

Our Easter Joy

“Alleluia, he is risen, Alleluia! Alleluia!”

My parish community is blessed to have a fabulous music ministry. One of the highlights of our Easter Vigil is the moment the cantor and choir sing the “Alleluia” before the proclamation of the Gospel. The lights of the sanctuary are brightened, and our song is full, energized, and glorious. With the angels in heaven, we stand at God’s throne and give thanks and praise: “Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!”

During the season of Lent, we have fasted from this powerful word. The Church removes “alleluia” from our liturgies to remind us that we must be on a constant journey of transformation if we are to truly praise God and live in his Kingdom. Lent has reminded us that the Kingdom of God is, as theologians say, “already and not yet.” It is already here, because Jesus Christ lived, taught, suffered, died, rose, and sent us his Spirit, establishing the Kingdom on

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earth. It is not yet because the world remains caught in webs of sin and deceit, and there are still places that have not heard the Good News. When we fast from singing with the angels in Lent, we remember our sinfulness, repent, and resolve to carry his message more fully. By letting go of this word, we hear it in fresh, new ways as we celebrate Christ’s Resurrection and rededicate ourselves as “alleluia” people.

One of the wonderful practices of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is that of “burying the alleluia.” The children in this faith formation program write the word “alleluia” and decorate it. They then place their artwork in a box, which is either literally buried in the ground or symbolically buried in a closet or another out-of-sight location. At Easter, the tomb is



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opened, and the “alleluia” is sung once again. This is a wonderful practice for families as well.

In this season, we can sing “alleluia” for our table grace. Consider using the setting from Mass to tie the faith and fellowship of our family dinner table to that of our parish community. When we’re in the Sunday assembly, we can be the people who sing with the enthusiasm, confidence, and gusto this prayer deserves.

And always, let us reflect not only on how we can put the “alleluia” on our lips but in our lives.