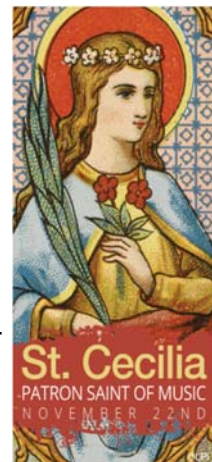




## It's [Not] Greek To Me!

We have covered the Entrance Antiphon (relatively) extensively, and we now come to the Introductory and Penitential Rites. If you want to review, be sure to check out the bulletin archive via the LPI website, or send me an email/stop by the choir loft. Both the Introductory and Penitential Rites are part of the Ordinary of the Mass - meaning they are always the same from Mass to Mass. This is where we are greeted by the priest and call to mind our sins. Both of these Rites can be sung (and depending on the degree of solemnity - they are). You are likely more familiar with singing the Penitential Rite. We are currently speaking the Confiteor (I Confess...) and then singing the Kyrie Eleison (Lord, Have Mercy). Fun fact: The Kyrie is the only Greek found in the entire Mass!

When I was growing up, I always thought that the melodies for both of these Rites were made up by the priest on the spot. In actuality, the Church provides us with music for them, just as it does with the Entrance Antiphon. The Introductory Rites have a specific chant tone (melody) assigned to them, although the priest has three different text options to choose from. The Penitential Rite has three different forms and they, too, have musical settings provided by the Church. The exception to this is the Confiteor itself, which is almost always spoken (although it is sung at Pontifical Masses in the Extraordinary Form). In the case of the Kyrie, the Church has a number of musical options to select from. We are currently using Kyrie XVI. The Kyrie has also been set to different music by composers throughout the history of the Church. In fact, a search of just one public domain archive of music gave me 2,180 different versions - and that was just the Greek text from one site! We could talk about why there are so many musical settings of the Kyrie for a LONG time, but the one sentence explanation is that the Kyrie, specifically, is generally regarded as the first “big ticket” musical part of the Ordinary, and thus, composers generally start there. Some of these are more suited to liturgical use (think the setting we use, or the Haydn Mass in G), and some are very clearly designed for entertainment purposes (Think of the Mozart Mass in C minor). Next week is Laetare Sunday, so we will have a slight aside for it. Then it is onward to the Gloria!



St. Cecilia, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity...Pray for us!

--Mark Wozniczka, Music Director (mwozniczka@archchicago.org)