

The Liturgy Corner - by Tom Lella

A series of discussions regarding the New Translation of the Roman Missal which we will begin using on November 27, 2011.

A New Translation of the Roman Missal - September 11, 2011

The way Catholics celebrate the Eucharist follows a standard form. We call this the Order of Mass. It is comprised of four main parts: The Introductory Rites, the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the Concluding Rites. Our worship is one great dialogue, namely, that God speaks to us and we speak to God. This is reflected in the many prayers and responses spoken by the priest and the people. Our prayers are not spontaneous, but have been given to us from many sources through the generations. They are collected together in the Sacramentary or Roman Missal. Each prayer text conveys aspects of the great mystery of faith that we celebrate.

In 2000, Blessed John Paul II issued a 3rd Edition of the Roman Missal based on the renewal of the sacred liturgy called for by the bishops during the Second Vatican Council. Originally produced in Latin, the texts have been translated into English using a careful method to preserve, as much as possible, the full meaning of the text. On the first Sunday of Advent 2011, we will begin to use this new translation of the Roman Missal.

What is the Roman Missal? Why a new Translation? - September 18, 2011

When Catholics gather to celebrate the Eucharist, we pray together through fixed or standard prayers. These are contained in the Roman Missal. It is the large, red book that is brought to the priest when he stands at the chair. It is also placed on the altar during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Roman Missal contains the Order of Mass, or the way we celebrate Eucharist, with all its accompanying prayer texts and responses.

During the Jubilee Year 2000, Blessed John Paul II issued a third edition of the Roman Missal that was first issued by Pope Paul VI. Presented to the Church in Latin, it is being translated into many different languages for use around the world. The method employed for translating the Roman Missal has changed since the first and second editions were translated. In 2002, the Holy See requested that the translation mirror the original Latin text as closely as possible. As a result, many of the newly translated responses in the English language will be slightly different from the ones we know by heart. The English translation for use in the United States will be implemented on the First Sunday of Advent 2011. In October, we will begin to introduce the sung acclamations that we will be using at St. Michael and Resurrection Parishes. Our musicians are now learning the new Mass setting and will be eager to share it with you in a few weeks.

September 25, 2011

Parishes throughout the English-speaking world will begin to use the new translation of the Roman Missal on the weekend of November 27. As we approach this date we will continue to learn more about the new translation. You will notice many changes in the words that the presider (priest) uses when he celebrates Mass. There are also a few changes to the words that the assembly will use when they respond, also referred to as the "people's parts." And as we said last week, we will also introduce a new musical setting for the Gloria, Holy Holy, Mystery of Faith, Amen and Lamb of God.

Until the early 1960s, Mass was celebrated in Latin throughout the world. At the Second Vatican Council it was agreed that the Mass could be celebrated in our own language, and in 1970 Pope Paul VI approved the official Latin text that would be used. This was then translated into different languages to be used throughout the world. It proved to be a huge task which was completed in a very short time. However, because it was done so quickly, some of the richness of the original Latin prayers was, quite literally, 'lost in translation'. It was agreed that a further translation was necessary. The new translation would keep the original words, meaning and style of the Latin as far as possible.

As we use the new translation we might also notice more biblical connections than we have been used to. The texts of the Mass are precious to us, partly because they were inspired by the bible. These words have come down to us over the centuries, and many of the words we speak at Mass are rooted in the bible. When we gather for liturgy, we are praying with words that have been given to us by our ancestors, who knew the bible well and prayed it well. The revised translation tries to make the connections between the bible and the liturgy a bit more clear than they are at present.

It will take some time to get used to these changes – but we are all in this together. Please pray that we will all make the most out of this opportunity to continue to grow as a faith community. We will practice some of these changes before Mass in the coming weeks, they may be discussed during the homily and we'll make available other resources to help each other along the way.

Coming next week: And with your spirit.

October 2, 2011

The Second Vatican Council reminded us of our ancient faith: Christ is always present in his church, especially in its liturgical celebrations. So, each time we come to Mass we experience the presence of Christ in four different ways:

1. Christ is present in the congregation – the people gathered together;
2. Christ is present in the person of the priest;
3. Christ is present in the Scriptures that we listen to during Mass;
4. Christ is present in the bread and wine when it becomes Christ's Body and Blood.

The more we are able to understand and participate in the Mass, the more we will come to appreciate and love it. The new translation will help us to do that because the words we will now use will say more clearly what our faith is teaching us.

