

Life, no one will come to salvation except through Him. The world complains that this is too restrictive. We are keeping people out of Heaven. Jesus makes it clear that not everyone will be Saved. The entrance to Heaven is through faith in Jesus. There are many who will not go through the narrow door. Still, a large number will come. They will come from the four corners of the Earth, not simply made up of the "chosen people" but made up of those elected by God to receive faith in Jesus. They will feast with Christ. Having been fed on the Word they will continue to be kept by Him to eternity.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

¶ O God of mercy, You canceled our debt of sin and credited us with the pure righteousness of Your only-begotten Son. Raise us up each day as Your people and establish in us Your will that we are able to do Your Good works. In this way we will do what is pleasing in Your sight, not from our will but from Your pure and Holy will.

By Your Holy Spirit work in us a true and living faith in You and in Your Son Whom You sent. In Your goodness and mercy we are seen by You, not having a righteousness which comes from any of our own work, since we know that even if we could fulfill one of Your laws we would do it wrong, but which comes from the Righteousness of Jesus.

Work in us such a spirit of obedience to the example of our Lord Jesus Christ that we are able to keep our words pure, our actions upright and our thoughts seeking Your peace. As we go through our life, help us do it with an ever stronger commitment and "turning over" of our will to You and Your higher purpose for us and all of creation.

Make our homes a sanctuary of Your presence and in that sanctuary, let Jesus Christ reign as sovereign supreme. Strengthen all parents, that they will be an excellent example, encouraging their children and youth in the practice of virtue, and service to You and to each other.

Pour out Your mercy on all who are in any trial or adversity, especially those who suffer for the sake of Jesus. Save them by Your mighty power. Bless our government and all useful commerce and industry. Help all people see that whatever they do, they are accountable to You.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (**Time of silent prayer.**)

For the sake and in the name of Jesus Christ, keep us on His Way, forgive our sins and keep us clean.

© Amen.

PROPER SIXTEEN

Chant Tone



Introit

Splendor and majesty are before Him;*

We will bless the Lord from this time forth and forevermore. | Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord, all nations!*

Extol him, all peoples!
For great is His steadfast love toward us,*
and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. | Praise the Lord!

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy — Spirit;
as it was in the be — ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. — Amen.

Splendor and majesty are before Him;*

We will bless the Lord from this time forth and forevermore. | Praise the Lord!

(Antiphon, Psalm 96:6a; 115:18;
Psalm 117)

Collect of the Day

O Lord, You have called us to enter Your kingdom through the narrow door. Guide us by Your Word and Spirit, and lead us now and always into the feast of Your Son, Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

Oh, fear the Lord, | you His saints,*
for those who fear Him | have no lack!
Many are the afflictions of the — righteous,*
but the Lord delivers him out | of them all.

(Psalm 34:9, 19 alternative)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: Praise and honor are due to You, our dear heavenly Father. You have brought us through many trials to this present hour. Your power and might have been with us constantly. Through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, You have heard our cries for help and answered our prayers. For Your constant care and watchfulness on our behalf, accept our praise and adoration. Through the power of Your Holy Spirit, help us believe that You alone have the Words of eternal life. Forgive all the sin and short coming of our life for the sake of Jesus, that our worship as we give it to You is pure and Holy in Your sight. This we pray in His name. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

I WAS DRIVING AN UNFAMILIAR VEHICLE WHEN THE LOW FUEL WARNING LIGHT CAME ON. I didn't know how many miles I could drive, but I was watching the exit for Shasta Lake in the rear view mirror. I started wondering if that was my last chance for fuel and if perhaps I should take the first exit and go back. We are the last people who have heard the Word of God. In terms of eternal life, however, we are in the position of being the first who will greet Christ in His return. All who have passed previous to us are the first to enjoying the wonder of life in the presence of God. (Though we still have the last event of physical resurrection to come.) We thank everyone, from first to last, who have come out, called by God to come and worship today. It is a pleasure as we blend our voices in the worship of our God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Who actively works for our good in all situations and settings.

THEME OF THE DAY:

The Narrow Way

INTROIT—(Antiphon, Psalm 96:6a, 115:18;) Psalm 117

In 1968, Psalm 117 became the Introit for today. We (LCMS) added an Antiphon from a piece of Psalms 96 and 115. In 2006, all of the Propers were changed. We (and the Roman Catholics) did not make the change. Psalm 117, (in two verses,) tells us that the saved are from all nations. The saved receive the Love of God in an identical manner. For this reason we praise God. ("Hallelujah" is translated as "Praise the Lord.")

COLLECT

This prayer was written new for our 2006 revision to the Propers. It far and away matches the theme of the day. Believing in Jesus is the only way through which we will be allowed to enter the feast of Heaven.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Isaiah 66:18-23

Isaiah was a prophet during the time when the Northern tribes were taken into captivity. He proclaimed the same thing would happen to Jerusalem. Isaiah, more than any other prophet, spoke an evangelism message to the people of the world. In this last chapter of his prophecy, Isaiah said that all people would be brought to the Holy Mountain. God will present Himself to His elect. Isaiah made mention of the new heavens and the new Earth without really spelling out what he meant. The New Testament Church is the Holy Mountain. It is the new Heaven and the new Earth.

GRADUAL—Psalm 34:9, 19 alternative

Psalm 34 was written when David stopped doubting the Sovereign nature of God. David remembered to depend on God for deliverance.

EPISTLE LESSON—Hebrews 12:4-29

This continues the theme begun in Isaiah. The Holy Mountain in Jerusalem is no longer the place of God. We no longer find God by going to the Holy Land to touch the Mountain. Nor do we look to the Mountain where Moses received the Ten Commandments, or the Mountain where Jesus was Transfigured. Instead we come to the heavenly Jerusalem, where our names are written in the Book of Life (which is a name for Jesus. He is the Book of Life, because being written in Him is Life Eternal.) All believers of the world are gathered as the firstborn of God. The New Testament Church is the full expression of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. There is only One Church, there is only One faith, and the One Church/One faith is mediated in the blood of Jesus.

GOSPEL LESSON—Luke 13:22-30

"Will those who are saved be few." The door to Heaven is not forbidden to anyone, it is simply a narrow way. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the