



Are you in the know?

As you may have heard, we will begin to use a new translation of the Mass on the First Sunday of Advent, November 27, 2011. This is because we have received a new English-language translation of the third edition of The Roman Missal. The Bishops have been working on this translation of The Roman Missal since Pope John Paul II announced a revision of the Missal in 2000.

Why do we need a new translation, you may ask? When the Second Vatican Council allowed for the prayers of the liturgy to be translated into the vernacular (or *common*) language for a given country from the original Latin, various groups worked quickly to develop an official English translation to be used for the first time in worship and a full English missal was published in 1973. The approach to translation used at that time (known as *dynamic equivalence*) aimed at communicating the general meaning of the Latin text of the mass, rather than providing a literal, or word-for-word, translation.

After forty years of celebrating Mass in English, the Church has come to see certain areas where the English text could be improved. Some have noted that, when the Latin text was paraphrased, a number of rich spiritual metaphors and images were lost. Important theological concepts were not always clear, and several biblical allusions did not shine out as noticeably as they could.

In 2001, the Vatican called for a more precise translation (formal equivalence) that gives Catholics a better sense of the richness of the Latin text- a translation that would be 'without omissions or additions in terms of their content, without paraphrases or glosses" (Liturgiam Authenticam, no. 20). Following this approach, the new translation of the Mass preserves more fully the theological tradition captured throughout the centuries in the liturgy. It also more clearly communicates the many biblical allusions and vital theological concepts that are expressed in the Latin original.

No significant changes have occurred in the Mass, since the Mass began to be prayed in the vernacular after the Second Vatican Council. Because of this, you are probably wondering how this translation will affect the way we celebrate the Mass.

One thing that has not changed is the structure of the Mass. There still will be two major parts of the Mass, the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Our postures -sitting, standing, kneeling, singing, listening, proclaiming, and praying at Mass - will also be the same. What will change are some of the words we hear, some of our responses, and some of the parts of the Mass that we sing. While this may cause some difficulty at first, the very unfamiliarity of the new language may help us reflect more deeply on the meaning of what we are saying or singing.

Over the next few weeks, we will take a look at some of the changes to take place and present the biblical background and liturgical significance of the dialogues and responses of the Mass to help us appreciate more fully what we are saying. Both current and the new wording will be given.

Are you in the know...you are now!