



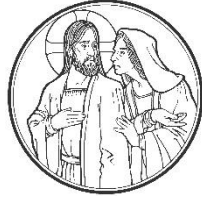
# ABOUT THE PROPER

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



## Second Sunday after Epiphany

January 19, 2025



Epiphany Moments

God Delivers More Than We Ask, Not Less

It is easy for us to assume that if God says “no” to a request, we are getting less than we wanted. We need to have an epiphany moment, seeing the reality—that God always wants more for us than we want from him. Saying “yes” to all our requests would often result in us receiving less joy, less blessing, a lesser life. So, when God says “no” to our request, we can be assured it is because he wants to give us more. Far more than existing as a “help desk” or 911 dispatch, God’s love for us is like that of a groom for his bride. His love for us exceeds all expectation and understanding. In that love, God always delivers more than we ask, not less.

**First Reading**<sup>3</sup>                      Isaiah 62:1-5

The Lord proclaims good news to Zion: the once rejected harlot will stand as his bride. To his glory, she will stand together with him in righteousness and salvation. She will be recognized as the delightful bride of the Lord, the jewel of his crown.

**Second Reading**<sup>3</sup>                      Ephesians 3:14-21

This selection from Ephesians brings comfort and confidence to the heart of Christ’s bride. As his bride, rooted in his love, we can only begin to grasp the immeasurable width, length, height and depth of his love. We join in echoing Paul’s prayer: to him be glory.

**Gospel**<sup>3</sup>                                      John 2:1-11

This account from the Gospel of John is not so much a stamp of approval on wedding celebrations as it is a display of glory by our bridegroom, Jesus the Christ. The Savior’s meeting of an immediate need was a secondary benefit to the revelation of his glorious power, his divine authority and the confirmation of his first disciples’ faith.

**Psalm of the Day**<sup>4</sup>                      Psalm 145 B                      “I Will Praise Your Name Forever”

The Church sings Psalm 145 in services that celebrate God’s power and love demonstrated among his people. The psalm is an alphabetic acrostic, each verse beginning with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Martin Luther said, “Psalm 145 is a psalm of thanks for the kingdom of Christ. It commends the exalted activity of praising God and glorifying his power and kingdom. The kingdom and power of Christ are hidden under the cross, where he helped the fallen, called the needy to himself, made sinners godly, and brought the dead to life. Who would know that if it were not preached, taught, and confessed? Yes, Christ also gives food to all, heeds the call of believers, does what they desire, and protects them.”

**Gospel Acclamation**                      John 1:14

“We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” The Apostle St. John points to Jesus as the fulfillment of the glory of the Lord, full of grace and truth. In Jesus the God whose glory is impossible to see is seen. The God who cannot be known is known.

**Prayer of the Day**

Almighty God, you gave your one and only Son to be the light of the world. Grant that your people, illumined by your Word and sacraments, may shine with the radiance of Christ’s glory, that he may be known, worshiped, and believed to the ends of the earth; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and forever.

## Hymn of the Day

375 “Arise and Shine in Splendor” (Martin Opitz, 1597-1639)

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

Epiphany

The readings during the Epiphany season carry forward the emphasis in the readings for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the theme of Jesus revealing himself to us as God and Savior. At the same time the readings present us with a real conundrum. The conundrum is that he hides the manifestations of his deity, so that his glory remains a secret and a mystery, even while he is revealing it. All the riddles are present in the readings for the Feast of the Epiphany. The theme present in all of the Epiphany readings is: He shows his hidden glory to those he calls. You may notice that in many of the Epiphany season readings appropriation is much easier than application. There is a good reason for that: In Christmas and Epiphany our attention is on getting to know Jesus, who he is and how he works; thus there is not so much emphasis on our response beyond the response of faith, which itself is always seen as his work and not ours.

## Colors & Symbolism

Green

Green is the color of vegetation; therefore it symbolizes life. It represents the new life that Christ gives us in baptism, as well as the spiritual growth we experience during the season as we study the Lord’s ministry.

## Minor Festivals

St. Timothy, Pastor and Confessor (January 24)

Timothy was raised by a Jewish mother who believed in Christ and by a Greek father. We first encounter Timothy in Acts 16, when he meets Paul and joins Paul in his mission work.

## Minor Festivals

Conversion of St. Paul (January 25)

God’s act of bringing Saul, a persecutor of Christians, to faith in Christ (cf. Acts 9) teaches us that faith is given to us by God as a gift.

## Nain Paraments

Epiphany

Superfrontal: The Greek symbol at the center of the superfrontal is the *Chi-Rho*. Chi (X) and Rho (P) 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)..... Next to the *Chi-Rho* are the letters *Alpha* (A) and *Omega* (Ω), the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. These two letters symbolize Jesus Christ, our eternal Lord and Savior, who is the first and the last, the beginning and the end (Revelation 22:13)..... The vines and vegetation branching out from the *Chi-Rho* represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God’s children, the branches (John 15:5)..... The blue wave at the bottom of the symbol represents both Holy Baptism (1 Peter 3:21) and the living water of the Word of Christ (John 7:37-38). The blue wave is intertwined with a vine of thorns, reminded us of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross to pay the price for our sins (John 19:2;30) and that believers are baptized into Christ’s death and resurrection for their forgiveness and eternal salvation (Romans 6:3-4).

Lectern antependium: The circle surrounding the center of the Latin cross (†) symbolizes the eternal nature of Christ and the gift of eternal life to all who believe in him. The Greek letters ΙΧΘΥC (pronounced: *Ichthys*) form both the word for fish and an acronym for the phrase, “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.” A simple drawing of a fish was used in the ancient Church in days of persecution. It symbolized Jesus Christ and also served as a code by which Christians identified themselves to one another as Christ’s followers. It also recalls Holy Baptism and is thus a symbol of Christian regeneration (John 3:5).

Pulpit antependium: The Anchor Cross symbolizes the sure and steadfast hope Christians have in Jesus (Hebrews 6:19). The two fish remind us that Christians are followers of Jesus (see the description above), those who are brought into the ship of God’s church through the efforts of those who proclaim Gospel (cf. “fishers of men” in Matthew 4:19). During Epiphany the Church celebrates the many ways that Christ made himself known as true God to the world. One of these ways was his miracles. The two fish thus also remind us of Jesus miraculously feeding the 5,000 with five loaves of bread and two small fish (Matthew 14:13-21).

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

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

<sup>3</sup> Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year C”. Joel J. Gawrisch, Author.

<sup>4</sup> From *Christian Worship: Psalter* © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Reprinted by permission.

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