



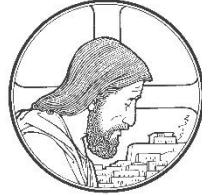
ABOUT THE PROPER

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Second Sunday in Lent

March 16, 2025



“Open Door Policies”
No Detours Allowed

The door to God and the glory he has prepared for us stands wide open. However, he has mapped out a very specific pathway to that door. It is not an easy one. As it did with Jesus, this route takes us through opposition, suffering, and even death. While our human nature may cause us to want to take a detour around these things, Jesus own life shows us that no detour is allowed. His cross came before his crown. The same path lies ahead of us. However, at the end of it, through the open door, we are offered a reward far superior to anything the world can offer.

First Reading³ Jeremiah 26:8-15

Jeremiah was rejected because he did not tell the people what they wanted to hear. Though threatened with death, he was resolute in his mission and faithfully proclaimed the Word of the Lord. Notice the invitation to repentance and mercy by the Lord of free and faithful grace that follows Jeremiah’s wake-up call. But it was a call that fell on many deaf ears. This section of Jeremiah ends with the murder of godly men.

Second Reading³ Philippians 3:17 – 4:1

Paul contrasts the journey through life of those who are enemies of the cross of Christ and those who embrace it. Be it our journey through Lent, or our journey from grace to glory, our focus remains on the message of the cross. It is only in Jesus that we can find strength to be resolute on our journey to follow him.

Gospel³ Luke 13:31-35

Prophets had been murdered for centuries by the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Yet Jesus was resolute in his mission. He would not be intimidated by Pharisaical lies or enemies of the cross. He would press on toward his goal to redeem humankind from the violence of sin, gathering the elect beneath his eternal wings.

Psalm of the Day⁴ Psalm 42 C “Why Does Such Grief Weigh Down My Soul”

The Church sings Psalm 42 in services that recognize the reality of forces hindering the preaching of the gospel, whether those are natural storms or human opposition. This psalm begins Book II of the Psalter, where the Hebrew word for God (Elohim) is more common than the Hebrew word for LORD (Yahweh). Psalms 42 and 43 are a pair. Martin Luther said, “Psalm 42 is a prayer psalm. The writer laments the sorrow of his heart. It seems that God is angry with him and has afflicted him. He wants to go to God’s house and hear God’s Word, which comforts him. God makes his presence known through his Word in his house, and there he reveals his grace.”

Gospel Acclamation Philippians 2:8b

“Being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross.” In his complete submission to his Father’s will, Jesus became obedient to death on a cross – a degrading instrument of execution normally reserved for someone cursed. This act of love displayed his humanity (as he was under the law of God), and his righteousness (since he obeyed God perfectly in thought, word, and action). Jesus did not display his glory while on this earth, instead, he became our humble substitute and died to save us. But with his descent into hell and his glorious resurrection, came Jesus’ exaltation. His Father has exalted him above all things, and he is King of all.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you see that we have no power to defend ourselves. Guard and keep us both outwardly and inwardly from all adversities that may happen to the body and all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; 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

 817 “Lord, You I Love with All My Heart” (Martin M. Schalling, 1532-1608)

God in his bountiful goodness gave us body, soul and all we have (v2), also redeemed us with the sacrifice of everything he had (v1). Since we are his, we ask that he lead us to glorify him in everything we do, even if it means bearing our crosses (v2), until he guides us safely to heaven.

Church Year Season²

 Lent

The season of Lent leads the Church on a forty-day journey of repentance and prayer, of remembrance and renewal of our baptism. God calls to mankind: Return to the Lord! The journey begins with Ash Wednesday’s warning of mortality and culminates at the Service of Holy Baptism in the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday.

The Church’s Lenten worship is muted and quiet. For centuries, the Church has omitted her most jubilant songs of praise during this season of repentance (e.g. the “Gloria in Excelsis,” and the use of the word “Alleluia”) to reflect the somber nature of the season. Note, however, that the Sundays are designated as Sunday in Lent, not Sundays of Lent. The Sundays themselves are not considered part of the forty days, but are islands of refreshment in our Lenten walk.

Colors & Symbolism

 Lent: Purple or Violet

These colors are a sign of royalty, self-discipline, sorrow and repentance. Purple also reminds us of sacrifice, not only because that colored clothing was very expensive (sacrifice of money), but also because in order to make purple clothing in ancient times, one had to dye the cloth in the blood of snails (sacrifice of life). Thus purple is a fitting color for the penitential season of Lent, during which we focus more intentionally on our sinfulness, and how our King and Savior, Jesus Christ suffered in our place and sacrificed himself on the cross to take away our sins.

Minor Festivals

 St. Joseph, Guardian of Our Lord (March 19)

The few references in the first two chapters of St. Matthew’s and St. Luke’s Gospels provide the only information that we have about Joseph, the husband of Mary. He is described as a pious man of Davidic descent. God raised up Joseph to be the faithful guardian of his incarnate Son, Jesus. We pray that God gives us the same uprightness of life and obedience to his commands.

Nain Paraments

 Lent

Superfrontal: The lamb at the center of the parament represents Jesus, the Lamb of God who was sacrificed to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29; 3:16-17). The nimbus (halo) around its head reminds us that Jesus was a perfect sacrifice, even greater than the unblemished lambs required of the Passover meal (Exodus 12:5).

The palm branches remind us of Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem on the Sunday before he died (John 12:13). Palm branches were used in celebration of victory. Jesus entered Jerusalem to conquer sin, death, and the devil. Our crucified and risen Lord assures us in his Word that his victory is ours by faith (1 Corinthians 15:57).

[The significance of the crosses on the far left and right of the superfrontal are explained below]

Lectern & Pulpit antependia: The cross formed by four nails represents Jesus’ death by which he was nailed to the cross (Luke 23:33; John 20:25,27). The white sash around the arms of the cross symbolizes Jesus’ righteousness and his perfect victory over our enemies through his resurrection (Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23;54-57).

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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