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Parish Preaching

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Parish Preaching

Only with difficulty can the propers of some summer Sundays after Trinity be made to demonstrate a certain thematic unity. And not every issue of a theological monthly should be expected to develop a common subject or a general theme. But volume III of the Reverend Fred H. Lindemann's work, *The Sermon and the Propers*, reviewed in this issue, gently urges that since "our Liturgy offers a set of Propers for each Sunday, we ought to make the best of what we have" (p. 47). Comment on this issue of the MONTHLY should attempt to do no less.

Those readers whose weekly privileges include the opportunity to prepare sermons and fit them into Sunday's worship might begin with Prof. Harry G. Coiner's review of the four volumes that were Pastor Fred Lindemann's final service to the church. Theoretically in the summer the parish pressure declines, making possible the planning of a pulpit program for the months ahead. Better than a hazy resolution would be the quick decision to order these four volumes. They will provide help for a new year's preaching not only by giving insights into the meaning of the year's Sundays but also by insisting on the place of preaching in the Sunday's worship. Once the accent of these volumes is understood and adopted by a total parish, every worshiping hearer becomes an assistant to the preacher.

"The preacher's own mental store may be meager, but when faith is added on the part of the hearer, the treasures of God's grace and truth are actually bestowed. As a person he may be less than inspiring. Yet as a proclaimer of the mystery 'hid for ages' he has every resource to be dynamic, stimulating, challenging, comforting, uplifting. In the worship of the Church as well as in its ethics the essential New Testament confession must prevail: 'Jesus is Lord.'" (Ernest B. Koenker, *Worship in Word and Sacrament*, pp. 46, 47.) Follow this thought with a reading of Dr. Martin Franzmann's

article "The Word of the Lord Grew." The life of the early church was "wholly dominated by the Lord Jesus Christ." The church today must look to the same source for its life and the total accent in its preaching.

Then a practical note about vestments — if the church is cold and the preacher's health is less than robust, what kind of documented headgear can a clergyman of the Augsburg Confession don? Dr. Arthur Carl Piepkorn's specific prescriptions are laid out, neatly bounded by definitions of *adiaphora*, symbolism, and esthetic effect.

GEORGE W. HOYER