One of the first things we will notice with the new translation will be in the response we make several times in the liturgy. When the priest says *The Lord be with you*, we will now say *And with your spirit* instead of *And also with you*. When the Mass first changed from Latin to English in the mid 1960s, for a while *And with your spirit* was the wording of our response. When the final version of the prayers we were to use at Mass (contained in the Sacramentary) came out in 1974, the official English version became our current *And also with you*. (Incidentally, English was one of only two languages that did not translate it as your spirit.) The wording *And with your spirit* more directly translates the original Latin *Et cum spiritu tuo*, but also brings out that the Holy Spirit is at work in both priest and people as we gather to celebrate Eucharist. This expression recurs in various combinations throughout St. Paul's letters to the early Christian communities (recall our discussion last week on the biblical connections). For example, at the end of his Second Letter to Timothy, Paul ends by saying, "The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you."

If you think about it, for nearly 2000 years Christians have been greeting each other, The Lord be with you, and with your spirit. So the new translation will bring unity to this response in all the languages of the world--and with all previous Christian generations.

Next weekend we will begin to learn our new Mass setting. Before the liturgy begins, we will hear and sing together the Holy Holy, which is our sung acclamation to the preface of the Eucharistic Prayer. We will dwell on the words to this “song of the angels” next week so we can all better understand the meaning of the simple change that occurs in this song: God of power and might will now be God of hosts.

October 9, 2011

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Today we have begun to learn the *Holy, Holy* from our new Mass setting—a new song really. It is our sung acclamation to the preface of the Eucharistic Prayer. Let’s dwell on the words to this “song of the angels” for a bit so we can better understand the meaning of the simple—but rich—change that occurs in this song: *God of power and might* will now be *God of hosts*.

The prayer has been in our liturgy since the mid-fifth century, having its roots in the synagogue morning office of the second century and the Eucharistic Prayer of the east through the influence of Jewish-Christians.

This prayer-text comes to our liturgy from Isaiah (6.1- 3), where the prophet reports his vision of “the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.” Above the Lord, he saw the seraphim—literally “burning ones.” This unique title for these angels suggests that they are so close to God that they reflect his radiance. This “host” of angels stands in awe before God—yet cover their faces—daring not to behold the full glory of God. They call to one another from beneath their covered faces:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of his glory. (Is. 6.3)

The icon helps illustrate the seraphim angel, but just imagine a host of these angels standing above the throne of our God, reflecting his radiance, praising him with so much vigor that those words cause the foundations of the Temple to shake and the room to fill with smoke. (You can get a small earthly glimpse of this when standing in the Great Hall at St. John’s University in Collegeville, what once was the main abbey church. Dominating the wall behind where the altar once was is this scene of 12 seraphic angels, faces covered, reflecting God’s radiance.)

When we sing this prayer at each liturgy, recalling this image might help us with the word host. God is not just God of *power and might*, but God of *many*, God of *hosts*, God of *all*.

October 16, 2011

Today before we began the liturgy, we practiced singing our new sung acclamation to the preface of the Eucharistic Prayer. We also learned our sung response to the presider’s words in the midst of this prayer:

“The Mystery of Faith.”

For Catholics, a 'mystery' is not a puzzle that cannot be solved. It is a truth that is so deep that we know we'll never be able to get to the bottom of it; a truth we'll never completely be able to understand. One example of this is our belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. We believe that Christ is truly present but we can't wholly explain it. The priest shows us the host and then the chalice. Then he genuflects and says “The mystery of faith.” The assembly then proclaims its response: “When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.” When the priest says “The mystery of faith” he is inviting us to welcome this Real Presence of Christ. We then make our response to God. Our parishes will begin using the new acclamations at Mass sometime in November.

We began our discussion about the Roman Missal several weeks ago looking to the questions: What is the Roman Missal and Why a new Translation. It might be good to look again to these questions and what will happen in about six weeks.

On the weekend of November 26-27, the First Sunday of Advent, the English-speaking churches throughout the United States will begin using a new translation of the Mass, contained in what is called the Roman Missal. The Roman Missal is the altar book from which the priest prays during the liturgy. The prayers of the people, reprinted for us in our hymnals and worship aids, are also contained in the book. What kind of change is this?

It is a change in the way we pray when we gather for liturgy. It involves some differences in both the prayers spoken by the priest and the prayers spoken by the people. The new edition of the Roman Missal, published in the year 2000 under the directives of Pope John Paul II contains these changes, but the English translation was only finally approved earlier this year. In preparation for its introduction on the First Sunday of Advent, priests and parish leaders have been attending workshops over the course of the last year.

We are sure that the question that is in many of your minds as you read this is, “Why is this happening?” It is a fair question. We'll continue our discussion next week.

October 23, 2011

Last week we left off with the question that is probably on your mind, “Why is this happening?” A fair question. Let's see what we can do to help.

