

The New Roman Missal in Our Parish

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Have you heard about the changes in English translation of the mass that is to happen in the Catholic Church in Canada? May be you are excited, may be you are doubtful, may be you questioning why? When we look into the story of this new translation, it will lead us into an attitude of openness and appreciation. I have borrowed most of the thoughts from the Official website of the Canadian Bishop's Conference; reflections written by Fr. Geoff Kerslake of the Archdiocese of Ottawa; notes from Bernadette Gasselin and from the official GIRM (General Instruction of Roman Missal).

Background:

The first edition of the Roman Missal was printed in the English language in 1974. The translation was done in four years with the understanding that these texts would need revision after in depth study of Latin liturgical terms. This translation tried to keep the sense of the words in English but it was not trying to be as literally accurate as possible. So ICEL began this retranslation in the mid-1980s. In May 2001, a new document, *Liturgiam authenticam* was issued by the Holy See that gave a new direction to the methodology of translating the Latin liturgical texts; thus started the need and new process of translation of the liturgy. A new edition of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) started to take shape over the years. On March 18, 2002 The Third *editio typica* of the *Missale Romanum* is published in LATIN by the Holy See. The new GIRM in English which is to be implemented on November 27, 2011 is a result of years of scholarship and research put into the translation. (www.romanmissal.ca)

It is not a new Mass but a new translation:

“The current form of the Mass that we celebrate in English has remained unchanged since it was first implemented over 30 years ago. ... The New Missal uses language which is not only closer to the original prayers (many of which are over 1,000 years old) but also reflects a more ‘formal’ or dignified way of addressing Almighty God. The New Missal also includes changes made to the Calendar of Saints with the addition of many new saints, including our Canadian St. Brother André!” The new mass invites us to come to the roots of the Latin text linguistically and experience the original intent of every prayer (www.romanmissal.ca).

Why from Latin?

“In the West, the Mother Tongue of the Church has been Latin since the Church was established in Rome. After the Second Vatican Council, the Church gave permission for the Mass to be translated from the official Latin version into other languages... . The Catholic Church continues to produce her official documents in Latin and in this way every language

group has a common ‘reference text’ to use to make sure we are saying and meaning the same things.” (Kerslake)

Bodily Postures:

There have been people approaching me saying, we need some uniformity in the postures expressed by the community. Here in Fort McMurray we are very diverse and liturgically unique. The new GIRM is an opportunity for our parish to bring that uniformity to our church. Being so culturally diverse and ethnically different we are all used to our own ways of celebrating mass. But now it is an opportunity for us to come together as one family of faith irrespective of our diversity. “A common bodily posture, to be observed by all those taking part, is a sign of the unity of the members of the Christian community gathered together for the Sacred Liturgy” (42).

The GIRM says, “the gestures and bodily posture of both the Priest, the Deacon, and the ministers, and also of the people, must be conducive to making the entire celebration resplendent with beauty and noble simplicity, to making clear the true and full meaning of its different parts, and to fostering the participation of all” (42).

So I invite all of you to fully participate in the postures and actions chosen for our parish. There is a need for sacrifice and cooperation to make liturgy more meaningful to us.

Role of Silence:

The role of silence in liturgy is reiterated in our new instructions. Silence is expected at various parts of our liturgy. Silence serves reverence. We begin with a call for silence at the beginning of the liturgy. Silence takes the following meaning in our liturgy: a. preparation (at the beginning, before readings); b. for recollection and prayer (during liturgy of word), c. Meditation (after homily) d. Praise and thanksgiving (after communion). (Notes from Bernadette Gasslein).

What are the changes?

- 1. Changes in Text:** There are changes affecting all participants of the mass. The changes include many responses of the people and most of the changes are for the priests with the changes in all of the Opening, Prayer over Gifts and Closing Prayers etc. The exact changes you will notice, when we start the new translation.
- 2. The changes in text calls for *Changes in Music:*** The changes in text of the responses in mass leads to changes in the music we are so familiar with for a long time. This calls for a unified effort and willingness to learn new responses and a conscious effort to participate.

Some noticeable Changes: (See the two column Change Table in page 4)

The Lord be with you –R: *And with your Spirit.* (This is the tough one for us to get used to). “The response “And with your Spirit” is based on sacred scripture and reflects the practice of the

early Christians (see Galatians 6:18 and Timothy 4:22). The fact is that the response in French, as in other languages too, has always been “And with your Spirit”. At Four important times during Mass, the priest and the people share this dialogue back and forth where we recognize that we want and need God’s presence with the priest who acts as Christ in the celebration of the sacraments.``

3. Changes in Liturgical Practices:

There are also some changes to some of our liturgical practices. This might affect various ministers assisting with liturgy. The exact changes and their implications will be incorporated into the liturgical training sessions and guidelines for various ministries.

- a. Postures: Kneeling after Sanctus to the singing of memorial acclamation is emphasised for the unity and reverence. Standing during communion until after the whole congregation has received the communion and being seated for silent prayer is another recommended change we need to implement. This brings about the communitarian spirituality of the church rather than individualistic spirituality.
- b. Communion in both species is a new liturgical practise emphasised by the instruction.
- c. Local autonomy of the College of Bishops is also recognised when it comes to the decision on postures, songs and other practices etc.
- d. Canadian saints and other feasts such as Canada Day are incorporated into the text recognised for Canada.

4. Changes in Theological Emphasis: (notes from Bernadette Gasselin)

Many of the changes in the new Roman Missal are guided by the following theological and doctrinal aspects:

- a: Emphasis on transcendence – the mass should elevate us to experience the heavenly joy.
- b: Ministerial Priesthood: it is not just the priest who is offering mass but the whole community; through words, posture and participation we all become part of the sacrifice.
- c. Sacred language: rather than a cool version, the church wants to emphasis on a sacred language.
- d. Unity: the concept of unity of one bread, one body to be expressed through one liturgy by the universal church. So the posture, singing, responses – all should reflect on unity.
- e. Continuity and Tradition: the liturgy in Catholic tradition is rooted in it thousands of years of prayer. Many of the prayers used in our liturgy have been used by the church for thousands of years. There is a continuity and tradition of the church being protected by this
- f. Dignity, beauty and Solemnity: Liturgy as an act of the Church calls for more solemnity, dignity and beauty.
- g. More emphasis is placed on communal spirituality rather than an individualistic spirituality.

Changes in Text for the Responses:

Here are some of the basic changes we are going to notice in people’s responses.
(The following chart is taken from the Western catholic reporter).

Part of Mass	New Wording	Present Wording
Response to the Greeting, Preface, Sign of Peace and Concluding Rites	And with your spirit	And also with you
Penitential Rite (A)	...I have greatly sinned through my own fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault...	I have sinned through my own fault
Sanctus	Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. ...	Holy, holy, holy Lord God of power and might
Memorial Acclamation A	We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again. (one of the options)	Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again

Gloria	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.	Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth, Lord God heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory...
Nicene Creed	I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible... ... consubstantial with the Father, through him all things were made	We believe in one God the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen... One in being with the Father. Through him all things were made.
Communion	Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,and my soul ...	Lord I am not Worthy to receive youI shall be

References:

1. GIRM: Available on <http://www.romanmissal.ca/GIRM.pdf>
2. Reflections: available on http://www.archottawa.ca/archdiocese/index_e.aspx?DetailID=768
3. An Introduction to the New Edition of the Order of Mass and the General Instruction of the Roman Missal – available on www.romanmissal.ca
4. Notes from Bernadette Gasselin.