rejoice in the fulfillment of God's plan for our salvation through Christ our King. And we rejoice because Christ our King reigns—the king who once came as a sacrifice; the king who still shepherds us day by day; the king who one day will conquer all our enemies. Rejoice in his reign and look forward to the day when every knee will bow with us before the King of kings and Lord of Lords!

### 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**

Ezekiel 34:11-16,23,24

Since the time of David, Israel had called her kings “shepherds.” The men who followed in David's line, however, did not shepherd Israel in the paths of God. So God made a promise: the Sovereign LORD would shepherd his people. Notice the first person pronouns in this lesson—we rejoice because we have a King who acts on behalf of his people, like a shepherd for sheep. God says, “I will guide them; I will guard them; I will seek them; I will find them.” Most importantly, God promised to raise up King David's greater Son to be the prince of his people and their Good Shepherd. Rejoice in the Christ the King who shepherds his flock day by day!

#### **Second Lesson**

1 Corinthians 15:20-28

If the story of Christ ended on Good Friday, there could be no joy at all. Had Christ not been raised, we should be pitied more than all men, as Paul says in the verse immediately preceding this lesson. But the story didn't end on Friday—a whole new chapter started on Easter Sunday morning! Christ has indeed been raised, and that means he is the firstfruits of the dead. When the Israelites brought the firstfruit offering to the Lord, they confessed that the whole harvest belonged to God, and they rejoiced at the greater harvest that was coming. Through the resurrection of Jesus, God promised that a field full of souls will follow the Firstfruits from death to life. Until then, Christ will reign as king until the Great Day comes when he reverses everything Adam ruined and destroys every enemy that stands against the Church. Then our joy will be complete, and God will be all in all. Rejoice in Christ the King who will conquer all our enemies!

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

Matthew 27:27-31

Joyful? How can this make us rejoice? The scene would seem like bad satire if not for its sad reality. Petty little men in a tiny little fortress bully the One who created light from darkness and divided land from sea. He deserved the finest crown, but look what Man gave! He

deserved the noblest scepter, but look what Man handed him! He deserved the sincerest devotion, but look what man offered! He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. The King of heaven came to earth, and look at what Man gave him! He could have swept them all away; he could have condemned us like he had the fallen angels. Man deserved nothing more—but look at what He gave! He gave his holiness for our sin and his death for our life. This scene is joyful because we know how it ends. The picture of our King wearing a crown of thorns is not tragic, but rather it is full of grace. We have a King in Christ who left his heavenly throne and regnavit a ligno crucis (“reigned from the wood of the cross”, Justin Martyr; Augustine). Rejoice in Christ the King who came as our sacrifice!

**Psalm of the Day**                      Psalm 47

God is the King of all the earth. Let the people praise him!

**Verse of the Day**                      Revelation 22:13

“Alleluia. ‘I am the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.’ Alleluia.”

**Prayer of the Day**

Lord Jesus Christ, by your victory you have broken the power of the evil one. Fill our hearts with joy and peace as we look with hope to that day when every creature in heaven and earth will acclaim you King of kings and Lord of lords to your unending praise and glory; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Hymn of the Day**                      217 “The Head that Once Was Crowned” (Thomas Kelly, 1769-1855)

**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**                      Christ the King: White

White is the color of God and heaven. It also symbolizes joy, celebration, gladness, light, purity and innocence. We receive these blessings because Christ, our righteousness Savior has forgiven all our sins through his all atoning work to save.

**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 and Editor.  
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