



Introit

Having received Absolution the congregation moves from the time of preparation to that part of the worship known as the “*Service of the Word.*” We begin the Service of the Word with an Introit (or a Psalm or Hymn).

Introit means “entrance” or “beginning.” As Christians moved from a persecuted minority to the official majority they also moved from having worship in someone’s home to larger basilicas. This in turn afforded the opportunity to adorn the service with liturgical details that would not have been possible in a cramped home church.

In the fifth century, Pope Celestine I (d. 432) decreed that an entire psalm should be sung antiphonally by a double choir as the clergy processed from the sacristy to the altar. His intent was to add solemnity to the entrance of the clergy and to establish the “theme” for the particular service. In a very real sense, the Introit was liturgical movement music.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Introit.

Behold, God is mine Helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.

He shall reward evil unto mine enemies: cut them off in Thy truth, O Lord.

Ps. Save me, O God, by Thy Name: and judge me by Thy strength.

Glory be to the Father, &c.

Today, the Introit is a little different. As stated, it comes after the Absolution to begin the service of the Word rather than beginning the Divine Service. The Introit is part of the “proprs” of the day, which means it changes from Sunday to Sunday.

The Introit is not a whole Psalm but a portion that contains the insertion of a repeated verse called an “antiphon”. The antiphon helps to set the theme for the day. We use the antiphon, it’s the first words spoken by the pastor, but we don’t repeat it.

An Introit (Psalm or Hymn) is appropriate after Absolution. Having been forgiven, it is natural to sing to the Lord as we come into His presence with Thanksgiving. The pastor shows this visually by “entering” into the Chancel during this part of the Liturgy. Prior to this point of the service, he would have been outside of the communion rails or three steps from the Chancel/Altar.

Now, his “entering” is the Christian version of the Holy of Holies. A Psalm or Introit is often used because the book of Psalms has been the prayer and hymn book of the church since Old Testament times, and it



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is a way in which the saints of all ages are joined together in worshipping the One True God. The Gloria Patri ends the Introit to proclaim to all that we are addressing the Holy Triune God!

Peace be with you all,

Pastor Jeff Patterson ✝