



There are Alleluias in the Air!

Today is Divine Mercy Sunday, the final day of the Octave of Easter. If you came to daily Mass this week, you heard a Gloria each day. Additionally, there were no observances of “saint” days as the celebration of Easter overrode all of those (apologies to St. Vincent Ferrer and St. John Baptiste De LaSalle). You may have also noticed a return of the sequence. The sequence used to be mandatory during the Octave of Easter, but since Vatican II, it has become optional. As in centuries past however, the sequence for Easter may be carried over to every Sunday of Easter. We can even change the Psalm to an additional Alleluia. I know that is a lot of Alleluias, but the Lord is Risen and we should be rejoicing!

Next up in our examination of the Mass is the Gospel Acclamation. It starts after a period of silence (again, to give everyone a chance to reflect on the Second Reading) and consists of an Alleluia and a verse of scripture linked to the forthcoming Gospel. Recall that in years past, the sequence of the day would have been placed here, but no longer is. It is also interesting to note that the Alleluia is varied according to degree of solemnity (recall our discussion of the degrees of solemnity from several weeks ago). On “normal” days there are only two Alleluias, and there are three for more solemn days. That is why at daily Mass you only hear “Alleluia, Alleluia” whereas on Sundays (and other solemnities and feasts) you hear the triple version.

I hope by this point you are starting to see that every single aspect of the Mass, from the macro form down to how/why/when we say certain words, is intentional and deeply symbolic. It can certainly be overwhelming to try analyzing everything, but be assured that the Church is not like a parent telling their kid to do something “because I say so”, but rather, everything she bids us do has a very specific reasoning behind it.

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

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