First, we realize that we celebrate the Mass not as separate individual parishes, but as a universal Church. I may have my opinion concerning what the best procedures, gestures, and rituals should be in the Mass, but that is not really the important point. We are being called to another important value. We are called to celebrate the Mass in union with the Church throughout the United States and throughout the world.

Second, some of the wording of the prayers will change because it is important that the words we use accurately reflect what we believe as Catholics. The new translation is a close, faithful rendering of the meaning of the words used in the Latin text. Does this mean that what we are currently saying and doing isn't accurate or prayerful or is wrong? No. When the translation of the Roman Missal after Vatican II was made in 1970, 1974 and 1985, the principles that governed the process of translation were different. Without being technical, the process used then was one of “dynamic equivalence” which simply means that the translators could translate entire phrases and have flexibility in word order from the original Latin text. Now we are under a

different process called “formal equivalence” which means that the text must be translated word for word, no substitutions or freedom in phrasing. As said above, a more faithful rendering to the Latin text.

Third, some of the wording of the prayers will change to more clearly reflect images used in the Scriptures. Much of what we say at Mass comes directly from the New and Old Testaments.

This will open a deeper, richer meaning for us in the way we pray the Mass prayers.

A few weeks ago in the gospel, Jesus asked his disciples and us a challenging question. “Who do you say that I am?” Peter responded that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. If, through these changes, we come to know and express our faith in Jesus, the Christ, our Messiah and Lord, in a deeper way, then they will truly accomplish what the Church is hoping for. During the time ahead, let us open our minds and hearts that this may happen.

Next week: what to do with all my questions.

October 31, 2011

Last week we undertook the question “Why is this translation happening?” Hopefully this question was answered in an understandable way. But you still may have other questions. So, what to do with them. Beginning this weekend there will be a small table with some resources on the changes in the Roman Missal for you to pick up. If you want a bit more in-depth information, these will help. But we also want to make this a more personal experience. If you still have questions, we will do our best to answer them. Here are a couple of different ways to submit your questions:

e-mail to liturgy@eastsideparishes.org

write it down and leave it in the basket on the table with the resources mentioned above
place it in the Sunday collection, in an envelope clearly marked “Liturgy Question”

We’ll use this space to answer them as best we can in the coming weeks. Be assured of anonymity, and know that we may group the questions depending on how they come in.

Last Sunday we looked at a segment in our first video presentation on the Mass. We began with the preface to the Eucharistic prayer because that is the music that we have been learning these past weeks. Today we continued with another segment, this one on the Mystery of Faith. In the next weeks we will look at the Creed, the Glory to God and finally we will review the presider’s greeting The Lord be with you and our response which will now be And with your spirit.

As we get closer to November 27th, I want to make sure that we all are clear on an assumption that could be made from some of the commentary or the video. The English language Roman Missal that we will use was directly translated from the Latin language edition that was approved by Pope John Paul II in 2000. Recall last week that we learned how the principles of translation from the original Latin have shifted from being flexible in the word order to being word-for-word. This in no way means that we are “going back” to the Latin that pre-dates Vatican II or that what

we will now say is the “same thing I said as a kid in the ‘50s or ‘60s.” Among us in our liturgical worship are several generations that have no experience of those times in our church history. While we hold tradition high, our church is a pilgrim church, a people on a journey, always moving ahead, always moving toward and building the kingdom of God.

Next week: what we will say at Mass.

November 6, 2011

One of the prayers that will change for us, the assembly, is the Nicene Creed. Recited after the homily, we remember and respond to the call and message of God. The Nicene Creed was drawn largely from the work of the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople (AD 325, 381), which affirmed that Jesus is both God and a human being. Originally, it was used with those who were to be baptized, therefore it began with “I believe.”

Using “I believe” reminds me of the promises made at baptism. As I pray the creed, I remember that I am a member of the family of the Church.

The Nicene Creed helps focus on who God the Son is and on his Incarnation. We will now use the word “consubstantial” rather than “one in being” to say that Jesus has the same nature as God and that he is not God himself. In Jesus, God took our human nature so that the person who is the eternal Son of God was born in time and is the person who is the Son of Mary .

Reciting the creed reminds us to be true to what we believe. We’ve included it here so you may begin praying it at home.

Next week: More of what we will say.

T HE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father ;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit it was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins

and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

November 13, 2011

With the revised translation of the Roman Missal, we will notice a number of differences to the text of the "Glory to God." Many of the verses in this hymn have strong biblical roots. The very opening line comes from the song of the angels announcing the joyful news of the Incarnation or birth of Jesus to the shepherds (Luke 2:14). We take up this very proclamation and make it our own announcing to the world the continued presence and incarnation of God through the Holy Spirit and the Church.

