

Gospel Acclamation

The Gospel Acclamation prepares us for the reading of the Gospel. It is a liturgical rite unto itself, as written in the General Instruction on the Roman Missal (G.I.R.M 62)

Alleluia is a word from the Hebrew tradition. This sacred word is translated to mean “praise the Lord.” It is an ancient Hebrew chant that would have been used in the Book of Psalms. It dates to the Church of Jerusalem and the Apostles. Not only was it used in Jewish liturgy, but it is also used in the New Testament Book of Revelation, Chapter 19, as St. John described “hearing the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying, “Hallelujah!” The Alleluia that we sing is a union of the earthly Church with the Church in heaven that sings this eternal song, “Praise the Lord”, Hallelujah.

The Alleluia chant is also accompanied by a verse of scripture, sung by the cantor or the choir, that is tied thematically to the Gospel to prepare us for what is about to be read.

Did you know? The Church doesn’t sing *Alleluia* during Lent. This emphasizes the penitential nature of the liturgical season and we are more reserved. We hold back our hymns of praise until we get to the celebration of the resurrection during Easter, at which time our cries of Alleluia explode forth in glorious praise!

Helpful practice: As you sing the Gospel Acclamation this week, imagine your voice joining with the Church on earth and the Church in heaven as you sing these ancient words. Allow it to help you focus deeper on the gospel.

Doreen Bondy, Associate Music Director/ Liturgy Commission Member

Gospel

The Gospel is the high point of the Liturgy of the Word. Christ is present and speaking to us. The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) consist of God's own words about Christ's life. We show reverence for those words by standing as we listen and reflect on the life of Jesus and how it affects our personal lives.

Following the Gospel Acclamation, the Deacon or Priest takes the Book of Gospels from the altar and processes to the Ambo where the Gospel is proclaimed.

Next, the Deacon announces the Gospel. Then everyone traces the sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart. According to tradition this gesture symbolizes writing Jesus's words on our mind, lip and heart.

After the proclamation, the Deacon says, “The Gospel of the Lord” and the people respond “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.”

The word Gospel comes from a Greek word evangelion, which means “**good news**” or “**preach the good news.**” The preaching of the good news began with Jesus himself. Through the scriptures we hear that Jesus went to the synagogue in Nazareth on the Sabbath and took the book of Isaiah and proclaimed the scripture to those present. (Luke 4:16) Thus the Gospel is a fulfillment of the scripture.

Eventually Jesus commands the apostles to “preach the gospel to the ends of creation.”

How can we preach the good news? Reflect on what Jesus is teaching us in the Gospels. Then not only read His words, but show by our actions that we understand what Jesus is asking us to do for others.

Veronica Kennealy, Liturgy Commission Member