



ABOUT THE PROPERS

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

July 4, 2021



The Lord Jesus Is Faithful, and in Mercy He Raises You Up from Death to Life

The Lord is faithful. His steadfast love never ceases. To keep us in repentance and to make our faith grow, he causes grief for a while, but he does not cast off forever; in due time, he will have compassion. Therefore, he leads us through faith to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD, for the LORD is good to those whose hope is in him. That is what the synagogue ruler, named Jairus did. His daughter was at the point of death, so he waited on the mercy of the Lord Jesus. God granted him saving help. **Jairus' daughter** had already died before Jesus arrived. Yet at the right time, the little girl got up and began walking. Such is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who humbled himself unto the extreme poverty of death so that you by his poverty might become rich, even unto life everlasting.

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

Lamentations 3:22-33

Much of human suffering is the direct result of sin, often the sins of others. So Jeremiah endures the loss of everything because of the rebellion and stubborn unbelief of his countrymen. They have nothing now but death and the living nothing but shame, misery, despair. But Jeremiah recognized that regardless of the sin that caused the misery or whose sin it was, suffering even to the point of death has a **salutary benefit of clearing out the rubbish in the brain and focusing the Christian’s attention on what really matters.** And what matters is grace and the sustaining promise of God’s abiding presence and his unfailing love expressed in the gospel.

Second Lesson ¹

2 Corinthians 8:1-9,13,14

Having everything Jesus gave it all up so that you would have everything. And now he blesses you with confidence in the gospel promises on this good day so that you can share those promises with those in a bad day. The same holds for your time and wealth; it is yours to share in humble imitation of what Jesus has shared —**no, what Jesus has generously and freely given to you.** That’s how we pass the test of sincerity; **that’s how invisible faith created by the Word turns into visible works of love for our neighbor** when he is having trouble seeing the grace and love of God because of the evidence of his pained circumstances.

Gospel of the Day ¹

Mark 5:21-24a,35-43

In the face of death Jairus trusted the promise even when he could not know exactly what form the fulfillment of the promise would take. **That’s our trust, too, when disaster, even death, approaches.** We take refuge in the promise of Jesus to go with us, even if it means a journey to the cemetery. Do you wonder if he is too busy to be bothered? Look at how the gospel lesson ends! Jesus is the one who attends even to the smallest detail in the story; he orders something for the little girl to eat. Is he any less concerned with you, especially when you need the comfort of him who triumphed over death for us and also for our believing loved ones? How very different our experience of suffering at the threat of death from the suffering of those who have no such victorious and infinitely loving comforter!

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 30

Everything in life is transitory and changing. Only one thing remains constant and reliable: the Savior and his Word. We learn that anew every time we think we finally have it made, only to discover the next day how fleeting all prosperity and success really is. Oh, how worthy he is of worship who calls us back to himself and to his Word by the days of darkness!

Verse of the Day

Mark 8:34b

“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” Jesus means that we must deny our natural, sinful self, that evil nature within us which is dead in sins, which follows Satan, and which is under the wrath of God. Moreover, a follower of Christ must “take up his cross.” To take up one’s cross means willing to suffer for Christ’s sake as his disciple. This is the way of one who has come to faith in Christ and wishes to be his follower.

Prayer of the Day

O Lord, our God, govern the nations on earth and direct the affairs of this world so that your Church may worship you in peace and joy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Hymn of the Day

448 “In You, O Lord, I Put My Trust” (Adam Reusner, 1496-1575)

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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