

Mass Parts 12/52: ***Responses to the Readings***



It is not simply a passive action to sit and listen to the readings. Our full attention is given to the spoken word. Our responses after listening, then, should reflect our assent, and the fact that we actually heard the message. After the First and Second Readings, the lector states: “The Word of the Lord.” This is not just any reading from any book. The Bible is truly the written Word of God. At the end of the readings, the lector does not say, “So say I,” or “according to some random guy.” What is proclaimed is “the Word of the Lord.” Our response is then: “Thanks be to God.” In grateful thanks we have received the Word. For centuries, humanity has been trying to appease the gods, to understand what they want. In the revelation to the People of Israel, we finally have the beginnings of the true revelation of the message of God. In answer to this, we say “thank you.”

The four Gospels have a special place within the Scriptures. They contain in a unique way, the words spoken by our Lord and Savior. The Gospel of Mark begins with the words: “The beginning of the *gospel* of Jesus Christ the Son of God.” The word “gospel,” or *evangelion*, can be translated better in English as “the Good News.” The whole of Jesus’ message of eternal life, mercy, peace, love, and forgiveness is the Good News. At the end of each Gospel proclamation, then, the deacon or priest says “The Gospel of the Lord.” Our response to this is not just “I agree.” With great joy we reply “Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.” Our response to the Good News is our life of praise, our joy, our song.

-Fr. Kopp

Next Week: Silence after the Readings