



ABOUT THE PROPERs

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Second Sunday of Easter

April 7, 2024



Resurrection Reality

The Living Lord Gives Proof and Peace

In the Great Resurrection Chapter (1 Corinthians 15), St. Paul writes an entire paragraph listing the people to whom Jesus appeared after he rose, including a group of over five hundred at one time. It is like St. Paul is telling skeptics, “*You don’t need to take my word for it. Hundreds of us saw Jesus back from the dead.*” The proof of Jesus’ resurrection brought peace and strength to those early believers. They knew there was more to their existence than just their time on earth. They knew the reality that eternal life was theirs, a gift from their living Lord. It gave them incredible joy and courage. May the resurrection reality give us the same.

The Propers

*The Proper*s are those portions of the service that change (i.e. 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 Reading

Acts 18:1-11

Beginning with the Second Sunday of Easter, the readings from the Old Testament are replaced by a series of readings from the Acts of the Apostles. Acts, written by the Evangelist St. Luke, is a continuation of the story of Jesus, who though ascended into heaven, continues to triumph through his witnesses, building his church by his Word despite all opposition. In today’s reading, we hear that the promised presence of the living Lord gave Paul the courage to keep on speaking the gospel, even when Paul was facing harsh persecution.

Second Reading³

1 John 1:1-4

Everything which the apostles had seen and heard is there to be received, shared, enjoyed in the Word. The Word brings the light. In darkness there can be no fellowship. You can’t walk hand in hand, work with or support, lovingly serve what is lost in the dark. But the Word brings God to light. It shows and brings the Advocate who pleads our case so effectively to light. It brings the truth to light that we are brothers and sisters in Christ. Sin removed is darkness removed. The light of the Word removes the sin by revealing the Advocate which brings forth trust in him and in his merit.

Gospel²

John 20:19-31

Jesus’ Easter greeting is much more than just the Hebrew *Hello! (Shalom!)*, meaning “peace”. He does not merely wish what the word expresses; he gives it. And then he gives it again. And then he gives it to them to give to the world. What an amazing thing! He is so anxious that they get peace which they should then give. What unfit vessels they were when he called them. How unfit they still are. But that’s just as well! All glory goes to Christ and the power he plants in the Word. He comes to us in Easter, with his peace. Peace with God and peace with Jesus himself was the last thing that the disciples might have expected to hear and receive from Jesus that day. But now, the very first thing the disciples hear from the mouth of the risen Savior is: *Peace!* That’s even his message to Thomas and now with an exclamation point behind it to us who have not seen but by the power of the Word have nevertheless believed.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 16 B

“This Is the Day.” We can trust our God for protection. The Lord is at our right hand, just as he was at David's, so not even death can overcome us.

Gospel Acclamation

John 20:29

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” Ever since Christ's ascension, this is how the Holy Spirit brings souls to faith – through the preaching and hearing of his Word. Faith comes from hearing the message, and whoever believes has everlasting life.

Prayer of the Day

O risen Lord, you came to your disciples and took away their fears with your word of peace. Come to us also by Word and sacrament, and banish our fears with the comforting assurance of your abiding presence; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn of the Day

456 “O Sons and Daughters of the King” (Jean Tisserand, d. 1494)

This hymn is a narrative Easter carol; it begins with the Easter gospel from Matthew 28:1-10 (vv1-3) and concludes with the doubting Thomas story from John 20:19-29 (vv4-8). Because the narrative covers two Easter season Sundays, the verses can be divided as follows: for Easter Sunday morning, verses 1-3, 5, and 8; for Easter evening, verses 1-4 and 8; for the second Sunday of Easter (which usually includes the doubting Thomas story), verses 1 and 4-8.

Traditions & Customs

The Paschal Candle

Paschal, meaning "having to do with the Passover," is a word associated with Easter. It was at the conclusion of the Jewish Passover Festival (the "Pasch") that Jesus rose from the dead and proved himself to be the true Passover Lamb whose blood removes sin and death (Ex 12; 1 Cor 6:6-8). The candle is lit for services during Easter to symbolize that Christ is alive and lives among us. The candle is also lit for Baptisms and funerals, reminding us of our resurrection to eternal life.

Church Year Season ¹

Easter

After forty days of repentance and prayer, the Church bursts forth in jubilant praise at the Resurrection of our Lord. The alleluias and glorias which were muted for Lent ring out again as the Bride of Christ welcomes her Bridegroom back from the dead. Easter is as the pinnacle of the Church Year, the oldest festival and season celebrated by the worshipping Church. For a full week-of-weeks (49 days) the Church celebrates the resurrection of Christ on the Sundays of Easter which culminate on the 50th day, Pentecost.

Colors & Symbolism

Easter: White

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

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).

¹ Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year A”. Jonathan E. Schroeder, Author.

² Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year B”. Daniel M. Deutschlander, Author.

³ Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year C”. Joel J. Gawrich, Author.

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