

Understanding the Newly Revised Mass Texts Article 1 – Introductory Rite

The new English translation of the Roman Missal is to be implemented on the first day of Advent, November 27, 2011. We will pray the same prayers but with slight alterations in wording. Basically, if you are of the vintage of those who remember Mass in Latin, these English words will follow more closely those Latin texts. We are not returning to Latin, English is here to stay! However, this new translation into English has the power to enrich and give deeper meanings to our Mass. The words will probably sound more formal, but, this translation, closer to the Latin, will match the responses and prayers that already exist in other major languages, including Spanish, French, Italian and German.

The Mass remains the same though! It still consists of the following parts: Introductory Rite, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Concluding Rite. This bulletin insert is the first in a series that will explore the parts of the mass, the changes, the meaning and most importantly, how we can participate together in mass more fully as a community of God's own people.

How we can participate together in mass more fully as a community of God's own people?

Introductory Rite

Our gathering for mass begins much before the opening song and procession! It begins with all of the alarm clocks that go off in our community, our personal journey and preparations to get here, it begins with the first person to turn the lights on in the church and unlock the doors. Some of us have time to read through the readings of the day, others are working hard to ready children, families for attending mass, while others are deep in preparations of our liturgical ministries. How prepared do you feel when you finally arrive in church? Are you collapsing in the seat, centered in prayer, or busy welcoming others? I think that we all experience bits of these scenarios in our lives!

So as the opening Song begins, and we stand, we are coming from all

Soon you will answer, "And with your spirit."

walks of life and experiences, to become united in prayer – God's people gathered for worship. The priest says the words for the Sign of the Cross and we answer, "Amen". There is no change there. Next the priest may choose from three options to greet the people. Most often we hear, "The Lord be with you." Our response will be new, "And with your spirit." This follows more closely the Latin, "*Et cum spiritu tuo.*" The purpose of the priest's greeting is much more than just saying hello! He is not only greeting us but he is also reminding us that we are entering a sacrament with responsibilities during this time of prayer.

Both the greeting and the reply come from the Bible. "The Lord be with you" appears as a greeting or encouragement in Judges 6:12, Ruth 2:4, 2 Chronicles 12:2 and Luke 1:28. "And with your spirit" comes from passages that conclude four of the New Testament Epistles: 2 Timothy 4:22, Galatians 6:18, Philippians 4:23, and Philemon 25. Paul is usually addressing whole communities in these cases. Basically the two parts to this greeting demonstrate the desire that the Lord be present to the spirit of the entire community. Here we take up our roles, together with the priest, to praise God.

The revised translation roots us more deeply in the scriptures.

Penitential Act

Here in the beginning of mass, we ask for God's mercy and forgiveness.

There are three options for the Penitential Act. Our community most often uses a spoken option with in English, responding after various invocations - "Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy" or sung options in Greek, "Kyrie, eleison", "Christe, eleison," and "Kyrie, eleison." This will remain the same, which means that during Lent and Advent, we are still able to use our favorite sung version, from *Mass of Remembrance*!

Reflecting on how tense a time with another may be when we have unresolved issues ...

Remember Matthew 5:23-24

“So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go: first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.”

At times, we also use the prayer known as the Confiteor, beginning with, “I confess to almighty God.” This prayer changes in the new translation and it will be:

Confiteor

I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have **greatly** sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done
and in what I have failed to do,
through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sister,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

The third option, which we also use here, has gone through a complete retranslation. Here is the new version:

PRIEST: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

PEOPLE: **For we have sinned against you.**

PRIEST: **Show us, O Lord, your mercy.**

PEOPLE: And grant us your salvation.

In these translations, we humbly collect ourselves before stepping any further into prayer. One can take a step back and reflect on the Penitential Rite: We are a community linked through God, our work and our friendships. Have you been the recipient of another’s goodness and forgiveness and how might that have changed you? Have you thought about these Penitential options and ever thought about which version you prefer? How do you apologize to another?

At the conclusion of the Penitential Rite, the priest proclaims an absolution (not the same as the sacrament of Penance...) and the text of this has not changed, “May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.” We respond, “Amen”.

This Penitential Rite may be replaced with a blessing or a sprinkling of water. Those texts have been revised. We will have new music to go with the new antiphons for singing during sprinkling.

The Collect

The Collect – from Latin, meaning to bring our minds and hearts together, focused on our prayers and on our preparation for hearing the Word of God and the Eucharist, which we will share.

This is the prayer that the priest says before we sit down, concluding the Introductory Rite.

These prayers have been completely retranslated and will sound different to our ears. The new translation should make the role of the Persons of the Trinity more precise. We will continue to respond, “Amen” at the conclusion of these prayers, signaling our affirmation in our belief in God and the unity of the prayers of everyone present.