The hymn continues to praise God in a unique way. The revised translation in the new Roman Missal adds the five acclamations found in the original Latin text: "We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory..." This lavishing of praise is an ancient form which highlights the greatness of the subject being addressed. We "heap" our praise upon God, thereby acknowledging God's omnipotence. The text continues by praising each person of the Trinity.

For us at the Eastside Parishes, the assembly will take up the refrain of the sung hymn. We sang it at Mass for the first time today. We'll use it again next week, on the feast of Christ the King, then not until the feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8. We don't sing it during Advent because we are in a time of waiting and longing. We joyfully herald its return on the feast of Christmas.

Next week: And with your spirit.

GLORY TO GOD

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

November 20, 2011

On this Sunday, as we celebrate the feast of Christ the King, we end our church year, and we end some of the familiar responses that we are accustomed to saying during the liturgy. Next Sunday, on the First Sunday of Advent, we open the Roman Missal for the first time.

One of the first things we will notice with the new translation is the response we make several times in the liturgy. When the priest says **The Lord be with you**, we will now say **And with your spirit**.

The wording **And with your spirit** more directly translates the original Latin *Et cum spiritu tuo*, but also brings out that the Holy Spirit is at work in both priest and people as we gather to celebrate Eucharist. This expression is scriptural in nature, coming from St. Paul's letters to the early Christian communities.

It will be a challenge for all of us as we begin to commit this response to memory. But in time it will come. Another place where our text will change is at the Invitation to Communion, which comes just after the Lamb of God. We have not focused on this particular place in the liturgy, so let's take a look at it now.

The priest will invite us:
Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

And we will respond:
Lord, I am not worthy
that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word
and my soul shall be healed.

These words are scriptural in nature, also. They come from the story of the Roman centurion who asked Jesus to heal his servant who is at his house. Like the centurion, we recognize our unworthiness to have Jesus come under the “roof” of our souls in Holy Communion.

Again, it will be a challenge for us to remember these responses. We all will need to hold and use The Order of Mass—Prayers and Responses booklet that we find in the pews. For each and every one of us, this will be different. We will stumble over some words; we’ll get lost during the Creed; we’ll say some of the words and phrases that have become our prayer-fabric for many years and are now not there. We’ll sing our heart out with the new acclamations because we have practiced and really know them.

We will all do it. And we will be okay. Our liturgy is a communal celebration. We all stand next to each other to support one another. We will get through this first day with a few bumps, but we’ll resolve to come back again the next week and continue our prayer.

And please be sure to see the articles in the Heartworks newsletter that should arrive in your mailbox this week. They continue our discussion.

November 27, 2011

So here we stand at the threshold of Advent. A time to be watchful and alert, as the gospel-writer Mark tells us. A time again to make all things new. The one thing we cannot hide on this First Sunday of Advent is the big red book that was carried in procession today—our new Roman Missal; the prayer book from which we will now draw our communal prayer, our prayer, the prayer of the church.

This is being written ahead of our first experience at speaking and hearing the words from the new Roman Missal. But I am confident that our prayer-experience today at liturgy was good. I’m sure that it wasn’t perfect, but that’s okay. Read Fr. Paul Turner’s comments below on the first reading from today’s Mass.

When we come together each week to pray, we do it together, as community. We gather to give praise and glory to God. And as we do that, we ask God to continually be present to us as we go about our life’s work each day. Sometimes life gets messy. We clean it up and move forward. Maybe the liturgy today was a bit messy. Maybe we didn’t get all the words right, maybe we were a bit distracted, but that’s okay. We resolve to come back next Sunday and try again. And it will be a bit less messy. In these next four full weeks of Advent, let us keep in the front of our minds the words we sing in our gathering song each of these Advent weeks: Come to us, O Emmanuel. Let’s make it a good and prayer-filled Advent.

-----It Must Be God’s Fault Isaiah 63.16b-17, 19b, 64.2b-7 “-----

Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down!” It must be God’s fault. That’s the conclusion Isaiah reaches. And who of us hasn’t thought the same. If things don’t go our way, if someone hurts us, if someone leaves us—even if the mess is our own fault—we blame God.

People sin, but Isaiah asks God, “Why do you let us wander from your way s?” People show no remorse, but Isaiah asks God, “Why do you harden our hearts so that we fear you not?” It must be God’s

fault.

Isaiah's prayer opens the season of Advent because of a specific request it makes: "Rend the heavens and come down." In the midst of our misfortune, sorrow and sin, when we realize our own strength fails to make life any better, to eliminate hurt, or to erase the past, we finally turn to God for a solution. Let there be no veil concealing heaven from earth. Let God rip it open, come down here, and save us from the messiness of life.

God did just that on the first Christmas Day.

As we stand on the threshold of another Advent, we ask God to do it again. Even if our mess isn't God's fault, we need God's help to set us free.

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