



ABOUT THE PROPERS

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Second Sunday after Pentecost

June 6, 2021



Spiritual Rest in Christ

In God's kingdom we are to live according to his will as expressed in the law. But even in the directions given for our lives in the law, we see Christ for us. Jesus declares the true intent of the Sabbath law (the word *Sabbath* means *rest*). It was God's gift; not for God's benefit, but for our benefit. The true and lasting Sabbath rest is found in Christ and in his work; thus the worship of the New Testament is chiefly a worship not of doing but of receiving what God has done for us in his Word and sacraments. The Third Commandment is a pre-eminent example of the point. We find our true Sabbath rest in Christ alone.

The Propers

The Propers 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 ¹

Deuteronomy 5:12-15

There is no greater benefit to man in the law than this: God wants us to rest so that we may remember. Remember what? Remember all that he has done for us and for our salvation! Then when the rest is over, we will be refreshed to go again to serve him in serving one another. That was the ultimate purpose of the Old Testament Sabbath day; in the New Testament we are free from the day, but not from the gift of time to rest, remember, and be refreshed for service in the coming week.

Second Lesson ¹

2 Corinthians 4:5-12

This lesson is the beginning of a series of readings from 2 Corinthians that will last six weeks. Give thanks and praise to God that he affords us time for hearing his Word, the gospel preached by the apostles and prophets in the Holy Scriptures! See how eager God is for us to hear it! He so rules over the world that in spite of the devil's rage and the world's hatred, the gospel message of Christ our only Savior still goes forth from Sunday to Sunday; as it goes forth it still performs the miracle of creating and preserving your faith. You hear the Absolution; you receive the Benediction; you receive a full meal in the sermon and the sacrament. That's all God's design, the result of his rule and providential protection of his Word, just for you! Treasure the treasure!

Gospel of the Day ¹

Mark 2:23-28

The Pharisees had turned even rest into a work! Jesus declares the true intent of the Sabbath law (the word Sabbath means rest). It was God's gift, not for God's benefit, but for our benefit. Its true and lasting rest is found in Christ and in his work; thus the worship of the New Testament is chiefly a worship not of *doing* but of *receiving* what God has done for us in his Word and Sacraments. Even the Old Testament ceremonial law had the gift of the Sabbath as its corner stone and connecting thread; thus even details of the ceremonial law could be violated in the interests of the blessings God wanted to give to man through the law. The priest gave and David received what otherwise would have been unlawful so that David and his men could carry out the expressed will of God that David should live and eventually become king. God gives the law for our benefit; our obedience to it benefits us and our neighbor, not God. The chief benefit of the rest day for us is the opportunity it affords the Holy Spirit to work faith in us by the preaching of his Word.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 126

There is no better response to his saving acts than to acknowledge them and worship him for them in the company of the saints.

Verse of the Day

Psalm 119:105

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” God’s Word is the only rule according to which all doctrine should be judged. God’s Word enlightens our hearts through faith to understand his work of salvation for us and guide us through life.

Prayer of the Day

O God, you rule over all things in wisdom and kindness. Take away everything that may be harmful and give us whatever is good; 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

190 “We Now Implore God the Holy Ghost” (German hymn, 13th c. v1; Martin Luther, w2-4)

Church Year Season ²

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).

¹ Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year B”. Daniel M. Deutschlander, Author.

² Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year A”. Jonathan E. Schroeder, Author and Editor.

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