



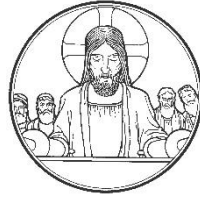
ABOUT THE PROPER

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Third Sunday after Epiphany

January 26, 2025



Epiphany Moments

Rejection Is Not Proof of Failure

When people are disinterested in God's Word, we feel like we've failed. So, here is this week's epiphany. Rejection is not proof of failure. Precisely because the gospel is divine revelation, it is guaranteed to be rejected by many. God's Word offends like an unwelcome diagnosis from the doctor. When someone rejects God's Word (including us), that rejection is proof that God's Word powerfully cuts straight to the heart of mankind's biggest problem—sin. Yet, what causes Jesus' words to hurt is what gives them power to heal. That reality encourages us to receive God's Word with joy and to proclaim it boldly to others.

First Reading³ Isaiah 61:1-6

Isaiah records for broken hearts and imprisoned souls the Voice of Salvation. The Anointed one proclaims healing and freedom – the making of all things right. No longer will there be sin and sorrow, but restoration and righteousness. How these words must have touched the despondent hearts of the faithful in Israel! How these words touch the hearts of those who have seen the Fulfillment! This *is* the Year of the Lord's Favor.

Second Reading³ Acts 4:23-31

The Apostles are blessed to see the fulfillment of prophecy: Messianic Psalm 2 foretells of Herod and Pilate conspiring against the Lord's Anointed. Yet it was the will of the Lord that was carried out for the salvation of many souls. It is the message of this promise fulfilled, revealed to the Apostles, that spurs them on to speak this same message with like boldness: This prophecy is fulfilled!

Gospel³ Luke 4:16-30

All that was promised to Adam and Eve, all that was renewed with the Patriarchs, all that was foretold through Isaiah, all that was passed from generation to generation...is fulfilled. It is no longer a future promise to fainting hearts, blind eyes, and bound souls. It is a promise fulfilled as the Anointed One reveals himself to be the Fulfillment. Let there be no doubt, the Messiah has come. The gracious words of the Anointed One win admiration but not hearts of faith. When confronted by their own unbelief and the inclusion of Gentiles in spiritual Israel, "Joseph's son" is driven from the synagogue to be thrown from the cliff. Yet the Savior of the nations passes through the angry mob to continue his mission and reveal himself in Capernaum.

Psalm of the Day⁴ Psalm 146 A "I Will Praise the LORD All My Life"

The Church sings Psalm 146 in services that encourage trust in the Scriptures because they testify about Jesus. It gives particular attention to God's love for the lowly. Martin Luther said, "Psalm 146 is a psalm of thanks to God for helping in time of need. It teaches us to trust in God and not in princes or other human beings, as people do over and over. God is the only one who can truly help us in our times of need, and only his help can truly be called help. Human help is uncertain and does not last."

Gospel Acclamation Luke 4:18

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor." Early in his ministry, Jesus visited his hometown of Nazareth and went to the synagogue. As he stood up to read, he quoted these words from Isaiah 61:1. After reading, he began his sermon by saying, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing," thus identifying himself as the Messiah prophesied by Isaiah. Jesus fulfilled this prophecy through his ministry of healing and preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you sent your Son to proclaim your kingdom and teach with authority. Anoint us with the power of your Spirit that we too may bring good news to the afflicted, bind up the brokenhearted, and proclaim liberty to the captive; 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 384 “Hail to the Lord’s Anointed” (James Montgomery, 1771-1854)

This hymn is based on Psalm 72, a well-known prophecy of the coming Messiah foretelling the reign of the King and what the Kingdom would be like. As we sing this hymn, we both declare our hope and our longing for the Kingdom of God, and for the coming of the one who will turn darkness to light, and whose “name to us is Love.”

Church Year Season ¹ 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. Titus, Pastor and Confessor (January 26)

Titus heard the Gospel preached by Paul, and God used that experience to bring Titus to faith in Jesus. Titus then became a steadfast worker in the mission field with Paul.

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* (Α) 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 ΙΧΘΥΣ (pronounced: *Ichthus*) 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).

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. Gawrisch, Author.

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