



# ABOUT THE PROPER

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



## Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

February 9, 2025



Epiphany Moments

The Least Qualified Are the First Sent

There is no more important job than sharing the good news of salvation with others. So, you would expect Jesus would only give that job to those most qualified, like the angels. Nope. The least qualified are the first sent. In love, Jesus prepares and equips us to speak on his behalf. How? He draws unworthy sinners into his presence to provide us with the free gift of holiness that we lack. Once cleansed, we jump at the opportunity to be the ones through whom God does the same for others. Here is this week's epiphany moment. Let this be a crucial epiphany moment! You might think you are unqualified to share the gospel with those Christ brings into your sphere of influence. But the least qualified are the first sent.

### First Reading<sup>3</sup>

Isaiah 6:1-8

God called Isaiah to the prophetic office with a grand vision of heaven. This man of unclean lips was called to carry the message of salvation for the Lord. Though sin had separated him from the Lord Almighty, yet the LORD of free and faithful grace took away his guilt and atoned for his sin. With a pure and contrite heart Isaiah boldly answers the Lord's call.

### Second Reading<sup>3</sup>

Romans 10:12-17

The emphasis on this Sunday highlights not only the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word but also the privilege given to sinful human beings called to serve as God's messengers, proclaiming that which has the power to bring people to faith. How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!

### Gospel<sup>3</sup>

Luke 5:1-11

In calling the disciples to be full-time fishers of men, Jesus reveals his power as the Lord's anointed. What a beautiful picture of future fishing for these maturing disciples. For the miracle of this abundant catch of fish would only be surpassed by the fishing for souls to which they were called. What a privilege for us to answer the same call, to lay our hands on the net of the gospel and be fishers of men.

### Psalm of the Day<sup>4</sup>

Psalm 67 A

"Let the Peoples Praise You"

The Church sings Psalm 67 in services that celebrate mission work. There is some speculation that it was used in Old Testament worship just before the benediction. Martin Luther said, "Psalm 67 is a prophecy of Christ. It predicts that he will be the king of the entire world, and that he will rule people correctly, that is, with the gospel. The people will be freed from sin to live for him in righteousness and thank him with joy. Gentiles will give thanks to God, be joyful, and fear him, that is, serve him."

### Gospel Acclamation

Psalm 71:15

"My mouth will tell of your righteous deeds, of your saving acts all day long."

### Prayer of the Day

Gracious Lord, you call and appoint us to proclaim the good news of your Son despite our sins and weaknesses. Purify us by your grace, remove our uncertainties, and work through us to fill the nets of your kingdom with those lost in the darkness of death; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

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 &amp; 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.

## 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: *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).

<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.

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